**Transcript**

***Dr Susan Lawrence – Water use in the colonial gold rush***

I’m interested in the archaeology of the Victorian gold rush. It’s my real research interest. I’ve been working on that for a long time. At the moment I’m working on a project specifically looking at the use of water during the gold rush and the way that miners had to find sources of water so that they could extract the gold and there were lots of different ways that miners used water. Australia is a very dry continent, of course, and so what we’re really interested in is how they were able to adapt to that environment, to use some technology that they were familiar with from where they had come from in the UK or in China and their familiarity with moving water around the landscape, how they captured it, how they stored it and what that then meant for the rest of the development of the gold rush and for colonial Victoria.

We’re really looking to develop a better understanding of how people have adapted to the Australian environment in the past. The idea that difficult climates aren’t something new to Australia. It’s part of the way Australia is and even as recent migrants Europeans have had to be dealing with that for nearly 200 years now. So we’re really interested in how they have done that in the past so that we can better understand what we’re doing today and to make good long term choices for the way that we use the Australian environment.

We hope that the information that we’re developing, the understandings we’re developing will be especially relevant to the local community, the people that live in the Central Highlands region where we are doing our work. We’re working around Creswick and Castlemaine and Bendigo and help people up there to really understand, develop better knowledge of their local place and where they live so that they can understand the landscape in better terms. And yeah, just develop that long term knowledge about how people have always used water in those places.