

CAA Australasia Annual Report 2017

Report to CAA International

As noted previously, CAA Australasia* has been more-or-less dormant since the 2013 conference, apart from Arianna Traviglia's work on publishing the proceedings.

However 2017 has seen a revitalisation of the chapter, which we expect to continue and expand in the coming years. Our main activities for the year were:

AGM

The AGM was held in Sydney in April. We reviewed the current state of the chapter and planned an initial set of activities for 2017. The chapter has a healthy financial state and 74 members at 31 March 2017.

Office holders continuing/elected: Ian Johnson (Chair, continuing), James Flexner (Secretary), Gail Higginbottom (Treasurer, continuing), Ben Davies (Membership secretary), Lorna Cooper (Social Media coordinator), Andrew Wilkinson, Yann Tristant, Claire Reeler, Kelsey Lowe.

The next AGM will be held in Sydney in April 2018.

Spring Institute “Digital Methods in Archaeology”

Our major activity for the year was a five-day residential workshop at the Australian National University's Kioloa campus in south coast New South Wales, about 4 hours south of Sydney, jointly organised by Ian Johnson and James Flexner from the University of Sydney, with help from Yann Tristant and Olivier Rochecouste from Macquarie University.

The Institute was a valuable opportunity to attract new members and begin to build the CAA Australasia community. The Institute was attended by 20 participants from all around Australia, as well as two delegates from New Zealand. Most of the participants were graduate students, junior academics and archaeological consultants. The venue was a wonderful combination of good facilities and informality with accommodation, meals and socialisation in wooden farm cottages set on paddocks with roaming kangaroos, and a purpose-built, award-winning rammed-earth conference facility for the meetings.

Participants at the Institute presented and discussed a range of topics, including research design and data management, field methods (e.g. photogrammetry, geophysical survey, tablet data recording), and archiving and public presentation of digital archaeological data. Practical sessions include GPR and resistivity survey thanks to Kelsey Lowe and Aaron Fogel from Brisbane, and drone photography thanks to Yann Tristant from Macquarie University.

The end product of the institute was a sense of community which we believe will form an expanding and collaborative nucleus for the chapter. Everyone involved felt that it was a highly successful event which should be repeated in 2018 or 2019 (or perhaps both) – see *Future Planning* below.

CAAA symposium at AAA

The chapter organised a CAAA-sponsored session of six papers at the Australian Archaeological Association conference "Connections across land and sea" in Melbourne in December 2017. The session entitled *CAA Australasia: Archaeology through Multiple Lenses* was convened by Kelsey Lowe, Aaron Fogel and Ian Johnson.

Session abstract:

Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology (CAA) is a long-running international organisation aimed to bring archaeology, computer science, geoscience and other technical disciplines together to encourage cross-disciplinary communication. The conversation benefits practitioners, researchers and Indigenous groups alike, enabling twenty-first-century archaeology to be viewed through multiple lenses. Specific areas of interest in CAA include data acquisition and recording, modelling, data analysis and management, 3D data capture and reconstruction, image visualisation, geophysics and geographic information systems (GIS). When such techniques are used jointly with traditional archaeological methods, they provide a more detailed picture for investigating, understanding, managing archaeological sites and landscapes.

CAA Australasia, our supra-national Chapter, is working to promote this cross-disciplinary conversation in Australia and New Zealand through the organisation of workshops and conference sessions. This session invites papers to explore current developments and advances in computer and quantitative methods, particularly multi-disciplinary work which highlights the benefits of incorporating other sciences into the discipline and addresses possible trajectories of future work.

Future planning

We also held a planning meeting with CAAA members attending the Australian Archaeological Association meeting in Melbourne, including several members who were at the Spring Institute and a number of new members. Coming out of the Institute and the planning meeting we have a number of initiatives underway including another residential Institute – probably on Stradbroke Island (Straddie to the locals) in southern Queensland, a one day meeting in conjunction with the Australian Archaeological Association next year in Auckland, New Zealand, and some wild and wacky meetings fitting for a bunch of Antipodeans, such as the CycloConference (involves bicycles and brewing heritage sites ...). We are also working on a program of regional lectures and training sessions sponsored by CAAA, and a supporting set of useful resources.

* Name change

While we are still legally incorporated as CAA Australia, we have changed the chapter's name to CAA Australasia to include New Zealand and the wider Pacific region. This name change was approved by CAA International, but the legal name change has been held up by local administrative procedures; it should take place within a couple of months.

Ian Johnson, Chair & James Flexner, Secretary

21 February 2018