

## Australian Archaeology



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individual file card, which contains measurements, identification numbers, relevant field notes, reference to field photographs if any, and an outline drawing. A Museum access number list gives cross reference to the field number. The file card system has been assembled according to the established type complexes ("industries") which are the same as the storage in display vitrines, chest of drawers and storage racks.

Dr Alexander Gallus

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#### CANBERRA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY - 1974-5

Increasing governmental awareness of the need for conservation of not only the environment but of the country's heritage, and the almost unbelievable speed at which Canberra's suburbs are sprawling across former grazing lands, have combined to give the Canberra Archaeological Society (CAS) its first fieldwork for a couple of years. Prompted by the march of red and grey brick bungalows which devour several hectares of rolling grazing country each week or two, the Department of the Capital Territory, through its Conservation and Agriculture Branch, has commissioned the CAS to do a site survey in the Gungahlin area where a new satellite city has been pegged out. An area of about 75 square kilometres, it is contained between the Barton and Federal Highways, running north and east of the Canberra City centre, and extends from the edges of creeping suburbia to the northernmost border of the Australian Capital Territory.

Under the direction of Mr P. Bellwood, Society member and lecturer in the Australian National University's Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, members have in the first day of the survey, located nine scatters of artifacts, but not necessarily any distinct sites. A pattern has not yet emerged, but with an expected 40 Society members and volunteers, broken into groups of five, surveying the area in the next two full days of fieldwork, a picture of the archaeological value of the area must emerge for the final report to the government before Christmas.

Ironically, a few of the CAS members helping with the fieldwork are public servants who have been involved in the planning of Gungahlin which will, within a decade, be the hunting grounds of milk bar cowboys. Public servants form a high percentage of the membership of the Society - as would be expected in the public service capital - but students and professional prehistorians,

archaeologists and anthropologists, largely from the Australian National University, make up the balance. Total membership stands at 64, comprising 17 students and 47 'ordinary' members. This compares with 59 'ordinary' members and 26 students last year, The Society's best year membership wise. This high membership coincided with a high availability and refreshing variety of speakers from the Society's meetings, usually held monthly. But as Mr T. Power, last year's secretary put in in his annual report: '...we had so many speakers we had to put on three special meetings'.

We were especially fortunate that Professor J. Desmond Clark paid a flying visit to Canberra in April (1974) and we were able to get him to speak on the latest archaeological discoveries in Africa. On the following night we were honoured with a brilliant lecture on tree ring dating by Dr W. Ferguson of the University of Arizona, Tucson, and a pioneer in dendrochronological research. Our third special meeting saw a departure from prehistory and an excursion into the realm of historical archaeology when Dr E. Wood, author of the *Collins Field Guide to Archaeology in Britain*, gave an illustrated lecture on the Forest glass industry in England.

The high international standard was maintained in the Society's ordinary meetings. The year opened with an interesting description of Great Basin archaeological research from Dr J. O'Connell, a Research Fellow in ANU's Department of Prehistory, Research School of Pacific Studies. In April, Mr R. Lampert, Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Prehistory, courageously theorised on the prehistoric occupation of Kangaroo Island.

It was difficult to find a topic for our May meeting. We could have only one talk from Professor N. Tindale and with his long experience over a vast range of topics it was hard to find the perfect subject. However, we eventually decided on a talk on the Kaladilt people of Bentink Island, followed by two films from the famous Tindale collection.

The geomorphology of the Lake Mungo lunette, 500 miles west of Canberra is not an easy subject but at the June meeting Dr J. Bowler, Fellow in the Department of Biogeography and Geomorphology, Research School of Pacific Studies, made it seem so in a lucid presentation. He was followed in July by Mr R. Luebbers, a PhD student in the Department of Prehistory, who spoke about his important peat bog site of Wylie Swamp.

We had another change of field in August. Pathologist, Professor A. Robertson, of the Institute of Pathology, Case Western Reserve University, Ohio, presented evidence for heart disease in early historic times, which led to a prolonged discussion on the relationship of pathology to culture. In September, Dr I. McBryde of ANU's Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, gave an exhaustive survey of the prehistoric subsistence patterns of the New England area, leaving all gasping but much more informed.

October brought another unusual topic, but an extremely interesting one. Always an interesting speaker, Mr R. Wright, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney,

captivated his audience with an expose of the history of the game of Merelles or nine men's morris. This was followed by a Merelles tournament among the audience using roasted and unroasted coffee beans.

A quick tour of China with Mr A. Thorne, Research Fellow in the Department of Prehistory, Research School of Pacific Studies, as our guide was the lecture for November, in which sites like Choukoutien, the Forbidden City and the Great Wall, came to life with some unique slides. The December meeting was the Christmas party and it was appropriate that such a lighthearted occasion should be accompanied by a lighthearted talk. Ms S. Bowdler, a PhD student in the Department of Prehistory, supplied just that when she told us about women's cricket in Port Moresby.

This year, lecture topics have taken the society from Mr P. Bellwood's account of archaeological expeditions in North Africa and Iran, 1964-66, to a geologist's view of Arnhem Land, a look at prehistoric art from Dr A. Rosenfeld's site at Laura, Queensland, an expose of Ms S. Bowdler's work on the 'first Tasmanians' from Hunter Island, through to Mr G. McCall's account of the archaeology of Easter Island and details of paleo-ecology in Australian archaeology from Dr D. Horton, paleo-ecologist at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

The Society flew in Mr R. Wright from Sydney to lecture on his excavations at Lancefield, Victoria. The site is being investigated to answer questions about the interaction of prehistoric man and extinct species of marsupials.

An all-night festival of films on prehistory and anthropology, both new and very old, is being planned for the December meeting and Christmas party.

The international flavour of the 1974 meetings is likely to be repeated next year when several overseas prehistorians and anthropologists visit the Australian National University, some for the 1976 University lectures. The public lectures, which are a major part of the University's calendar, are based on prehistory and will carry the theme, 'Origins'.

A membership drive is also planned for next year. The Society will approach the public through the media and publicise more the activities of the CAS. This year, one newspaper advertisement alone attracted an extra large audience to a Society lecture and many new members from the general public joined up.

There is also the possibility of the Society excavating a site 40 miles south of Canberra and the continuation of survey work.

With these plans and devices, the Society hopes to increase the understanding of prehistory, archaeology and anthropology among the non-professionals in these fields who inhabit the brick bungalows on the former Canberra hunting grounds.

Graham Pike  
Secretary  
Canberra Archaeological Society