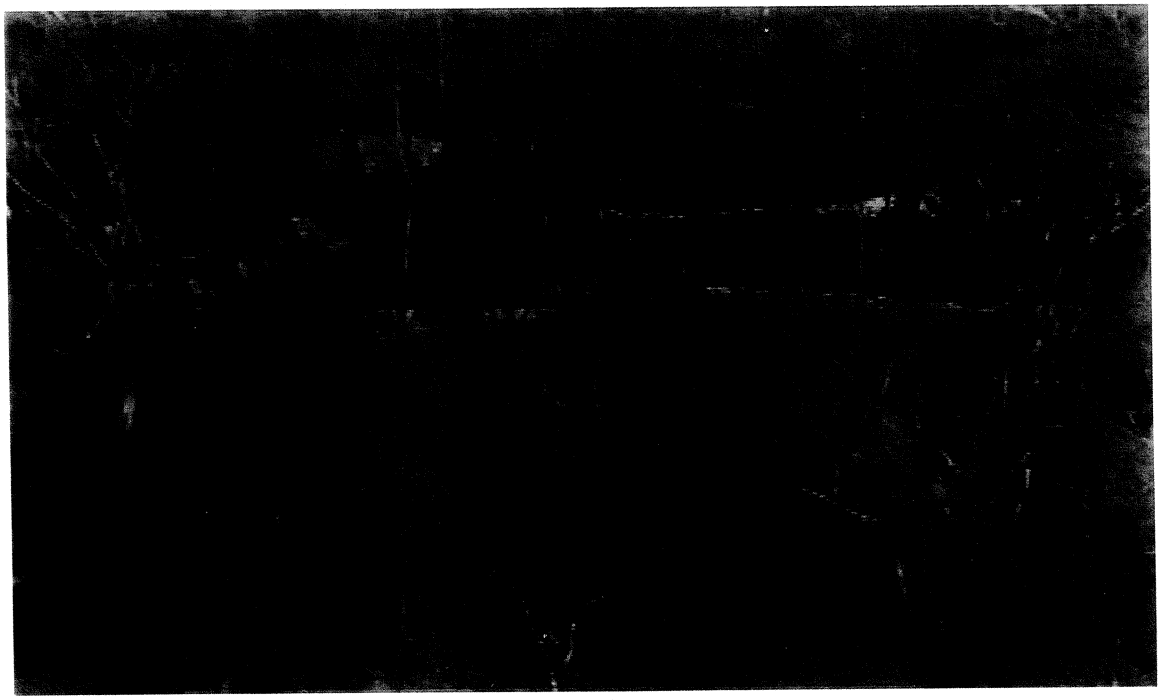

Frontispiece - At the top is an aerial view of Bulee Brook 2, the oldest known site in the NSW South Coast hinterland, seen from the north-east. The shelter lies at the base of the large sandstone outcrop on the right. Below is an aerial view of Bob's Cave, one of the largest rockshelters with archaeological deposit in the Budawang Ranges, and like Bulee Brook 2, a site that was first occupied during the Pleistocene. Both views are stills taken from video footage shot by Steve Barnes, Contact Television Productions.

DIDTHUL, BHUNDOO, GULAGA AND WADBILLIGA: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE ABORIGINALS OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES SOUTH COAST HINTERLAND

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Except where otherwise acknowledged,
this thesis represents my own work, all
responsibility for any errors herein is mine.

Philip Boot

VOLUME 1

To Anne, Amelia and James, for always being there.

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Field crew AG15 Blue Gum Flat - C4 class 1993 including Kylie Anderson, Steven Avery, Iain Brady, Chris Carter, Ian Coates, Julie Dixon, Kathy Dunn, Ian Farrington, Deirdre Jones, Jan Klaver, Renée Kroupa, David Leigh, Ingereth MacFarlane, Mary-Jane Mountain, Stewart Muir, Stephen O'Shea, Liliana del Pozo, Liz Smith, Joan Tanton, Jenny Tracey, Mike Tracey, Doug Wonders. Isabel McBryde and Andrée Rosenfeld visited during the excavation. Field crew Gnatilia Creek 3 - Iain Brady, Julie Dibden, Chris Martin, Rebecca Robinson and Diane Rutherford. Burrill Shelter 2 field crew - Chris Carter, Peter White. PK20 Buckenbowra field crew - Iain Brady, Phil Hunt and Steve Free. The site was visited during the excavation by Geoff Bailey, Ian Farrington and Tessa Raath. Bourke's Road 2 field crew - Jane Dickins, Alistair Grinbergs, Paul Griffiths, Tom Knight, David Leigh, Willow McGregor, Jackie Taylor. Field crew Kangaroo Hill 4 - Iain Brady, Stuart Huys, Kate Lemann, Doug Wonders. Field crew Rock Pool Shelter - Doug Williams (excavation supervisor), Edwina Jans, Nicole Livermore, Tessa Raath. Stuart Cohen and Sue Feary, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) visited during excavation. PW1 Tianjara field crew - Amanda Hirschfeld, Tessa Raath. Bulee Brook 2 field crew - Peter Kuskie, Bob Snedden, Duncan Snedden. BB2 excavation crew - Sam Wickman. Bob's Cave field crew - Tony Bushell, Phil Hunt, Peter Kuskie, Tessa Raath, Sam Wickman, Doug Williams, Doug Wonders. Visitors to the Bob's Cave excavation - Sue Feary NPWS, Ruth Leahy, Alan Norman, Senior Ranger, NPWS Ulladulla Sub-district, Bob Snedden and Duncan Snedden.

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Ink versions of site plans and stratigraphy diagrams drawn by me were produced by Charles Dearling and Peter Kuskie. Artefact drawings were produced by Winifred Mumford. All were produced with great skill.

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ABSTRACT

The hinterland of the NSW South Coast has long been considered a cultural heritage backwater in comparison to the adjacent coastal strip. While the coast has been a focus of intensive archaeological research for several decades, the forested hills, mountains and plateaux between the coastline and the tablelands have only been investigated by a small number of archaeologists. Paradoxically, many coastal researchers developed models of hinterland Aboriginal occupation without conducting any field research there. Before commencement of the research program described here, only two excavations had been completed in the South Coast hinterland, compared to over 20 on the adjacent coast. The research described in this thesis was developed to provide more balance between coastal and hinterland archaeological knowledge.

The research program included reviews of previous work, existing site distribution data and ethnohistoric records. An extensive fieldwork program of survey, excavation and artefact collection was also completed. The materials and data obtained in the field were subjected to a wide range of laboratory and computer analyses. An extensive radiocarbon dating program was also undertaken. The results discussed in the first nine chapters have been interpreted and synthesised in the final chapter to provide a preliminary prehistory of the South Coast hinterland.

Some of the major results have led to revision of many previously presented hypotheses, but others have withstood rigorous testing. The research has demonstrated that hinterland Aboriginal occupation was extensive and wide ranging, was probably not seasonal and has a late Pleistocene antiquity. The results also indicate that the intensity of hinterland occupation fluctuated geographically and temporally, possibly in relation to environmental change, local resource abundance, spiritual associations and as a result of Aboriginal economic and subsistence strategies.

The work has allowed the identification of preferred resource exploitation and inhabitation zones within the hinterland, which range from a Pleistocene preference for well watered and protected locations to a Holocene focus on highly biodiverse hinterland valley woodlands. The strategies used to exploit such environments have also been discussed. The research has shown that, although exchange networks were largely restricted to within the hinterland, the Aboriginal occupants had extensive social and ritual networks which linked them with coastal areas to the north, south and east and with the tablelands to the west.

Overall the research presented here indicates that Aboriginal people have successfully inhabited and exploited a diverse range of hinterland environments over many millennia. The descendants of those original inhabitants still maintain strong connections with the hinterland's unique cultural heritage.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volume 1

Volume 2

Volume 3

LIST OF CHAPTER SECTIONS

LIST OF TABLES

page

page

page

LIST OF FIGURES

page

page

page

page

page

page

page

page

LIST OF PLATES

page

page

LIST OF APPENDIX SECTIONS

page

LIST OF APPENDIX TABLES