

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION.

## 18-20 CLARENCE STREET, PORT MACQUARIE. OPEN DAY, SATURDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2007.

### What have we found?

The archaeological team have now been digging for four weeks.

We have found a series of structures (see plan overleaf for numbered items).

#### 1. The 1830s house.

We have located the footings of the 1830s house on the Clarence Street frontage. The building has two large rooms, fireplaces and then smaller verandah sized rooms.

Some of the timber footings have survived. They were made from logs, split longitudinally, then laid with their flat side up. A slot may have been cut into the timbers to take the wall framing. The walls may have been slab built, but we have discovered so much yellow mud plaster that at least some of the walls must have been lath and plaster. We even find the small nails for attaching the laths to the timber framing or slabs.

At the rear of the house was an additional room. The corners are marked by brick piers and the door into the east end of the room is marked by a brick threshold.

#### 2. Detached kitchen.

Behind the 1830s house, the site of the detached kitchen is marked by a brick floor.

#### 3. Post-Office, 1820s.

The earliest structure on our site has also been the most elusive. We believe the Post Office

building, shown on the 1826 map is located directly beneath the brick floor of the detached kitchen. The wall lines are marked by wall slots in the soil. These originally held the timber wall members of the early structure.

#### 4. The 1920s house.

The third stage of development on the site was a house, built in the 1920s.

The timber framed house was supported on rows of timber piers. The regular layout of post-holes can be easily seen behind the 1830s house.

#### Todd Holden.

Since the 1950s, the site has been used as a petrol station and car mechanics workshops.

The concrete slab forecourt of this building has protected the archaeology beneath, except on the eastern side of the site. Here the hydraulic hoists in the workshops and the fuel tanks have cut through the earlier remains. Because the remains are poorly preserved, we will not be excavating in this area.

#### 5. The Brick Barrel Drain.

The drain across Clarence Street was built in the 1830s, as the street was laid out for the new town. We know the date because the headwall of the drain is parallel with Clarence Street, and not the earlier street layout.

#### 6. A landscaped garden.

It is not often that we find garden landscape features. Here we have a series of brick lined and rubble surfaced pathways around a circular garden, probably a formal rose garden or similar style of planting.

This garden belonged to the 1920s house.

#### Artifacts.

On all 19<sup>th</sup> century sites we find a whole range of artifacts, from crockery and tablewares, to

bottles, nails, bricks and other everyday items. In most cases this was the rubbish that they chucked out, but it tells us all we need to know about their lifestyle.

#### How do we know where to dig?

We have already done all the historical research, the assessment report and permit application.

Once we open up the site by machine, we can see all the archaeological deposits. Even if someone digs into the ground and backfills it immediately, the soil structure is changed. We look for those changes in soil structure, colour and texture. Often new soils and materials are introduced, which makes it even easier for the archaeologist to dig out features like post-holes, pits, trenches, wall slots and wells. We dig them layer by layer, giving artifacts a specific layer number, so we can date the features after analysis.

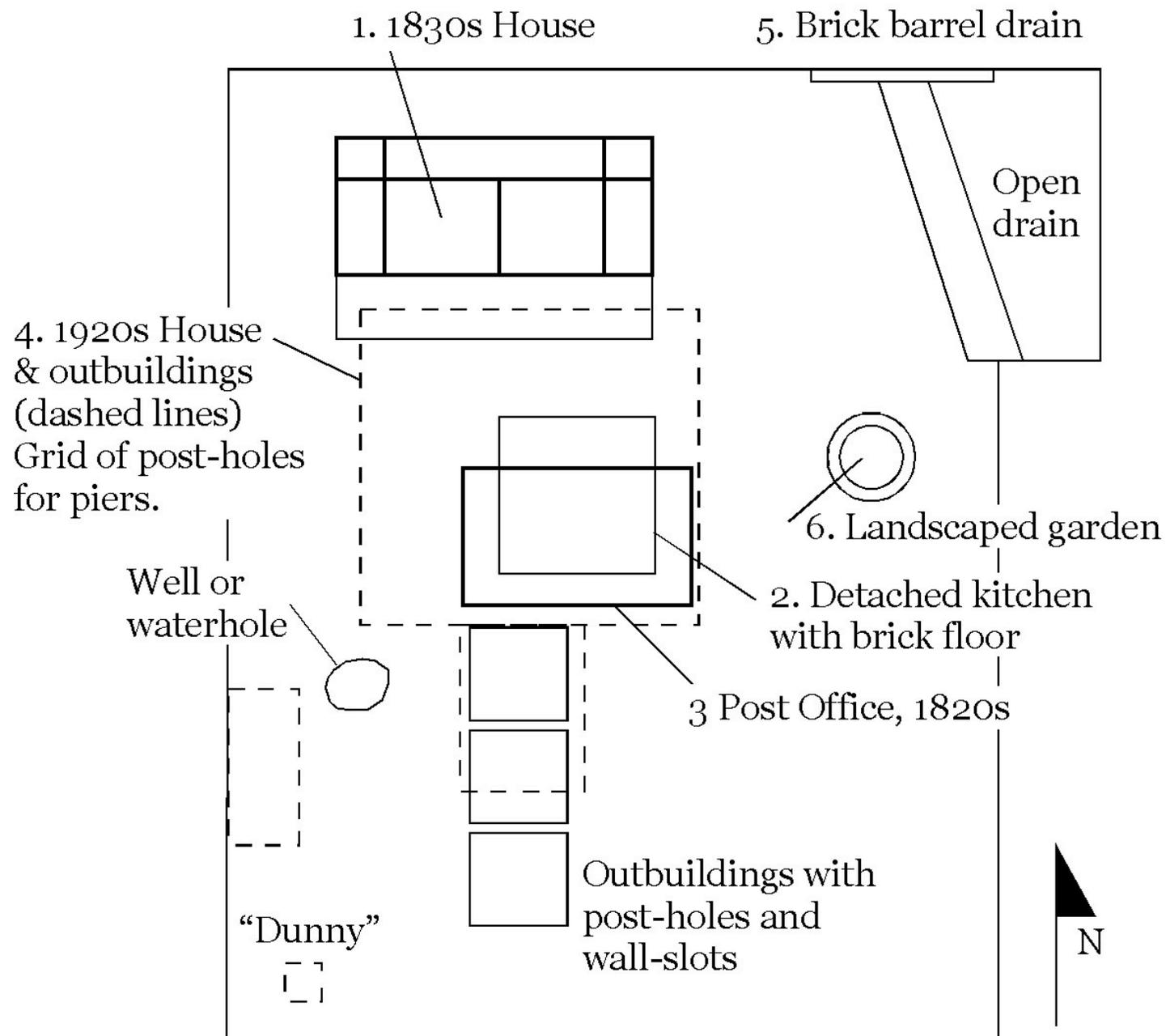
When you look at the archaeological site you can see many of the different soils, colours and materials that make up the features we are excavating.



*This is the way to dig...Get the staff to do it for you!*



The upper end of the brick barrel drain on Clarence Street, with the headwalls and wingwalls intact.



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