

Thank you all for your continuing support and interest this year, and especially the committee members – Kristie, Emma, Richard, Adrian, Peter and Cameron.

2006 has been a learning year for me, getting a handle on how the Society had changed in the 12 years since the last time I was President. We have had a keen committee, new faces for me except for Peter White – we were on the committee together last century.

Some old faces still here, lots of new ones. A variety of interests.

I have been disappointed that there is very little archaeological fieldwork anywhere in ACT or nearby NSW. We were unable to find somewhere to visit this year, but look forward to our visit to the ANU excavation at Kiandra in mid February next year, courtesy of Ian Farrington. The excavations are at the Government camp and probably the hospital - both built in 1860. Details of where to meet etc will be sent out soon.

However we had a good variety of speakers, starting with Professor Matthew Spriggs in his traditional slot at our first meeting for the year. Happily Matthew has agreed to keep the flame alive with the next thrilling installment of Vanuatu in February next year.

We had more speakers giving new perspectives on Pacific archaeology such as Peter Bellwood and tonight's speaker, Dr Geoff Clark.

Other speakers showed us some indigenous museums in North America and discussed the history of the local Aboriginal people. Michael Westaway's enthusiasm and generosity in answering questions took us on a nostalgic journey for some, to Lake Mungo. Ingereth McFarlane and Mike Smith took us in our imaginings to the central desert, a welcome change in Canberra winter. And Adrian presented his thesis findings on an abandoned settlement.

The low numbers of people at some of these very interesting topics led me to consider the wisdom of night meetings in June and July, so we will trial something a bit different next year.

CAS has also been successful in getting 3 ACT Heritage Grants, with the assistance of the National Trust (ACT Branch) in the management of these. We have started planning how we achieve the tasks for these: to stabilize for public access the ruins of John Crinigan's hut at Amaroo and compile interpretation; to work with local Aboriginal groups to develop interpretation for Girrawah Park in Ngunnawal and to prepare an inventory and conservation advice for the ACT Heritage Unit's store. I am hoping that some of the junk, excuse me, examples of material culture, that I collected last century are still there.

We welcome any assistance members may offer in planning and achieving the work for these grants and we hope to generate at least one student project from the material.

It would be good to see our membership numbers rise. Please share your Old News with your friends. We would particularly welcome more student members, whose numbers seem to drop when we don't have an active member who is part of the ANU faculty. Any ideas from those of you with academic links would be very welcome.