

## Australian Archaeology



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, 1975

This report summarises archaeological developments that took place during 1975 within the History Department, the staff of which includes two archaeologists, Mr W. Culican (Reader; specialisation: Middle East) and the writer (Research Fellow; specialisation: Oceanic prehistory and ethnohistory).

A New Undergraduate Course

The broadening of the History Department's frame of teaching and research reference, first manifest in 1974 with the introduction of the new first year course History 1D ('Culture Contact in the Pacific'), was continued in 1975 when 'Prehistoric Archaeology' (History 1F) was offered by Culican and Orchiston.

Research

Most of the research carried out by the ethnohistorians and archaeologists in the Department and by their post-graduate students related to areas outside of Australia. However, in December Orchiston and Mr R. Glenie (a part-time Tutor in History 1F for one term) led a 14-man University archaeological-geological expedition to Flinders Island, where 2½ weeks were spent investigating geological sequences and evidence of prehistoric human occupation in the Palana dunes. Thirteen different archaeological sites were recorded, all situated on the same old fossil soil horizon, and although most were characterised by worked granite blocks and quartz 'flakes', only eight contained *in situ* faunal material. Excavations were carried out at two sites. Analyses of artifacts and bone, shell, and sediment samples are continuing, and material is to be forwarded to the University of Sydney for radiocarbon dating.

Seminars and Public Lectures

The Research Seminar series in Archaeology and Ethnohistory initiated in 1974 (when 'imports' included Isabel McBryde and Graeme Pretty) was continued in 1975, and three of the nine who delivered papers spoke on Australian topics:

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| Judy Birmingham: | 'Irrawang - a colonial pottery site'  |
| Sandra Bowdler : | 'Bones of contention: problems of analysis of faunal remains from Cave Bay Cave, Hunter Island' |
| Graeme Pretty :  | 'Cultural chronology of the Roonka Flat - a preliminary consideration'.                         |

The other non-local speaker during the year was Jim Specht.

In September and October Public Lectures were given on Melanesian anthropology and prehistory and Polynesian ethnohistory by Graeme Pretty, Jim Specht, and Wayne Orchiston, respectively, in conjunction with an ethnographic exhibition on traditional Melanesian warfare displayed in the University Gallery (see Orchiston 1975). Then, almost two months later, John Mulvaney followed with a most successful Public Lecture. This took place during a Conference on Victorian Prehistory (see 'Recent Developments in Victorian Prehistory', elsewhere in this *Newsletter*), organised jointly by the Geology and History Departments and the Office for Continuing Education.

### Other Developments

Two new University-level Adult Education courses on 'An Introduction to Prehistoric Archaeology' and 'The Prehistory of Polynesia' were offered by History Department staff during the year, and proved popular. Meanwhile, within the University, close contacts were maintained with personnel in the Departments of Economic History, Geology and Zoology (and the Geography Department at Monash) where Australian prehistory is also taught, and exchange lectures were arranged with Geology and Geography. Closer ties were also forged between the History Department and the Archaeological Society of Victoria.

D. Wayne Orchiston

### Reference

Orchiston, D. Wayne 1975 *Warfare in Melanesia. The Leonhard Adam Ethnological Collection Part Two.* Melbourne, University of Melbourne.

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### A NEW ARCHAEOLOGY-ETHNOHISTORY RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR THE PACIFIC AREA

*The Artefact*, formerly the newsletter of the Archaeological Society of Victoria, is now a professional research journal specialising in the ethnohistory and archaeology (prehistoric, historic, and ethno-) of the Pacific region.

The new journal is published quarterly (not twice-yearly, as previously stated) and each number should average around 50-60 pages. Contents include a News and Notes section, research and review papers, and book reviews. The 1976 annual subscription is \$A5.00 if posted to an Australian address, and \$US10.00 for overseas subscribers (or \$A7.00 if submitted in Australian currency). All subscriptions should be directed to the Honorary Secretary of the Society: