

16 December 2024

The Heritage Council c/- The Conservation Manager
Heritage NSW
Department of Premier and Cabinet
Locked Bag 5020
Parramatta NSW 2124

RE: Response to Excavation Director Criteria – Rebecca Agius, Senior Archaeologist and Heritage Specialist, Curio Projects

The following statement and attached Curriculum Vitae have been prepared to support Rebecca Agius' nomination as a Secondary Excavation Director for archaeological management of potential State significant archaeological 'relics' associated with the Western Sydney University Parramatta South Campus study area (SHR #00749), located at 171 Victoria Road, Rydalmere, NSW.

Rebecca has worked as a historical and Aboriginal archaeologist and heritage specialist in Australia for 5 years, as well as experience in archaeological fieldwork and teaching overseas. Her experience includes the preparation of Archaeological Research Designs (ARD), Excavation Methodologies, Historical Archaeological Assessments and Excavation Reports. She has supervised on archaeological testing and salvage excavations, and monitoring programs across Sydney.

Rebecca is also an experienced supervisor and Excavation Director on Aboriginal archaeological sites, excavating under both the *Code of Practice for Archaeological Investigations of Aboriginal Objects in NSW* and approved Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permits (AHIP).

Excavation Director Criteria

Part 1A – Essential Qualifications/Experience:

Requirement 1 – A tertiary pass degree with subjects in archaeology or a related discipline and four years professional experience in historical archaeology or a related archaeological field.

Rebecca's tertiary qualifications in archaeology are presented below:

2017 – 2019	Bachelor of Archaeology (Major in Archaeological Science and Biology), Macquarie University
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Rebecca's professional experience in archaeology is summarised below:

2019 – present	Curio Projects – Senior Archaeologist and Heritage Specialist
2023 – present	Monash University & Associazione Culturale ASTRA Onlus – (Sub-contract) Assistant Archaeological Field School Director and Educator
2019 (June-July)	Associazione Culturale ASTRA Onlus – Archaeological Fieldwork Assistant

2018 – 2019	Museum of Ancient Cultures, Macquarie University – Museum Administration and Educator
2018 (Sept-Oct)	Macquarie University & Associazione Culturale ASTRA Onlus – Ceramic Analyst

Requirement 2 – A demonstrated understanding of NSW heritage legislation assessing heritage significance criteria and relevant archaeological guidelines/best practice methods and standards including, but not limited to, relevant archaeology publications issued by the Heritage Council of NSW.

Rebecca has a demonstrated understanding of NSW heritage legislation and is proficient in assessing archaeological resources against the heritage significance criteria using relevant archaeological guidelines and standards (most notably *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'* (Heritage Branch, Department of Planning, 2009)), the Burra Charter (ICOMOS 1999) and the *Historical Archaeology Code of Practice* (Heritage Council of New South Wales 2006)).

Rebecca's experience on a range of projects including small and large-scale urban developments, has led to a practical and comprehensive understanding of best-practice methods and their application in different archaeological settings.

Such projects have required Rebecca to provide comprehensive heritage advice to clients regarding NSW heritage legislation, actively manage archaeological teams, negotiate/mitigate impacts to provide positive outcomes for both archaeological resources and built heritage, and ensure that works are carried out in accordance with best practice guidelines.

Her experience preparing and adhering to ARDs and excavation methodologies prepared in accordance with Heritage Council guidelines and policies has provided her with practical and theoretical experience for appropriately managing State and locally significant archaeological resources.

Further, Rebecca's experience as an Aboriginal archaeological supervisor and ED has required her to provide holistic advice and archaeological management recommendations in consideration of relevant legislation, guidelines and best practice methods across both disciplines. This has allowed Sarah to offer an integrated approach and best outcomes for both Aboriginal and European heritage.

Reports relevant to this requirement are presented below:

- Goat Island Wharf Demolition, Statement of Heritage Impact, including Aboriginal and Historical Archaeological Assessments, 2024
- 74-108 Botany Road & 86-100 Wyndham Street, Alexandria, Historical Archaeological Assessment, 2024
- 105-153 Miller Street, North Sydney, Historical Archaeological Assessment, 2024
- 51-57 Bayswater Road, Rushcutters Bay, Historical Archaeological Assessment, 2024
- Piccadilly Hotel Redevelopment, 169 Victoria Street, 171-173 Victoria Street, 90-98 Brougham Street, Potts Point, Historical Archaeological Assessment, 2023 + 2024

- Piccadilly Hotel Redevelopment, 169 Victoria Street, 171-173 Victoria Street, 90-98 Brougham Street, Potts Point, Historical Archaeological Research Design and Excavation Methodology, 2024
- St John's College, 10 Missenden Road, Camperdown, Historical Archaeological Assessment, 2023
- St John's College, 10 Missenden Road, Camperdown, Historical and Aboriginal Archaeological Research Design and Excavation Methodology, 2023
- St Paul's Anglican Carlingford Cemetery, Historical Archaeological Assessment, 2023

Requirement 3 – Demonstrated experience in the investigation of comparable or relevant historical archaeological sites (especially Australian Historical Archaeology) project management and preparing written archaeological assessments/site management recommendations.

Rebecca has demonstrable experience in the investigation of comparable or relevant historical archaeological sites, project management and the preparation of written archaeological assessments/site management recommendations.

Rebecca has been a supervisor and archaeologist on sites of local and State significance since 2019. These projects have included monitoring, testing and salvage excavation programs in and around the Sydney CBD.

Rebecca's experience has familiarised her with archaeological deposits, artefacts and site formation processes typical of 19th century Australian archaeological sites. She is experienced in dating of archaeological deposits through material culture and structural remains. Sarah is proficient in the interpretation of ephemeral site features including postholes, under-floor deposits and yard deposits, as well as archaeological features in both industrial and residential contexts.

Rebecca is experienced in the development of appropriate management measures for the protection or interpretation of archaeological resources through the preparation of archaeological assessments and post excavation reports. Sarah has been actively involved in the post-excavation collation of archaeological data, including historic artefact analysis, as well as the preparation of scaled site drawings and digitisation.

Rebecca has considerable project management skills, developed through her work as site supervisor and project archaeologist for both simple and complex archaeological sites. Rebecca also has experience managing project teams with university student involvement, with her duties including training and oversight of the student team. Rebecca's experience as a heritage consultant has further expanded her management skills, with her responsibilities including client and regulator liaison, preparation of assessments, community consultation and development of mitigation and management of archaeological resources for complex State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) and Development (SSD) projects across both European and Aboriginal heritage disciplines.

Rebecca's archaeological field experience and its development since 2019 relevant to this requirement is presented below:

- 20 Waterview Street, Putney, test and salvage excavation, monitoring, 2020-2024 – State and local
- Jobbins Terrace Renovations, The Rocks, monitoring, 2024 – State

- Middle Head National Park, Mosman, monitoring, 2024 – State
- Redeemer Baptist School, North Parramatta, underfloor deposit salvage, 2024 – local
- Harbourside Shopping Centre, Darling Harbour, monitoring, test and open area salvage 2022-2023 – local
- Parramatta Powerhouse, Parramatta, test and open area salvage excavation, 2021-2022 – State and local
- Fort Street Public School, Sydney, open area salvage excavation, 2021 – State and local
- Lands and Education Buildings, Sydney, monitoring, test excavation, salvage excavation, 2020-2024 – State and local

Requirement 4 – Ability to demonstrate that work under any approvals previously granted by the Heritage Council has been completed in accordance with the conditions of that approval and the final report has been submitted to the Heritage Council.

Rebecca has co-authored excavation reports in accordance with approvals granted by the NSW Heritage Council:

- Royal Sydney Golf Club, Rose Bay post excavation report, 2024
- 590-592 New South Head Road, Point Piper post excavation report, 2022

Part 1B – Historical Archaeological Fieldwork Experience

Test Excavation

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her understanding of the meaning (date, type, common application in the past) of basic artefacts and building material types likely to be encountered.

Rebecca's experience working in urban and rural sites across NSW and overseas in Italy has given her a diverse understanding of artefact types, glass, ceramic, brick, mortar and nail manufacturing techniques and chronologies, building construction methods, landscape modification methods, land use and varying types of occupation deposits (underfloor deposits, refuse pits and yard scatters). Rebecca also has experience in historic post-excavation artefact analysis.

As such, Rebecca has a practical understanding of basic heritage fabric likely to be encountered in archaeological contexts both within NSW, and a global context, as well as the ability to identify and date building materials and artefacts.

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to recognise and interpret taphonomic processes and their meaning.

Through her experience in both Aboriginal and European archaeology, Rebecca has a thorough understanding of the taphonomic processes that shape and impact archaeological sites and features. She has developed an ability to recognise and interpret the subtleties of soil movement and how it relates to residual soils that have potential to contain Aboriginal objects, as well as any overlying European archaeology.

Rebecca has also worked on complex forensic anthropological sites that involved the detailed excavation and recording of human remains and the analysis of the taphonomic processes the remains have undergone. Rebecca's involvement in the excavation of single and mass graves as part

of the Mass Grave Project at the Australian Facility Taphonomic Experimental Research (AFTER) (also known as the Body Farm) in 2023, required a comprehensive understanding of taphonomic process in an Australian context.

Rebecca is experienced on sites that have been shaped by mechanical taphonomy through reclamation, industrial alteration or widespread demolition. Her work on the Harbourside Redevelopment project in Darling Harbour involved excavation of reclamation fills within the harbour, and open area excavation of an 1870s industrial foundry built on the edge of reclaimed land and original shoreline below deep levels of overburden. At this site, Rebecca also monitored the machine excavation of the seabed, exposing archaeological features such as mid-19th century sandstone and timber slipways below centuries of industrial reclamation fill.

Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to complete adequate recording of stratigraphy, soils, features without needing to re-excavate previous trenches, including provision of measured drawings and survey.

Rebecca has been responsible for record keeping and interpretation of soil profiles, identification of taphonomic processes and archaeological features, as well as compilation of the overall site recordings that meet the archival standards of heritage bodies.

Recording techniques have included section drawings, scale plans, photographing features, exposed archaeological remains, Total Station mapping and dumpy level recording.

Projects relevant to this requirement are:

- Royal Sydney Golf Course, Rose Bay Archaeological Monitoring, 2024
- Jobbins Terraces, The Rocks Archaeological Monitoring, 2024
- Penrith Football Stadium, Archaeological Test Excavation, 2024
- 20 Waterview Street, Putney Salvage Excavation and Monitoring, 2024 (ongoing)
- Mass Grave Project at the Australian Facility for Taphonomic Experimental Research (AFTER) 2023
- 590-592 New South Head Road, Point Piper Archaeological Test Excavation, 2023
- Harbourside Shopping Centre, Darling Harbour Test and Salvage Excavation, 2022-2023
- Parramatta Powerhouse, Parramatta Test and Salvage Excavation, 2021-2022
- Lands Department, Sydney Test and Salvage Excavations, 2021-2024
- Fort Street Public School, Sydney Salvage Excavation, 2021
- 20 Waterview Street, Putney Test Excavation, 2020
- Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park Archaeological Monitoring, 2020

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate understanding of Australian historic and environmental context as demonstrated in Archaeological Excavation Methodology and Research Design.

Rebecca has been involved in the preparation of several excavation methodologies and research designs, both for historical and Aboriginal archaeology. Having a background in both, Rebecca has a thorough understanding of how the environmental context of a site and its historical use over time impacts a site and its archaeological potential and best practices for logical placement of testing locations. Below is a list of ARD reports that Rebecca has prepared, or aided in the preparation of:

- Western Sydney University Parramatta South Campus, Indigenous Centre of Excellence, 2024 (Aboriginal and historical)
- Blue Bet Stadium, Penrith, 2024 (Aboriginal)
- 17 Dover Road (Wilberforce Ave Carpark), Rose Bay, 2024 (Aboriginal)
- 100 Botany Road, Alexandria, 2024 (Aboriginal and historical)
- Piccadilly Hotel, Potts Point, 2024 (historical)
- 20 Waterview Street, Putney, 2024 (Aboriginal)
- St Johns College, Camperdown, 2023 (Aboriginal and historical)
- St Pauls Anglican Church historic cemetery, Carlingford, 2023 (historical)
- 590-592 New South Head Road, Point Piper, 2022 (Aboriginal)

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to prepare a report that clearly identifies what was done, why, what new information was recovered and what it means.

Rebecca has prepared and assisted in the preparation of several post excavation reports and analysis of artefacts for excavations in both NSW and Italy. Being involved in this process across a variety of projects has allowed Rebecca to articulate the process of excavation that occurred, what was learned as a result of the project and how this compared to predictive modelling prior to breaking ground.

One such example of this is Rebecca's excavation completed at Point Piper in 2022. Predictive modelling suggested that the area contained high potential for Aboriginal archaeological material and/or burials, however once excavation began it was demonstrated that the site was highly disturbed with no archaeological material identified and within a different soil profile that was mapped through GIS. The post excavation reporting prepared by Rebecca demonstrated these findings of the site, what it tells us about the historical development of the area and its contribution to the predictive modelling for future assessments.

When working in Italy with Monash University and the Associazione Culturale ASTRA Onlus team, Rebecca aids in the documentation and interpretation of both structural and artefact finds. Rebecca also teaches university students how to correctly record information, observations and findings whilst excavating on a site in the form of a field journal in order to practice skills in developing informative post excavation reports.

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to manage/work within a multifaceted team of heritage professionals.

Rebecca has been involved with many projects that include a multidisciplinary team of heritage professionals. These include collaboration with built heritage architects, Aboriginal archaeologists and Registered Aboriginal Parties, maritime archaeologists, historians, GIS specialists, geomorphologists, students, artefact specialists, surveyors, planners, conservation specialists, palynologists, laboratory technicians, OSL and radiocarbon dating specialists and archival recorders.

As part of her work excavating single and mass graves at the Australian Facility for Taphonomic Experimental Research (AFTER), Rebecca has worked with a diverse range of professionals outside, but contributory to the heritage industry. These included forensic anthropologists, NSW Police, Victoria Police, Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, PhD anthropology students from the University of Wollongong and the University of Technology Sydney.

Rebecca's work in association with the Associazione Culturale ASTRA Onlus in Italy and Monash University has allowed her to expand on her management and communication skills on a global level. Learning different methods of archaeological techniques from the Italian Archaeology team and being able to translate these learned skills to teach students has enabled Rebecca to manage varying team members whilst working on a site and ensuring that works proceed smoothly.

Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her commitment to operating within the principles outlined in relevant Heritage Council's guidelines and policies, including but not limited to: Historical Archaeology Code of Practice and the Burra Charter.

Rebecca's archaeological work in Australia, as well as her international work demonstrate her commitment to working within relevant State and international guidelines and policies. All of her completed assessment reports for various projects are always framed within the relevant assessment guidelines appropriate for the site, its current significance, and its potential to contain archaeological resources.

Monitoring

Previous experience with and demonstrated understanding of how to use a machine excavator effectively and safely.

Rebecca has worked on a number of projects that have required monitoring by machine excavation, both for historical and Aboriginal excavations, as well as in Italy. This has provided Rebecca with the experience to not only understand how to safely navigate a site using large machinery, but also how to instruct machine operators to carefully expose archaeological material/features.

Projects that have involved monitoring activities include:

- 20 Waterview Street, Putney, 2024-ongoing
- Blue Bet Stadium, Penrith, 2024
- Royal Sydney Golf Club, Rose Bay, 2024
- Middle Head National Park, Mosman, 2023-2024
- Carsulae, Italy, 2023
- Harbourside, Darling Harbour, 2022-2023
- Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park, 2020

Demonstrated ability to understand when it is necessary to change from machine to manual investigation.

When conducting the Harbourside test excavation program in 2022 (May-July + December), test trenches were excavated by machine to remove shopping centre construction and demolition fills, and 1880-1980s railway surfaces and fills in order to reach the deeper significant pre-1880s archaeological deposits and features. Manual excavation took over once the anticipated features, or bedrock/original shoreline were encountered. The same principles applied to the project once open area excavation commenced. During the Harbourside project, Rebecca also oversaw the mechanical removal of the seabed to identify early 1800s sandstone slipway, wooden wharf and other relics that had once been submerged under the harbour. These features were hand excavated and recorded once identified.

When working in Carsulae, machine excavation is also used to remove overgrown vegetation and accumulated soils in order to expose archaeological structures and features across the site. When working in the nymphaeum, a structure that has been covered and shaped into a large hill within the countryside, machines are used to remove excess soils until features are identified or soil profiles have changed. The archaeological team, under the direction of Rebecca and the Italian Directors, switched to manual excavation to expose the structure.

Large Scale / Complex Excavation

Documentation showing the nominee has been approved as Excavation Director on five (5) or more prior permits for excavation of lesser scope such as archaeological testing or monitoring permits (and/or section 63 approvals).

This is Rebecca's first time being nominated for Secondary Excavation Director, and therefore, cannot currently provide examples of previous historical excavation permits.

Rebecca has however been previously approved for several Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permits (AHIPs), including:

- 17 Dover Road (Wilberforce Ave Carpark), Rose Bay, 2024, AHIP #5318 (testing)
- 143 Station Street, Blue Bet Stadium, Penrith, 2024, AHIP #5314 (testing)
- 20 Waterview Street, Putney, 2024, AHIP #5261 (salvage)
- 590-592 New South Head Road, Point Piper, 2022, AHIP #4874 (testing)

Excavation Director needs to demonstrate that ALL the abovementioned projects have been completed in accordance with the permit consent conditions.

This is Rebecca's first time being nominated for Secondary Excavation Director, and therefore, cannot currently provide relevant examples for the above question.

Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her excavation experience as a Site Director or Trench/Area supervisor on at least three (3) sites subject to large scale/complex excavation.

Rebecca was one of the primary supervisors during the open area excavation of the Harbourside shopping centre project in Darling Harbour. Having had a detailed understanding of the site by being a part of the testing program, as well as preparing previous documentation for the site, Rebecca was well suited to this position during the salvage works. Rebecca was responsible for maintaining all records – photos, logs, context sheets etc. – as well as managing the archaeological and maritime teams and expectations of the client and construction crew on site.

Rebecca has worked throughout various stages of the archaeological works (2020-2024) undertaken at the Lands and Education buildings within the Sydney Sandstone Precinct (bound by Loftus, Bridge, Bent, Gresham and Young Streets in Sydney's CBD). This work has involved monitoring, testing and salvage works to identify features of the State significant gardens of First Government House, as well as other phases of use and occupation on the site. Throughout 2023 and 2024, Rebecca has been a site director on site, managing archaeological teams, maintaining records and communicating with the client throughout the project.

Rebecca has completed complex open area archaeological excavations within three separate locations on site at Carsulae, Italy. For two of these excavations, Rebecca has been a site director and educator for university students. The Carsulae site presents a complicated history from Roman use, through to medieval and modern-day occupation. This is also an ongoing position in which Rebecca participates in yearly to train up and coming archaeologists as more of the wider Carsulae site is excavated.

Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her experience and/or clear evidence of a capacity to:

(a) manage project timeframes, budgets, client's requirements

Rebecca is well versed in managing project timeframes, budgets and client requirements, both when completing fieldwork, as well as project managing and preparing assessments for submissions.

One such example of maintaining a project under a tight deadline is the test excavation work completed at Blue Bet Stadium, Penrith. Rebecca was responsible for ensuring that the excavations ran within the project timeframes without significant delay to the program, as well as provided budgetary advice with the pros and cons of either employing a larger archaeological team to complete the works faster or have a smaller team that may take longer to complete excavation works. Overall, the client (INSW) was impressed and appreciative of the efforts made by Rebecca and her archaeological team for the project.

(c) manage community interest/public relations issues

Rebecca has currently not been involved in projects that have resulted in her needing to manage public interest/relations issues. However, as a consultant, Rebecca is extremely familiar with managing client expectations, concerns and issues on a wide range of projects.

(d) manage and implement permit conditions (when triggered) including relationship to other legislative requirements (e.g. Aboriginal heritage legislation and Work Health and Safety legislation).

Rebecca has worked on many sites that have integrated both historical and Aboriginal archaeological history and investigation and is therefore experienced in the potential interactions between the two. A prominent example of this is Rebecca's involvement within the Harbourside redevelopment. During the assessment process for the project, Rebecca prepared the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR), which concluded that there was a very low likelihood of Aboriginal archaeological resources to be present on site. Rebecca was then a part of the project for the historical excavations, as both an archaeologist for historical relics, as well as monitoring for any potential Aboriginal cultural material, in the event that it should be present along the original shoreline. Whilst no Aboriginal cultural material was uncovered, and therefore no legislative requirements were triggered, Rebecca had detailed knowledge of the site and legislative requirements. Other examples of projects include:

- 590-592 New South Head Road, Point Piper, 2022 (historical/Aboriginal interaction)
- Parramatta Powerhouse, 2021 (historical/Aboriginal interaction)
- 20 Waterview Street, Putney, 2020 (WHS trigger – asbestos identified)

Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to synthesise excavation and post excavation analysis/historical research into a report that responds to identified research questions and makes a positive contribution to community understanding of the history and significance of the place, and to provide sound advice for future management of the site.

Rebecca's work in Italy has contributed to publications of archaeological data from the excavations, as well as interacting with the public through community engagement in and out of the archaeological park.

Within NSW, Rebecca has contributed to and prepared post excavation reports and been a part of a variety of projects that have required the preparation of advice to future manage a site in light of the results and findings of an investigation. Some examples relevant to this requirement include:

- Site of Squire's Brewery, Putney, 2023 - ongoing
- Harbourside Salvage Excavation, 2023
- Lands Department Test and Salvage Excavation/Monitoring, 2020 – 2023
- Harbourside Test Excavation, 2022

Excavation Director needs to clearly demonstrate his/her understanding of the significance and archaeological research potential of sites of State significance and of the loss of information that can be incurred by application of less than best practice and/or rigorous methods both on-site and during preparation off site (including reviews of the site assessment).

Rebecca's experience in the field of archaeology and heritage both in NSW and internationally has provided her with a wealth of experience and background knowledge upon which to base any assessment of significance of a heritage or archaeological site.

Rebecca has worked on State significant sites such as Middle Head National Park, where proposed works have implemented the use of minimal physical intervention whilst identifying and exposing archaeological deposits while also being able to provide comprehensive advice to the client regarding the nature, extent and significance of the archaeological resource uncovered.

Rebecca has also prepared archaeological assessments on a variety of State significant sites, which has provided her with an extensive understanding of the significance and archaeological potential of these sites:

- Western Sydney University Parramatta South Campus (Library of the Future project), 2024
- Western Sydney University Parramatta South Campus (Indigenous Centre of Excellence project) 2024
- Goat Island, 2024
- St John's College, Sydney University, 10 Missenden Road, 2023
- Chief Secretary's Building, 121 Macquarie Street, Sydney, 2020

Excavation Director needs to clearly demonstrate his/her experience in project management of on-site interpretation.

Many of the projects which Rebecca has completed have required some level of archaeological interpretation and public communication of the results. Throughout her time at Curio, the

multifaceted team of archaeologists, heritage specialists and designers have come together on projects to develop interpretation plans, manufacture of designs and public interaction.

Rebecca's work at Carsulae has involved collection and digital interpretation of ceramics contributing to publications of the archaeological excavations of the site. This data has been presented at lectures both associated with the university program, as well as public museum presentations.

Rebecca is also currently involved in analysing an underfloor deposit from the Redeemer Baptist School in North Parramatta, which is listed within the locally significant heritage conservation area 'Burnside Homes'. Rebecca is working with an in-house team at Curio to put together some interpretation strategies for the artefacts to display and use as learning tools for the students at the school.

Thank you for taking the time to assess my nomination as a Secondary Excavation Director.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions concerning my experience or ability to fulfil the criteria.

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca Agius
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17 December 2024

Rebecca Agius: Reference Letter for Nomination of Excavation Director Criteria NSW

Dr Jaye McKenzie-Clark is an archaeologist and ceramic specialist with over 25 years' experience working at archaeological sites in Italy and Greece. In her current role, as Adjunct Lecturer and Field School Director in The Centre for Ancient Cultures, School of Philosophical Historical and International Studies (SOPHIS), Faculty of Arts at Monash University, she trains university students in all aspects of archaeological practice.

Jaye works in collaboration with Associazione Culturale ASTRA Onlus at the ancient Roman site of Carsulae in Italy. The town is thought to have been settled around 300 BC, and became an important trading centre with the construction of the Via Flaminia, 220 BC, which connected Rome with the Adriatic coast. The town is thought to have gone into decline and abandoned after the diversion of the Via Flaminia around 4th century AD. The town was raided in later periods, which saw some buildings dismantled and the stone re-purposed for construction in surrounding medieval towns. However, many substantial structures still remain in Carsulae, such as the theatre, amphitheatre, temples, and funeral monuments.

Jaye has known Rebecca since September 2018, when she was a ceramic research intern under Jaye's direction. Rebecca helped to identify, sort, document, analyse and visually record a large assemblage of Roman ceramics from the site. Although Rebecca had not studied ancient pottery previously, she learnt these new skills very quickly. She has a good eye for detail, and was rapidly able to recognise different ceramic fabrics, forms and styles. Her work was accurate, and she proficiently utilised reference material from various sources to place the ceramics into a chronological sequence. During the four weeks of her internship, Rebecca also demonstrated a strong work ethic and excellent time management skills, competently juggling assignments from other courses with her internship responsibilities.

Rebecca's commitment to learning saw her return to Italy in July 2019 as a self-funded volunteer, to participate in the excavation at Carsulae. The work involved a wide range of excavation activities, which changed constantly during the course of each day. Rebecca proved to be very flexible, adapting quickly to each new environment and work requirement. Her practical skills were exceptional, she worked

accurately and quickly, with an excellent attention to detail and very good interpretation of the archaeological evidence. Rebecca was a highly valued member of the team, respected by all members of the Australian cohort as well as the Italian Directors of the excavation.

In her spare time during the excavation season, Rebecca also voluntarily undertook to learn a new computer program, to assist in the digitalisation of potters' stamps found at the site. She mastered the program quickly, producing accurate drawings and demonstrating her ability to adapt and take on new tasks proficiently.

Since her time as an intern, Rebecca has gained experience working as an archaeologist and heritage consultant in Australia.

In 2023 and 2024 Rebecca was invited to return to Carsulae as an Assistant Field School Director for Monash University, helping Jaye run and supervise the excavation program for new rounds of students. Her responsibilities for the program include teaching students correct field methodologies and techniques, supervising the development of their excavation and critical thinking skills, managing and supervising complex open-area excavation locations across the site, and grading the archaeological-related assignments of the students, testing their ability to record and interpret archaeological data.

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her understanding of the meaning (date, type, common application in the past) of basic artefacts and building material types likely to be encountered.

Rebecca's experiences working in Carsulae have provided her with the skills and expertise to recognise, correctly handle and interpret a wide range of artefact materials such as glass, ceramic, brick, metal, plaster, mosaics, marble and bone. Rebecca's broad knowledge enables her to differentiate between building materials, decorative materials and domestic ware, allowing her to identify different dating indicators, manufacturing and decorative techniques.

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to manage/work within a multifaceted team of heritage professionals.

Rebecca's communication skills are exceptional and she is able to work well with a wide range of people. Her work in Italy requires her to liaise with a variety of professionals, including artefact specialists, archaeologists, conservation archaeologists, GIS and drone mapping specialists, as well as local government officials and university staff. Rebecca has also developed strong communication, teaching and organisation skills supervising Monash University students. These aptitudes are vital to managing sites as either an archaeological supervisor and excavation director, making Rebecca an ideal candidate for such a position.

Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her excavation experience as a Site Director or Trench/Area supervisor on at least three (3) sites subject to large scale/complex excavation.

Since 2019, Rebecca has contributed to the management and supervision of three different large-scale complex areas of excavation at Carsulae: The Roman Tribunal; an elite Roman domus and a nymphaeum. These diverse regions within the town have provided complex histories from Roman through to medieval periods, and have required in-depth analysis to understand the contexts in which archaeological artefacts and structural features have been identified. Rebecca therefore has had a robust exposure to the potential complexities of an archaeological site.

Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to synthesise excavation and post excavation analysis/historical research into a report that responds to identified research questions and makes a positive contribution to community understanding of the history and significance of the place, and to provide sound advice for future management of the site.

During her time working at Carsulae, Rebecca has developed invaluable skills and techniques for analysing ceramic artefacts, producing detailed technical drawings (both by hand and digitally), and researching comparative samples of ceramic artefacts in order to date the archaeological finds on site. This work contributed to publications on the archaeological data excavated at Carsulae by Associazione Culturale ASTRA Onlus and Dr Jaye McKenzie-Clark, as well as aiding in the development of future community interaction and engagement with the history of the ancient site, both in an academic and public setting.

Rebecca exhibits high-level practical, analytical, communication and management skills, abilities which have made her an invaluable member of the excavation team. She has made a valuable contribution to the understanding the history and significance of Carsulae. Her supervision of students has provided them with a firm understanding of the importance of archaeological research. Rebecca's experience and abilities are easily translatable to all aspects of archaeological fieldwork, both on a global scale and within her work in NSW.



Dr Matthew Kelly

January 2025

Rebecca Agius: Reference Letter for Nomination of Excavation Director Criteria NSW

Matthew Kelly has nearly 40 years' experience in archaeology and heritage management in both Australia and overseas. Matthew has conducted a large number of assessments and excavations for a variety of clients, from small site owners to major development/ construction companies and State and Commonwealth Government Departments.

Matthew's archaeological experience includes experience of test excavations, monitoring and open area excavation on sites of both local and State significance. In the course of his career, he has worked with teams of heritage professionals with skills such as artefact specialisation, palynology, surveying, geomorphology, materials conservation, forensic archaeology, oral historians and interpretation. Sites involving such teams included Fort Street Public School, Mick Simmons site, George Street, Sydney, Rouse Hill House, Rouse Hill, Palais Site Newcastle, Castle Hill Heritage Park, Castle Hill and Eora Creek Papua New Guinea (PNG). His work in conflict sites in PNG and France required Matthew to be conversant with Commonwealth heritage processes and assessment criteria as well as international standards in relation to archaeological excavations, assessments and work practices through his involvement with Australia ICOMOS and ICOFORT.

Matthew worked with and mentored Rebecca for close to 5 years during his employment at Curio Projects, working on a number of projects and excavations together.

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her understanding of the meaning (date, type, common application in the past) of basic artefacts and building material types likely to be encountered.

Rebecca has experience in identifying basic fabric types. She has demonstrated that she is familiar with all classes of historical artefacts likely to be encountered in historical archaeological excavations. Rebecca has been required to identify historical artefacts in deposits whilst on site, as well as being involved in historic post-excavation artefact analysis and assessment of significance of built heritage fabric.

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to recognise and interpret taphonomic processes and their meaning.

Rebecca has worked on several excavations that have provided both simple and more complex stratigraphy and taphonomic processes. As a result, she has gained experience in recording and interpreting taphonomic processes at all levels of excavation – trench, area and entire sites.

An example of this is the 2022-2023 Harbourside historical archaeological excavation, where her recognition and interpretation of taphonomic process in operation at the site allowed the successful mechanical clearance and removal of 1880 to 1980s railway surfaces and fills then demolition fills and shopping centre construction from the site without any harm to the significant archaeological deposits and features dating to the 1870s and earlier.

Secondary Excavation Director needs to demonstrate his/her ability to complete adequate recording of stratigraphy, soils, features without needing to re-excavate previous trenches, including provision of measured drawings and survey.

Rebecca has been responsible for the record keeping on a comprehensive range of projects involving all scales of record keeping from personal notebooks to computer accession of records on a daily basis. This work has not only involved the creation of written, photographic and graphic recording of archaeological features and deposits but also the maintenance of overall records for sites.

One example of a site Rebecca and Matthew worked on together, the Fort Street Public School excavations, Rebecca aided in the process of maintaining standard paper and digital photographic records of the open area excavation to expose the State significant cottage on the site and identify its location to site engineers for design of structural elements of the school that avoided impacts on the remains. Rebecca was also one of the personnel on site to provide scale plans of sample trenches across the site.

Other examples of excavations in which Rebecca has been responsible for record keeping include:

- Test and Salvage Excavations, 2021 – 2024, Lands Department, Sydney – Built
- Open Area Excavation, 2023, Harbourside, Darling Harbour – Mirvac
- Test Excavations, 2022, Harbourside, Darling Harbour – Mirvac
- Open Area Excavation, 2020 – 2022, Parramatta Powerhouse – INSW

Demonstrated ability to understand when it is necessary to change from machine to manual investigation.

As a part of her work under Matthew, Rebecca has been exposed to all levels of archaeological excavation process. This includes archaeological monitoring via machine excavation.

The Harbourside test and open area excavations provided various points in where machine excavation was conducted under the direction of Matthew and Rebecca (amongst other archaeologists throughout the project). During the testing phase, trenches were dug by machine to reach through deep layers of fill prior to reaching historical layers of stratigraphy. Once features, or bedrock, were encountered, hand excavation was required to reveal the exposed features to record via paper, digital photography and survey.

Rebecca was also responsible for overseeing the mechanical monitoring of the seabed once it had been dredged during open area excavation of the site. Features that were uncovered and hand excavated once revealed included sandstone slipways, wooden wharves and remnants of wooden boat frames.

Overall, Rebecca has proven herself to be a competent archaeologist who has developed her skills over a variety of excavation programs, covering archaeological monitoring, test excavation and salvage/open area excavation on sites that have unearthed both local and State significant archaeological relics and features.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matth' followed by a stylized monogram or initials.

Dr. Matthew Kelly