

Old News

February 2010

Canberra Archaeological Society/Centre for Archaeological
Research

First Public Lecture for 2010

Manning Clark Theatre 6

7:30pm Tuesday 23rd February

Matthew Spriggs

Corpses and Cone-Shell Anklets:

Wrap-up of the 2009 Teouma Lapita Cemetery Excavations, Vanuatu.

Prof. Spriggs gives a wrap-up both of the progress of the excavations and of the many analyses that are ongoing and yielding more surprising findings about Vanuatu's first inhabitants of 3000 years ago. More skeletons were excavated in 2009, including two - a woman and an older child - who had conus shell ring ornaments around their ankles. This is the first time that Lapita ornaments have ever been found in place on a body, showing how they were worn in death - and presumably in life.

Prof. Matthew Spriggs was appointed to a Professorship in the School of Archaeology and Anthropology in 1997. Since 2004 he has co-directed excavations with Dr Stuart Bedford of the College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP), ANU at the Teouma site, just outside of Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu. This is the oldest cemetery yet found in the Pacific Islands and contains the earliest burials of the Lapita culture, the founding human settlers of the Pacific Islands beyond the main Solomons chain, including Polynesia. Prof. Spriggs is interested in Pacific and Island SE Asian archaeology, history of archaeology and the Cornish language.

Following are the dates for CAS/CAR public lectures

Third Wednesday every month

March 17	April 21	May 19
June 16	July 21	August 18
September 22	October 20	November 17

Please note these dates in your diary

2010 MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE

Help us keep the Society viable

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Up Coming Events, Conferences & Tours



THE ANU (CANBERRA) FRIENDS OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE AT ATHENS

Professor Jacques Perreault

Professor of Greek Archaeology at the University of Montreal, Canada

THURSDAY 25 FEBRUARY, 8.00PM, AEGEAN ROOM, HELLENIC CLUB

Pottery production increased greatly during the archaic period in the Greek world and we know of many different styles and production centres. Unfortunately, very few pottery workshops of this period have been found. This lecture will present the results of the excavation of one of these where, apart from the impressive quantity of vases uncovered, all structures necessary to the production of pottery have been found.

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The Australian National University Public Lecture Series is part of their commitment to community outreach. Public lectures make ANU accessible and available to the local ACT and regional community by hosting some of the world's top academics, scholars, public figures, artists and theorists.

A full list of public lectures <http://billboard.anu.edu.au/events.asp>.

or look for the ANU Events Calendar in The Canberra Times on Saturdays.

If you miss a public lecture then all is not lost- download the lecture and watch and/or listen to it at home.

<http://www.anu.edu.au/discoveranu/content/podcasts/>

If you would like to be notified of upcoming ANU Public Lectures sign up using the online form at

<https://apollo.anu.edu.au/default.asp?pid=3573> for weekly email updates.

Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific Studies (AAAPS) 3rd Conference
'Oceanic Transformations' at the Victoria University Conference Centre, Melbourne, 8 – 11 April 2010

Contacts: helen.gardner@deakin.edu or jonathan.ritchie@deakin.edu.au.

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Palmerville Heritage Signage Launch



Lionel Moore, Marilyn Folger and Chief Minister and Minister for Arts and Heritage, Mr Jon Stanhope at the launch of the Palmerville interpretation sign.

Photo ACT Heritage Unit

On 20 January 2010 five signs in the Canberra Tracks series were launched at Palmerville Heritage Park located in Owen Dixon Drive, bounded by William Slim Drive in Giralang and the CSIRO Experiment Station on the Barton Highway.

The Monaro Folk Society Bush Dancers set the scene.

Lionel Moore, the last resident of Ginnindera as Palmerville was known in his time, spoke about some of his experiences from 1957 to 1959 before he was evicted by the CSIRO. Several descendants of John Crinigan, one of the convicts assigned to Palmerville, as well as descendants of the Crace and Campbell families and Canberra Archaeological Society (CAS) members and friends were also in the crowd.

A short tour of the site concluded a very pleasant morning. For those who could not be present, it is an easy walk around the site with its explanatory signs and in autumn the old oaks and other exotics will be beautiful.

CAS has been involved with this significant early Canberra site over many years, initially as the Belconnen suburbs were being developed in 1982 and more recently in pushing for signage and further interpretation of the site. While we were unsuccessful in our 2009 heritage grant application we are happy to see that the grassy mounds covering the ruins of the former buildings are now identified for the public and some of the stories of the people and place are outlined on the signs. Perhaps this can be seen as stage one of a future project for CAS.

History

The Palmerville settlement was established in about 1826 by George Thomas Palmer Senior. His father Lieutenant John Palmer had arrived on the First Fleet ship *Sirius*. Palmer probably learned about this fertile land on the Ginninderra Creek from his uncle Robert Campbell. James Ainslie had brought Campbell's sheep from Bathurst and depastured them somewhere in this area before being shown the Pialligo (later Duntroon) site by an Aboriginal woman. Duntroon was established in 1823.

Palmerville was managed in the early days by an overseer, Duncan McFarlane. From 1837 to about 1845 Charles Campbell and his wife Catherine (Palmer) lived there, followed by George Thomas Palmer Junior and his wife Selina; then from 1850 William Davis and his wife, Susan Adriana Palmer.

William Davis was a popular 'Squire of Ginninderra'. He supported the local community, including a famous cricket team that included Aboriginal people Jimmy and Johnny Taylor and Bobby Hamilton. Balls were held in the shearing shed and fireworks were staged in 1863 to celebrate the marriage of Prince Edward.

In 1860 William Davis built a new home on newly acquired land at 'Goongarline' (later Gungahlin). Tragedy forced William Davis to leave the District in 1877 after his favourite nephew, Ernest Palmer, was killed in a horse-jumping accident at the Queanbeyan Show. Davis sold both his Ginninderra properties to Edward Kendall Crace.

Hard as it is to imagine to-day, Ginninderra Creek was the site of a drowning tragedy in 1892 when E.K. Crace and his groom, George Kemp, attempted to cross the flooded creek. Both drowned and Kate Marion Crace (nee Mort) was left to manage the properties which by then included Charnwood. With the establishment of the Capital all the properties were resumed in 1916. The CSIRO now occupies the Gungahlin homestead.

The buildings of Palmerville/Ginninderra were demolished in the 1950s.

Archaeology

In 1983 John Goldsmith prepared a conservation plan for the Palmerville area which later was to become the Giralang District Park. In 1986 Jonathon Winston-Gregson conducted a further investigation on the non-CSIRO part of the site. He made several suggestions regarding the conservation of the site which unfortunately were not carried out. During the ACT Heritage Festival at the Albert Hall in 1985 detailed photos of the excavation were displayed. Where are these photos now?

The old Ginninderra Cottage is probably now on CSIRO land and despite repeated ploughing, an archaeological investigation of this area could add significantly to the Palmerville story.

The area subsequently became the Palmerville Heritage Park and in 1990 the archaeological excavations were covered and the mounds planted with grass.

Excavation had revealed a 1820s 'convict' stone barn, measuring 65 feet (19.8 metres) x 22 feet 6 inches (6.8 metres) with three internal partitions.



In 1828 there were some 14 convicts at Palmerville. The 1841 census showed about 68 people – 47 males and 21 females; 15 were convicts and 6 ticket-of-leave holders.

Several other buildings were also identified including stables and a house site consisting of 4 buildings spread out over some 900 square metres.

A woolshed, cricket pitch, an office/store and other structures are known from the historical record.

Oral histories and interviews with former resident, Freena Humphries (a Crace descendant), Jane Southwell (nee Moore) and Beula McAppion (nee Curran) added to the archaeological evidence, together with Lyall Gillespie's knowledge of Ginninderra history. However further interpretation of the site is needed.

Palmerville also has some very old exotic vegetation. Three large oak trees thought to date from 1848 have survived together with elms and poplars. A hawthorn avenue has been re-established near the reconstructed wooden bridge and a bay tree, planted in the early 1900s, is thriving.

An investigation in 2004 of a proposed flood retardation basin on Ginninderra Creek identified parts of Palmerville that would occasionally be affected by inundation. Nothing has eventuated to date from these proposals, but any action should be monitored.

There is a need to clarify the 'village' buildings, their purpose, siting and changes over the 130 years of settlement at Palmerville. This would be an ideal historic archaeology project for students, particularly as we approach the centenary of Canberra the Capital city in 2013

Marilyn Folger

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Obituary

Jean Elizabeth Cooke (born Adelaide 25 March 1915 died Canberra 25 January 2010)

We extend our sympathy to our President Helen Cooke in the passing of her mother Jean Elizabeth Cooke.

Members may remember that I went back to Adelaide in 1995 to look after my aging parents. I returned in 2005 when my mum Jean had gone into a hostel and she very bravely moved to a hostel in ACT at the age of 92. We had a lot of fun and she quickly came to love our beautiful city. Mum loved coming to heritage events with me. She especially enjoyed meeting you 'young people' at Blundell's open day and several events at Crinigan's Hut. We even got her to the Queanbeyan Museum and she especially enjoyed the afternoon teas. Jean was nearly 95 and quite ready to move on. She passed away very peacefully with two of my offspring and I by her side. Thanks to all for your condolences and especially those who helped shoulder the things I let slip.

What Happened to the Australian Megafauna?



Artist's reconstruction of the half-tonne *Palorchestes azael*, an extinct Australian giant marsupial which was similar to a ground sloth.

(Credit: Courtesy of Peter Schouten)

The debate which will just not go away: Was it climate change or human hunting that caused the demise of Australia's megafauna? I can remember, an eon ago, as a wide-eyed and naive first-year undergraduate delving into this subject with great interest. The debates were clearly in two schools of thought (or contention): it was climate change which caused irredeemable changes in the habitats of the large animals causing their eventual extinction; it was the arrival of humans during the Late Pleistocene and their hunting of the animals as a food source which caused these beasts to die out. The popular articles and the academic papers which were written supporting one view or the other were lucid and strong in their tone but highly refutable. Neither hypothesis has prevailed to a point of overall acceptance. It is now interesting to see that research is still being done and that the debate is still going as strong as ever.

A new scientific paper co-authored by University of Adelaide researcher reports strong evidence that humans, not climate change, caused the demise of Australia's megafauna – giant marsupials, huge reptiles and flightless birds – at least 40,000 years ago. The following report on the paper is taken from *ScienceDaily* (Jan. 22, 2010)

In a paper published in the journal Science, two Australian scientists claim that improved dating methods show that humans and megafauna only co-existed for a relatively short time after people inhabited Australia, adding weight to the argument that hunting led to the extinction of large-bodied species.

According to Professor Richard 'Bert' Roberts from the University of Wollongong and Professor Barry Brook from the University of Adelaide, new methods to directly date bones and teeth of extinct species show that megafauna fossils and Aboriginal tools do not all date from the same period.

"Debate about the possible cause of these late Pleistocene extinctions has continued for more than 150 years, with scientists divided over whether climate change or the arrival of humans has been responsible for their demise," Professor Brook says.

"Australia was colonised during a time when the climate was relatively benign, supporting the view that people, not climate change, caused the extinctions here," he says.

But one site in western NSW – Cuddie Springs – stood out as an anomaly. Fossils of super-sized kangaroos, giant birds and the rhino-sized Diprotodon (the largest marsupial ever to roam Australia) were found in the same sedimentary layers as stone tools, leading some scientists to previously claim "unequivocal evidence" of a long overlap of humans and megafauna.

However, Professor Roberts – the lead author of the Science paper "And Then There Were None?" – says direct dating of fossils shows that the artefacts and megafauna fossils at the Cuddie Springs site were mixed together over many thousands of years, long after the giant animals had died.

"Given that people arrived in Australia between 60,000 and 45,000 years ago, human impact was the likely extinction driver, either through hunting or habitat disturbance," he says.

Professor Brook says previous claims for sites containing younger megafauna – such as in Kangaroo Island, eastern Victoria and the highlands of Papua New Guinea – should also be considered suspect in the light of these revised, older dates for the Cuddie Springs fossils.

I am sure that there are some CAS members who will have an opinion on this new research. How about sending in your comments to *Old News* and we will publish them – let's keep the debate alive (unlike the megafauna).

Peter Dowling

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A Call for Contributors

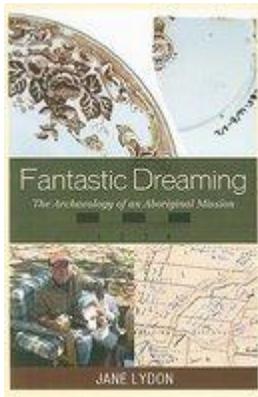


Let's make *Old News* more interesting and informative. While we have a very keen team researching, editing and producing this newsletter we would like it to have a broader perspective. We would like to have more articles by a range of authors which would contribute to the archaeology, history and heritage of the ACT and region and articles which would contribute to a general debate on themes and practices in archaeology. **Do you have something to say or would**

you like to contribute an article? If so, then we would like to hear from you. Articles up to 600 words with one or two images. Please send them in to us with the text in MS Word format and images (with captions and credits) in separate .jpg format.

Contact us at: dipetaia@bigpond.com

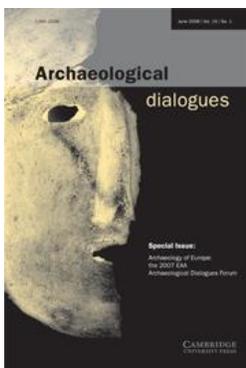
Bookworms



Fantastic Dreaming: The Archaeology of an Aboriginal Mission by Jane Lydon
AltaMira, (2009).

From their earliest encounters, white settlers evaluated Australian Aboriginal people on the basis of their material culture. This book shows how colonial practices of controlling and transforming Indigenous people centred upon material goods and practices, and especially their domestic environment. In this view objects are equated with identity, an essentializing approach that still persists within archaeological analysis. Through the example of Ebenezer Mission in south-eastern Australia, this study explores the complex role of material culture and spatial politics in shaping colonial identities.

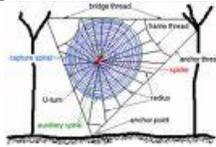
"Lydon's *Fantastic Dreaming* represents an important contribution to our understanding of the complexities of cross-cultural exchange in Australian history. Focused on the mission site of Ebenezer in Victoria, Lydon skillfully weaves a story of transformation and persistence that is grounded in a deep engagement with the place, its people, and material culture recovered through survey and excavation. Significantly, Lydon's story acknowledges the importance of Ebenezer to those whose lives it has touched in so many ways, and it provides an exemplar of how researchers and indigenous people can together create compelling history."-Timothy Murray, La Trobe University



Archaeological Dialogues, 16, Cambridge University Press, (2009)

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayIssue?jid=ARD&volumeId=16&issueId=02&seriesId=0>

This series of edited chapters addresses the theme 'Is archaeology useful?' it's a question many archaeologists wonder about during momentary lapses of reason. For a third time, *Archaeological Dialogues* has organized a face-to-face dialogue at an international conference around a current and provocative question. At the annual meeting for the Society of American Archaeologists in Atlanta, USA, in April 2009, *Archaeological dialogues* invited a panel of leading scholars to participate in a discussion forum entitled 'Is archaeology useful?' The discussion sought to address a number of interrelated questions: how important is the criterion of 'usefulness' in establishing the value of our discipline. Check out the previews and chapter abstracts on the website.



Some interesting websites

Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies

The Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) is currently undertaking a full review of the *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies* (GERIS) and associated materials. The Guidelines were drafted around ten years ago, and have not been comprehensively reviewed since.

The project is looking at developments in ethical practices over the past decade and emerging trends for the future, with the aim of delivering a coherent policy document to guide ethical research involving Indigenous peoples over the next 5-10 years.

The closing date for comments was 12 February but the Discussion Paper and revised draft of GERIS, can be downloaded from: <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethicsreview.php>.

The Internet Archive – a great source of books online.

<http://www.archive.org/details/texts>

The Internet Archive is a non-profit that was founded to build an Internet library. Its purposes include offering permanent access for researchers, historians, scholars, people with disabilities, and the general public to historical collections that exist in digital format. The organization was founded in 1996 and is located in San Francisco. In late 1999, the organization started to grow to include more well-rounded collections. Now the Internet Archive includes texts, audio, moving images, and software as well as archived web pages in its collections. Check out the Biodiversity and Heritage section – you can read the books online or download them as pdf documents, and they are free!

Australian Newspapers online.

<http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>

At long last this very usable historic research source is available online. No more going to the libraries, finding the micro reels, trying to find a reading machine that works and then straining the eyes trying to read the photographed pages – it can now be done at home from your computer. The source is on the National Library website with a link on the home page. The major city newspapers from 1803 to 1954 are included. And what makes this source extremely valuable as a research tool is that it is searchable by key word.