



Canberra Archaeological Society Inc

Monthly Newsletter **Old News**

May 2010

Canberra Archaeological Society/Centre for Archaeological Research

Public Lecture

Manning Clark Theatre 6

7:30pm Wednesday 19th May 2010

The Big Dig site & the Sydney Harbour YHA at The Rocks: conserving our historic heritage

Trish Saunders

Sydney's Rocks district was one of the first areas to be settled after 1788. Its earliest European residents were mainly convicts and ex-convicts. During the nineteenth century, it developed into a densely populated neighbourhood which came to be regarded as a "slum". Demolitions were carried out in the early years of the twentieth century.

In 1994, Sydney Cove Authority decided to investigate a large, open, paved area between Cumberland and Gloucester Streets in The Rocks. The archaeological excavation generated enormous public interest and became known as 'The Big Dig'. It uncovered the remains of 46 separate buildings and over 730,000 artefacts and gave a rich insight into that part of our history.

In 2006 Youth Hostels Australia (NSW) won the right to develop the site. The archaeological remains had to be protected and open to the public, but the development also had to be commercially viable. YHA built an innovative youth hostel and education centre supported above the site on steel pillars, allowing the archaeological remains to be extensively viewed from inside and outside the building. Panels and displays interpret the site to guests and passersby. Hands-on education programs at The Big Dig Archaeology Education Centre cater for school students and other groups.

Trish Saunders is a long-time member of CAS and a consultant archaeologist with her own business, specialising in Indigenous archaeology. She was inspired to give this talk after visiting the new Sydney Harbour YHA and the fantastic heritage site it protects and interprets.

Up Coming Events, Conferences & Tours

The School of Cultural Inquiry,
Film & New Media Studies and
Classics & Ancient History Programs

present

A public lecture by

Dr Arthur Pomeroy (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)

8.00 pm, Wednesday 12 May 2010

Haydon-Allen Tank, Australian National University

The gaze of the past: the invention of the Peplum (Italian sword and sandal films 1958–65)

Dr Art Pomeroy is coming to the ANU next week to lecture to our Ancient History course, *The ancient world in film*. The Friends have taken advantage of his presence to invite him give a public lecture on one his favourite subjects, Italian “peplum” movies. This should be an entertaining event, which will also address issues of how we in the modern world shape our ideas about the world of classical antiquity.



NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY WEEK

Sunday 16th to Saturday 22nd

Check out the website: <http://www.archaeologyweek.com>

Tell all your friends and if you can help with any activity, please let us know.



Manning Clark Theatre 6,
Tuesday 18th May 2010 7.30pm

Stone tools, ethnographic artefacts and photographs –
George Horne's 1922 Lake Eyre collections?

David Kaus is a senior curator in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs at the National Museum of Australia. David holds an Honours degree in Archaeology from the ANU and a Masters degree in Cultural Heritage Management from the University of Canberra. He has had a long association with the National Museum's Indigenous collections and has published two books and several articles on them.

David has recently commenced detailed research on Horne's collection and his talk will focus on material acquired during a trip to Mungeranie on the Birdsville track in 1922. While at Mungeranie Horne recorded information about stone tools and wooden implements directly from local Aboriginal people which led to the publication of a book with George Aiston, *Savage Life in Central Australia*, in 1924. David will discuss the information Horne recorded and show images of artefacts from Horne's collection and photographs taken during Horne's trip.

Gold coin donation : Contact Helen Cooke 0408 443 243



The ANU Co-op Bookshop, in conjunction with the Canberra Archaeological Society and the Centre for Archaeological Research, are pleased to invite you to the launch of

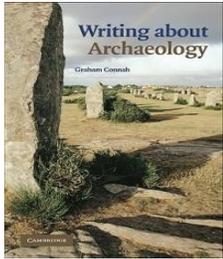
Prof Graham Connah's new book
Writing About Archaeology.

Wednesday, 19th May 2010 at
5pm for a 5:30pm start
The ANU Co-op Bookshop, Union Court, ANU
Refreshment will be served

Please RSVP by 17th May to anu@coop-bookshop.com.au or (02) 6249 6244

'Writing About Archaeology' reviewed by

Helen Cooke, President Canberra Archaeological Society



Graham explains in the preface that this is not a 'manual of instructions' but his own reflections after over 50 years of writing about archaeology. Who better than Graham to take us through the history of the writing of archaeology? If you read the conversation with Graham written by Ted Higginbotham in Volume 19 of the ASHA Journal you will know that he has been interested in archaeology since he was a lad and followed opportunities wherever he could to gain experience in the field.

Graham dedicates this volume to an historian; but archaeologists are also writing history, using more tools than other historians. We too need to make the story interesting for the reader or we are failing in our role as researchers and educators. This book will interest not only archaeologists but historians and the general interest reader, and will be just as useful to authors in any discipline. Graham shines through as a skilled raconteur and teacher, capturing our interest while imparting gems of wisdom on writing techniques for different situations. He illustrates this technique by using historical research and anecdotes about the famous and the fortunately obscure, drawn from his long and varied career. Graham is not frightened to reveal his own experiences. For example, once the distinguished archaeologist, Mortimer Wheeler, made disparaging remarks over Graham's excavation at Lake Chad – not of his excavation technique, of course, which as always would have been impeccable, but of the content.

Graham tells us early on page five that: 'Writing archaeology for publication is a skill that has to be learned'. There are no magical shortcuts; he draws the parallel of learning the balancing skills to ride a bicycle while still moving forward. He also explains that there have been and still are many styles of writing archaeology and in his very readable and gripping style Graham takes us through the early antiquaries who preceded the discipline of archaeology, but began 'the heavy reliance' ... 'on the visual presentation of material culture' which is 'an integral part of archaeological writing' but less common in writing history. Snippets from many sources, including John Aubrey, William Stukeley and Thomas Jefferson, illustrate the development of the descriptive, analytical and interpretive methods which have been expanded in archaeological writing. Graham's study of the different styles of the early greats in archaeology provides a link to the tradition he has established in Australian historical archaeology, not only his excellent articles on particular sites and books, but the fine scholarship still maintained in the ASHA Journal.

This book is a thoroughly good read, almost a ripping yarn. Come along to the launch at 5pm on Wednesday 19th May at the ANU Co-op Bookshop and hear more and buy your autographed copies. Graham Connah is a Visiting Fellow in the School of Archaeology and Anthropology at the Australian National University in Canberra. A scholar of the archaeology of Africa and Australia and a member of the Canberra Archaeological Society. He is the author of eight books and founded the Journal Australasian Historical Archaeology. Graham is a life member and past President of CAS

'Writing about Archaeology': Graham Connah

Cambridge University Press, 2010

Saturday 22nd May

2.00 – 4.00 pm

Visit to archaeological sites at Gungahlin:
The Ginninderra Blacksmith's Shop and 'The Valley' homestead.

Peter Dowling will tell us about the history, results of excavations and conservation saga of the Blacksmith's shop, with some good news this year due to interest from our Chief Minister.

Helen Cooke will then tell us the history of 'The Valley' homestead, the past residents and the plans for conservation.

Meet at the Ginninderra Blacksmiths Shop, Barton Highway, Nichols at 2pm. Take the unsealed entrance towards the Golf Club maintenance depot (south of Gold Creek Road) on the left hand side heading towards the city.

We will arrive at 'The Valley' about 3pm and we can then all retire to the George Harcourt around 4pm for a beverage and discussion of what roles CAS can play in conserving and presenting these historic places – or the footy scores or any other topic that strikes us.



STOPPRESS

Good News from the ACT Budget

The ACT Government has allocated \$730,000 for conservation programmes to Ginninderra Blacksmiths Workshop, The Valley Ruin, Tralee and Couranga Homesteads and Cargill's Cottage at Dairy Flat, Fyshwick.

CAS and the National Trust have lobbied strongly for conservation works to be done for these places. Another \$150,000 will go to restore the Shearing Shed at Mulligans Flat to be used as an educational and visitor centre



Friday 28 May 2010
Sydney Historical Archaeology
Professionals Workshop (SHAP) 2010

Presented by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and the Heritage Branch, NSW Department of Planning, and supported by Biosis Research, the Sydney Historical Archaeology Professionals Workshop (SHAP) 2010 will take place on **Friday 28 May 2010** at the Big Dig Archaeological Education Centre, Sydney Harbour YHA, Gloucester Street, The Rocks NSW 2000.

SHAP 2010 will focus on the *in situ* conservation and on site interpretation of archaeological sites, and will provide a forum for members of the Sydney historical archaeology community to get together to network, share ideas, and learn about the latest developments in *in situ* conservation and on site interpretation.

SHAP 2010 has been scheduled to coincide with the recently opened Sydney Harbour Youth Hostel on the site of the 1994 and subsequent archaeological excavations at Cumberland/Gloucester Streets, otherwise known as the “The Big Dig” site, and will take place the Friday following National Archaeology Week.

Confirmed speakers include: **Tracy Ireland**: Why *in situ*; **Liz Holt**: *in situ* constraints; **Wayne Johnson**: The Rocks; **Sam Moody & Monique Galloway**: Ballast Point; **Siobhan Lavelle**: Parramatta Justice Precinct; **Denis Gojak**: on site interpretation at Old Marulin; **Sarah Ward**: *in situ* underwater; and **Pamela Kottaras** will lead the closing discussion

Registrations close 21 May 2010.

<http://www.archaeologyweek.com/states/nsw.php>

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HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKSHOP 3RD JULY

The next joint Historical Archaeological Workshop will be on the 3rd of July.

More information on this in the next issue but keep the date free.

It will be held at the University of Canberra.

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Gold! Gold! Gold!

Adelong/Kiandra Trip

19-20 June 2010

On Saturday and Sunday 19-20 June CAS will be running a self-drive trip to Adelong and Kiandra. After stopping in Gundagai to view some of its history; we shall travel through Tumbalong to Adelong, one of the largest goldfields in N.S.W. Adelong was gazetted as a goldfield in 1855. Its rush accelerated after the discovery of reef gold in 1857. Several of the town buildings from the goldfields era still exist. At Adelong Falls we shall look at the restoration and interpretive work done at the extensive gold-mining ruins. We intend staying overnight in the Adelong area, perhaps sampling the epicurean delights of the Adelong Services Club. We have also been promised a welcoming barbecue. There is a choice of accommodation in the Adelong – Tumut area. The Golden Gulley Caravan Park, Adelong has 2-bedroom self-contained cabins, accommodating up to 6 people. For those who appreciate higher prices, there is high-standard bed and breakfast at Beaufort House, Adelong.

On Sunday 20 June we'll visit the ghost-town of Kiandra, where gold was discovered in 1859. The town quickly grew up and then declined. The courthouse is currently undergoing restoration. We'll look at the layout of the town, water race, mullock heap etc.

Cost: As much as you like. This is a self-drive, self-catering trip. Please let us know as soon as possible if you want to attend. The sooner we book; the easier it will be to get accommodation nearby. Please let us know your accommodation requirements, and if you require a lift or are prepared to offer one.

Enquiries John Bundock 623 17699, 0400249429, j.bundock@homemail.com.au.

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CAS at Elm Grove

During the recent Canberra and Region Heritage Festival members of the Canberra Archaeological Society conducted a very popular practice excavation for kids. The site was at the open day celebrations at the heritage listed Elm Grove property in northern Gungahlin.

A 1x2 metre pit was dug out three weeks before the festival and then filled with a variety of household and farming artefacts together with marsupial bones collected nearby. All the material was of a kind that would have been expected to have been deposited in a rural property in the southern highlands. The kids were given basic instructions on how to excavate, sieve, bag and label the artefacts they found. The only departure from standard archaeological practice (other than the loss of any stratigraphic control) was that the kids could take home the artefacts they excavated. Apart from the food and ice cream venues at Elm Grove the archaeological excavation was the most popular activity throughout the day.

At the end of a very 'productive' excavation three very weary CAS members, Helen, Trish and Peter, backfilled, packed up and struggled home. Hopefully we have impressed the kids of the fun it is to excavate and maybe there will be one or two future archaeologists who did their first dig at Elm Grove.



Some budding Archaeologists



Advertisement for Archaeological Geophysical Surveys

Hunter Geophysics is a Melbourne-based business providing archaeological geophysical surveys throughout Australia. The director, having worked on numerous digs while studying his archaeology degree, saw the need for an improvement in the accessibility of geophysical services for Australian archaeology. Geophysics is a means of detecting buried objects. Originally developed for detecting the presence of buried minerals, archaeologists have adapted geophysical techniques over the last few decades, allowing the rapid and low-cost detection and mapping of buried archaeology. Hunter Geophysics provides geophysical and other forms of archaeological prospection, such as earthwork analysis and oblique near-infrared photography.

By assessing the potential for archaeology, our services can speed up excavations and make cultural management plans more effective protectors of Australia's heritage.

Email : hunter.geofizz@gmail.com Web : <http://huntergeophysics.eb2a.com>

Websites



Acton Walkways

Want to learn more about the history and culture of Acton and Lake Burley Griffin and enjoy a walk?

www.actonwalkways.com.au

Two fossilized skeletons that could rewrite the story of human evolution have been unveiled, after their age was confirmed by a geologist working in Melbourne

<http://www.theage.com.au/technology/sci-tech/two-million-years-link-a-rock-and-a-new-species-20100408-rv3n.html?autostart=1>

International Journal of Cultural Property

Volume 17 - Issue 01 - February 2010

[PDF version of this Table of Contents](#)

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=JCP>

Historic Gardens

Interested in historic gardens? Try the website of the Australian Historic Garden Society and see their tours and winter lecture series

www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

Preserving National Art and Heritage Symposium

'Between Creation and the Collections Institutions' - Symposium

Melbourne Convention Centre

Thursday 3rd June 2010

Further information: Phone: 02 9454 2444

E-mail: pmaustralia@pmi.org

ASHA Conference 2010

The website for the Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology (ASHA) conference to be held

Thursday 30 September to Saturday 2 October 2010 in Brisbane is now available at

<http://socialscience.uq.edu.au/asha-2010>. Details of venues, registration costs, accommodation and transport options are available.