Imagined pasts..., imagined futures

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This volume of *Historic Environment* is the final of three thematic volumes inspired by discussions and debates that have been developed following the 2013 Australia ICOMOS Conference, *Imagined pasts…, imagined futures*. This conference took the imagining of the city of Canberra as stimulus for an event exploring how heritage participates in the ‘imagined communities’ and ‘imagined geographies’ of nations in a globalising world. The conference aimed to involve diverse communities of interest, connecting professionals, academics, activists and community members, and conservation practitioners with creative practitioners. The three volumes that have been developed following these initial meetings will, I believe, become landmark publications signalling new directions for heritage and conservation in Australia and beyond.

The conference had a strong focus on the future challenges and opportunities for communities and professionals committed to the conservation of culturally significant places and to understanding how and why individuals and groups make and experience heritage. This volume features papers that help to historicise heritage practice in Australia, that look beyond Australia to the Asia Pacific region and its changing geopolitical landscape, and outwards to the domain of World Heritage. These papers capture moments of debate and dialogue from the conference, as well as those that inspired discussion about the generative potential of practice-led theory.

On behalf of the conference committee, I express our thanks to the editors and contributors to this and the previous two themed volumes, for all their hard work in bringing these volumes to timely publication. The conference would not have been possible without the hard work of a tireless Conference Committee (Kirsty Altenburg, Sandy Blair, Kate Cowie, Celia Cramer, Anne Claque-Long, Edwina Jans and Juliet Ramsay) and without the generous support of our sponsors: the Australian Government through the Department of the Environment, the Museum of Australian Democracy, the Australian Capital Territory Government, University of Canberra, Lovell Chen, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, Rio Tinto, the Australian National University, Context, Ironbark Heritage, Canberra Museum and Art Gallery, GML Heritage, AHMS, Australian Council of National Trusts, Garden History Society, Heritage Council of Victoria, the National Capital Authority, the Getty Conservation Institute and Cityplan.

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