

Artefacts reburied

By **MICHAEL MCGOWAN**

A SUBSTANTIAL collection of Aboriginal relics discovered at the site of the new \$130 million dollar Westrac development at Tomago were laid to rest during a ceremony on the site last week.

The relics, which number into the hundreds, were uncovered throughout the construction of the site, which stretches over 23 hectares.

The ceremony was attended by both Westrac officials and representatives from the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council and saw the burial of the artefacts on the site of a new memorial garden in the centre of the development.

Worimi CEO Andrew Smith said that among the artefacts were materials including grinding stones, axe heads and spear points.

"It only emphasises the true history and occupation of this land, it's a real eye opener to non Aboriginal people," he said.

"We're very thankful that they've [Westrac] stepped back from their corporate world and showed respect to the local Aboriginal people".

Westrac Chief Operating Officer Darren Tasker said the ceremony was about respecting the local people.

"For us it's about respect for the community that we're moving into.



RESPECT: Leigh Ridgeway and Aaron Taylor of Karuah during the ceremony.

"It's a new development and we've got to show respect for our neighbours," he said.

Worimi Elder John Ridgeway said the gesture was "very important" to the local Aboriginal community.

"These artefacts were important to the Aboriginal people," he said,

"They are the shelters where they gathered to have meals and the rocks they used to cut their food."