



## 2005 Public Lecture Series

Wednesday 18 May 2005

7.30 pm, Manning Clark Theatre 6, ANU

# *The Aboriginal Story in the ACT from deep past to moth hunting*

by

**Dr Josephine Flood**

Using archaeological sites, from the 21,000-year-old Birrigai rock-shelter to campsites and rock paintings associated with Aboriginal feasting on Bogong moths, Dr Josephine Flood will reconstruct the story of Aborigines in the Canberra region.

*Dr Josephine Flood did her PhD at ANU, published in a book 'The Moth Hunters'. Subsequently she has published another three books, the best known being 'Archaeology of the Dreamtime'. She has also published a booklet on 'Moth Hunters of the ACT'.*

**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.

# The Travelling Archaeologist

Episode 2

Fenja Thedan



For those lucky enough to have visited Lake Mungo and the Willandra Lakes World Heritage area of Australia, the memories of this hauntingly beautiful place will remain for a lifetime. Vast plains, fiery red sunsets, and abundant cultural remains, maintaining a continuous record of human occupation stretching back tens of thousands of years.



A lag deposit usually not open to the public during the CAS trip to Lake Mungo

A trip to the Mungo National park can be incredibly rewarding – I am told the CAS trip to Mungo last year was an absolutely fascinating experience! Yet as a private visitor, I am afraid that the wonderful luxury of a host of knowledgeable indigenous guides and rangers is not usually part of the itinerary; one may browse through the visitor centre, drive along the self-guided

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## 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.**

# 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?
<b>18 May</b>	<b>Dr Josephine Flood</b>	<b>The Aboriginal Story in the ACT from deep past to moth hunting</b>
15 June	Kim Owens	Farmers, Fishers and Whalemen: 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	TBA
21 September	Kath Szabo	The Ebb and flow of tradition in an island world: Shell beads in island Southeast Asia
19 October	Mike Morwood	TBA
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

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loop of the lake, and enjoy kid's entertainment at the campground in the evenings. No mention of this being the home of possibly the world's oldest cremation, not even on the National Parks website. On the other hand, for many people (especially archaeology students!) Mungo is simply a remote, much debated archaeological site, swamped with technical arguments which emphatically argue back and forth over how many tens of thousands of years old the Mungo Lady and the Mungo Man are.

I want to introduce an important theme rarely mentioned in the academic literature, luckily more so at the Mungo site itself. And that is, what type of relationship exists between the scientific (and predominantly white Australian) community and the Aboriginal communities of the area. What are some little facts virtually unknown in the general community, yet vital to the development or maintenance of these relations?



Local Aboriginal guides show the CAS group an exposed shell midden

According to Alan Thorne, the archaeologist who led the excavation of the Lake Mungo III remains in the 1970s and who has been involved in the dating debate since this time, relations are exemplary and decision-making is almost entirely in Aboriginal hands (Thorne, pers comm). It turns out that the Mungo Lady (burial I) is not boxed away in a museum far from home, but is actually housed in a small safe at the Mungo Ranger Station. And to bring Mungo even closer to the CAS community: the bulk of the material, including the Mungo Man (burial III), is held at the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the ANU. To make it fair to all, there are only two keys to these safes: one is in the hands of an aboriginal representative, the other is in the hands of a representative of the scientific community and custodian on behalf of the indigenous community, Alan Thorne.\*

As the CAS expedition last year was lucky enough to experience firsthand, indigenous involvement in the affairs of its cultural heritage is optimal at Mungo, and respect for Aboriginal traditions and culture is ever increasing at sites such as this. Perhaps the focus of further publications should be on the indigenous aspect of the ancient remains. To Aboriginal beliefs, is a date of 45,000 years or of 62,000 years so very important? Have they not lived in this country since the beginning of time?

\* Information reproduced with permission of Dr Alan Thorne, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU

## 2005 Excavation of Knight's Folly - Darwin

I am a post-graduate student at Charles Darwin University doing Historical Archaeology and will be undertaking an excavation from July until mid September.

The site, situated in Darwin city, is where John George Knight built Darwin's first 2 storey house in 1884. I excavated for 3 months last year locating some foundations, stone and concrete steps and numerous other interesting varied levels of concrete floors and a dump. Hundreds of artefacts were collected.



I am seeking volunteers for this final season, asking people to offer whatever time they can. I do not receive any funding so cannot assist with airfares or accommodation. I am happy to find affordable accommodation, pick up from the airport, and take to and from the site. I do offer a delightful venue, refreshments and fun company.

Thanking you,

Julie Mastin  
E-mail [juliemastin@iinet.net.au](mailto:juliemastin@iinet.net.au)

## The Depths of Humour

Thanks to Denise Sutherland for this one...

After digging to a depth of 10 metres last year, Russian Archaeologists found traces of copper wire dating back 1000 years, and came to the conclusion that their ancestors already had a telephone network one thousand years ago.

So, not to be outdone, in the weeks that followed, American archaeologists dug 20 metres and headlines in the US papers read: "US archaeologists have found traces of 2000 year old optical fibres, and have concluded that their ancestors already had advanced high-tech digital telephone 1000 years earlier than the Russians."

One week later, the Australian newspapers reported the following: "After digging as deep as 50 metres, Australian archaeologists have found absolutely nothing. They have concluded that 5000 years ago, their ancestors were already using wireless technology