**Transcript**

***Dr Richard Cosgrove – The Ice Age wallaby hunters***

I’m an archaeologist and I work with Aboriginal people mainly in Tasmania and north Queensland, particularly looking at their history and how they adapted to different climatic changes across the whole period of occupation of Australia, that is entire 50,000 years. So, it’s really looking at how people adapted and changed and what they did with their technology and how they hunted and these sorts of things are the prime aims to try and understand human behaviour in the past.

Because the past is a different place we usually think of Aboriginal people and behaviour in the present and it’s information created in the present but we need to try and think about how we can explain the deep past where we know nothing about it. It’s a strange place the deep past because nobody’s got any experience of it. And only Dr Who maybe have that ability to travel back in time and as archaeologists that’s what we do. We travel back in time and look at the rubbish that people’s thrown away to try and understand their behaviour.

One of the aims of my research is to try and understand the spread of modern humans across the globe and particularly in Australia it’s the last, I suppose the end point of that big expansion of modern humans out of Africa about 70,000 years ago. And people came out of Africa across the Indian sub-continent, into southeast Asia and came by boat to Australia. They had to create some sort of way in which to get across the water and then spread out through this vast continent which was at that time over 12 million square kilometres because Tasmania and New Guinea were connected to the mainland Australia at that time because the sea levels were lower. And so, once they spread out into the environments in Australia they faced many different challenges from the Ice Age in southern Tasmania where there was glaciers and snow to the tropics where it was much warmer and had different sorts of resources. And, indeed into the deserts which posed a great challenge for people coming from a tropical environment from southeast Asia to be able to colonise those areas. So, my research is looking at a broad scale the colonisation of this continent by modern humans.