



2005 Public Lecture Series

Wednesday 20 July 2005

7.30 pm, Manning Clark Theatre 6, ANU

AXES AND ARE

stone tools of the duna and their implications

PETER WHITE

I made this film in the 1970's in the Western Highlands of PNG, among people who grew up using stone tools. I will discuss the uses of such studies in archaeology, in particular what finding such simple tools in complex agricultural societies tells us about the history of form and specialisation of tools in human history.



Peter White in the Flinders Ranges

Peter White is an Honorary Associate (sometime Reader) in Archaeology at the University of Sydney. Most of his research has been carried out in Papua New Guinea.

All welcome, entry is by gold coin donation at the door.

Please join us afterwards for light supper and a chat – find out how 'down to earth' archaeologists really are.

Professor Sprigg's Missing Head

Earlier in the year we had a lecture, Teouma (Vanuatu): The Oldest Pacific Island Cemetery And Its Missing Heads, by Professor Mathew Spriggs. Currently in his second season at the site, Professor Spriggs has uncovered even more unique finds. There have been several complete Lapita pots (you may remember from the lecture that they are usually found with the bottom broken), but the most incredible find comes from the inside of the pots. The missing heads! The Port Villa Presse (www.news.vu) reports on the new finds and is well worth a look.



POTTIER LECTURE AT AGNSW

Who: Dr Christophe Pottier, Director, École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Siem Reap.

What: "From the first millennium BC to early Angkor: Research in the West Baray, Angkor."

When: Thursday, 21st July, 2-3pm.

Where: Art Gallery of New South Wales, Centenary Auditorium.

Contact: Martin Polkinghorne (mpol0426@mail.usyd.edu.au) for further details.

2005 Lecture Series

7.30pm in Manning Clark Theatre 6 (unless specified)

Date	Speaker	Title
16 March	Mal Booth	Fire Support Patrol Base Coral: Using Material Culture to Reveal What Happened One Night in May, 1968.
20 April	Mike Austin	Environmental catastrophes: new lessons from history?
18 May	Dr Josephine Flood	The Aboriginal Story in the ACT from deep past to moth hunting
15 June	Kim Owens	Farmers, Fishers and Whalers: The settlement landscape of Lord Howe Island
20 July	Peter White	Axes and Are: stone tools of the Duna and their implications
17 August	Richard Hekimian	Edlington's Cottage: The CAS dig at the Duntroon Dairy
21 September	Kath Szabo	The Ebb and flow of tradition in an island world: Shell beads in island Southeast Asia
19 October	Mike Morwood	Little Women: discovery of a new human species in Indonesia and the consequences.
16 November	Peter Dowling	Archaeology and the ANZACs

Call for contributions

We've had a few articles written by CAS members for Old News...have you got something archaeologically interesting to say? An anecdote? A joke?...contact the editor at the details below....seriously, this is your newsletter, and it can only be as interesting as you make it!

Ad Space

Got anything archaeological to advertise? If you know of, or are running fieldwork this year and you need volunteers, or you want to volunteer for work, then drop us a line, and we'll advertise it for you in Old News. Websites and archaeological events are also welcome!

2005 CAS COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President	Sylvia Schaffarczyk	sylvia.schaffarczyk@anu.edu.au C/- School of Archaeology and Anthropology, ANU ACT 0200
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CAS trip to Joadja.



The committee has arranged a trip to the old abandoned Shale mining township at Joadja on **Sunday 17 July, 2005**. The township itself contains a wide range of remains, ranging from houses to a hotel stables and much of the mining and refinery buildings. Some of you may recall that CAS members and supporters did some archaeological work on the town remains in the late 1990's and produced a large report on some of the sites. In addition, we had a talk on our work and the history of the place given by Rob May, a previous president, and by Leonie Knapman, who has spent most of her life researching and writing on the site.



House remains at Joadja

Since our work there, the township has acquired a new owner and become a tourist attraction. Usually this means it costs money to visit. However, the owner is aware of our work there and has offered us a **FREE** tour. The site is in the hills to the



Remains of Joadja Bakery

west of Mittagong and reached by the Joadja Road just beyond the northern end of the town. It is about a two half hours drive from Canberra.

The trip is currently planned for members to make their own way to the site. If necessary we can probably provide shared car travel for those needing transport. We should meet at the Joadja visitor's centre by eleven am on **Sunday July 17**. Once there the owner will then take us for a guided tour of the site for several hours. After that we can have lunch and look at the place on our own. Members should provide their own lunches.

So that we can get an idea of numbers it would be useful if potential participants could get in contact via email contact@cas.asn.au or the contact officer (Kristie - see previous page).



Main street of the Joadja Township

LOOKS LIKE A PILE OF COPROLITES TO ME!

Towards a standardised description of coprolites



There is a field of archaeology that many feel uncomfortable getting their hands into: coprolites, or fossilised faeces. This may explain why a team from l'Université de Perignan in France are having difficulties in getting archaeologists to properly describe the ancient excrement.

In an article in the Journal of Archaeological Science, Françoise Jouy-Avantin and team, put forward a data sheet for the description of coprolites in the hope that this highly specialised field of research can develop a standardised classification system. This idea is especially important in coprolite studies as most forms of analysis involve destroying the fossil of interest. Breaking up a coprolite can provide a vast amount of information such as the diet of the producer or even the ecology of the area it lived in. Unfortunately most specialists forget that a coprolite is not just a specimen for analysis – it is, first and foremost, an archaeological find, so proper description is a must if it is to provide any relevant information.

To this end the data sheet has five sections.



The first section locates the coprolite in time and space and so is treated just like any other artefact. This helps to define the boundaries of research such as what animals and plants lived in the area at a certain time. The second section looks at the external descriptions such as colour and shape. Examining the constriction

marks of a coprolite can tell us 'how it came out', so to speak, which provides clues as to the animal of origin. Any other visible marks are also important because insects can often leave a distinctive mark on a fresh deposit that may be picked up when the fossilised remains are studied. Thirdly an internal description of the coprolite is made by breaking up the sample to determine texture and hardness. It is recommended that a glove be used for this procedure – you would not want to contaminate the sample. The fourth section includes any specialised analysis that is performed. These usually identify the contents and can even use reconstructed DNA to determine the sex of the producer. Paul Bahn has suggested that there are some specialists who can identify the contents of a reconstituted coprolite by smell alone – tasting is not recommended. Finally the report should finish, if possible, with the identification of the animal that produced the coprolite.

When a large data collection is complete the researchers hope that coprolites will be able to be grouped according to morphotypes that can then be linked to specific animals. The need for such a system can be found in sites where both dogs and humans co-existed as their coprolites are very similar in both size and contents.



Joke o' the weak

From <http://www.shef.ac.uk/assem/3/3jokes.htm>

**A depressed archaeologist in Siberia,
Suffered from mild hysteria
When he found on a dig
A prehistoric pig,
And now he couldn't be cheerier.**



CANBERRA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Canberra Archaeological Society was formed in 1963 to cater for the needs of all people interested in archaeology. The Society holds monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of each month (Feb to Nov). Meetings are held in Lecture Theatre 6 of the Manning Clark Theatres at 7.30pm.

Membership Application 2005 – Canberra Archaeological Society

Name(s):

Address:

Phone:

Email (if you wish to receive society announcements):

Circle YES to receive your newsletter via email

Please circle membership type: **Family \$40** **Single \$30** **Concession \$20**

Please return membership form with payment to:

The Treasurer, Canberra Archaeological Society
LPO Box A86
Australian National University
Canberra ACT 2601

Cheques should be made payable to: CANBERRA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY INC.