Ivar Nelsen

Ivar Nelsen is Manager, Historic Places for the Department of Natural Resources and Environment in Melbourne. Ivar has worked in the cultural heritage field for over 23 years in New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland and the ACT.

editorial

Multiculturalism and cultural diversity are ongoing themes in the history of Australia. While the terms themselves are recent, the coexistence of different races of people on the Australian continent is not new. Coexistence has not always been amicable and in the case of Aboriginal people, it was often violent. Somewhat scared, Australia has survived without the major conflicts seen elsewhere in the world as the result of the mixing of cultures.

The majority of the articles in this issue relate to postwar migrant cultural diversity. This has not been deliberate but reflects the response to Historic Environment's call for papers. It also reflects that sufficient time has now passed to make balanced assessments of cultural diversity during the postwar era. It is, possibly, too soon to begin to examine the impact of post Vietnam War Asian migration.

As a migrant myself, I found it sobering to see facts quoted in Helen Armstrong's article about the period of my arrival in Australia. This, however, is the essence of cultural diversity — it is more than just the consideration of places or objects, it is the sum of many personal endeavours. While patterns and figures can be observed, quantified and assessed over time, we as practitioners should not dismiss the very strong personal component in the study of cultural diversity.

In this issue Greg Young provides a stimulating challenge to our traditional concept of cultural diversity. This is followed by a series of articles on migrant and indigenous cultures. Helen Armstrong focuses on the appreciation and identification of migrant historic places and Rosemary Kornfeld provides an fine overview of both migrant and indigenous cultural diversity, with observations about the expression of cultural diversity in museums. Diana Chessell looks at 'The Parade' in Norwood, South Australia, as a cultural landscape. Megan Goulding complements Helen Armstrong's work by exploring the significance of Aboriginal sites in Victoria, while Paul and Lesley Jolly address the issue of conflicting cultural values at Silver Plains station in Queensland.

Cultural diversity is continually developing and ever changing. The physical remains reflecting cultures are but expressions of a fluid process — living traditions.