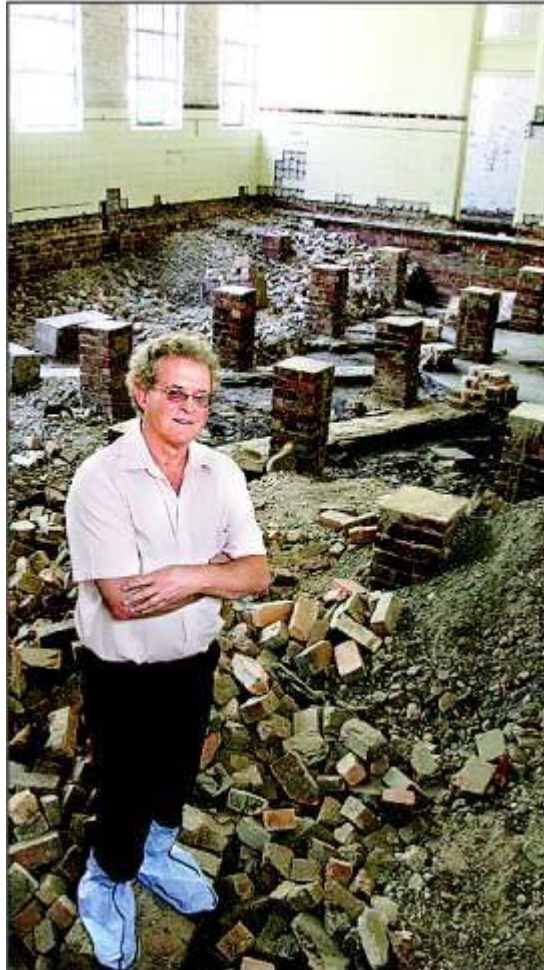




Dig frees jail ghosts



Unearthed: RMIT's Ron Crellin in the old jail's exercise yard. Picture: STUART MILLIGAN

THE original foundations of the Old Melbourne Gaol have been unearthed, giving a rare insight into the primitive conditions prisoners endured in the 19th century.

The find comes as archaeologists inspected the \$22 million make-over of RMIT's Emily McPherson building, on the corner of Franklin and Victoria streets, which will be the new home for the graduate school of business.

Parts of the circular exercise yard, watch tower and stone walkways from the prison governor's private garden — all constructed in the 1860s and built over since the 1920s — have been uncovered.

Traces of shelters, paving, drains and footings of the main blue-stone boundary wall and chief warden's house were also unearthed.

Professor John Toohy, head of RMIT's graduate school of business, said the find was significant and the university hoped to incorporate this history into the redevelopment of the site.

He said the university would look at laying a transparent floor over the exercise yard ruins.