

DigIt

NS Vol.1, Issue 1



- ♦ The Flying Dutchman reaches port
- ♦ Neolithic burial in Gua Harimau, Malyasia
 - ♦ The benefits of student groups
- ♦ Local and international archaeology programs and conferences
 - ♦ 2013 ArchSoc committee

Newsletter of the Flinders
Archaeological Society

February 2013

ISSN 1440-2475



Pg. 16

Flinders ArchSoc members and friends at the WAC-7 Gala Dinner at the Dead Sea Spa Hotel on the Dead Sea, Jordan (photograph: Taylor Antisdel, 17/01/2013). L-R: Gonzalo Compañy, Maria Victoria Roca, Islam Alhassn, Jessica Lumb, Eleanor Jenkins, Chanmakara Sun, Bashar Baghdadi, Susan Arthure, Clare Leever, Amy Butcher, Janine McEgan, Jordan Ralph, Joshua Brown, Andrew Wilkinson and a Bedouin Camel Herder.

Contents

The Flying Dutchman reaches port -Vincent Megaw	Page 4
The latest discovery of a Neolithic human burial in Gua Harimau, Lenggong Valley, Malaysia -Hsiao Mei Goh	Page 6
The benefits of student groups: A regional perspective -Jordan Ralph, Antoinette Hennessy, Vanessa Beasley and Rhiannon Agutter	Page 8
2013 ArchSoc Committee	Page 10
Oatlands Summer Archaeology Program -Samantha Fidge	Page 12
Bamburgh Research Project -Natalie Bittner	Page 12
Australian Archaeological Association's Annual Conference, Wollongong, 2012 -Rhiannon Agutter -Samantha Fidge -Mandy Atkinson	Page 14
ArchSoc to the rescue! -Claire Smith	Page 16
ArchSoc members win International Student Ethics Debate -Karen Martin-Stone	Page 18
The ancient city of Jerash, Jordan -Andrew Wilkinson	Page 18
ArchSoc news -Andrew Allen-Farr Award	Page 19

Editorial

After a successful relaunch of *Digit* at the end of 2012 after a lengthy hiatus, we have decided to start 2013 off with a new numbering system. This issue is Volume 1, Issue 1 in the New Series and we have planned to print three issues a year; one in February, one in July and the final one in October. If you have any suggestions for the lay out or content of this issue, or any issue, do not hesitate to contact me using the contact information below.

Aside from working on the printed newsletter, I have been digitising the old copies of *Digit* from the Megaw collection. Vincent Megaw owns what would be the only complete collection of *Digit* from Issue 1 1997 to Issue 15 2003. These will be available on our website very soon. It's great to look back on the old newsletters and seeing which of our lecturers and industry professionals were involved in ArchSoc committees and activities when they were at university. My personal favourite was stumbling upon the article 'What the hell is happening at JCU' in *Digit* 6 1999 by then President of the James Cook University Archaeology and Anthropology Student's Association, Michael Morrison.

As for this issue, we have lots to offer our readers (I actually had to turn away some entries!). We have had some great contributions from fellow students, and an article from Claire Smith about her experiences with WAC-7 and the efforts that ArchSoc put in to help run the WAC-7 conference in Jordan. The featured article of *Digit* 1 is by ArchSoc's first Honorary Life Member, Vincent Megaw. It is part one of 'The Flying Dutchman reaches port', which originally featured in *Antiquity* Vol. 86. No. 332 2012. It is an honour to have Vincent submitting articles to the new series of *Digit*, and if you read the old issues of the newsletter, you will see why!

Jordan Ralph

Digit

Digit is the official newsletter of the Flinders Archaeological Society. It began in 1997 and after a hiatus of at least five years, it was relaunched in 2012, with the new series beginning in 2013. It is published three times a year and is printed at Flinders Press. Digit features both scholarly and light-hearted articles from anyone with an interest in archaeology.

Correspondence to the Editor should be addressed to:

The Editor, *Digit* c/o ArchSoc
Department of Archaeology
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide, 5001

OR email jordan.ralph@flinders.edu.au

Editorial team

Editor: Jordan Ralph

Reviewers: Antoinette Hennessy and Andrew Wilkinson

Cover photographs

Front cover: ArchSocks in Egypt. Models: Jordan Ralph and Andrew Wilkinson (photograph: Jessica Lumb, Giza, Egypt, 23/01/2013).

Back cover: Petra at night (photograph: Andrew Wilkinson, Petra, Jordan, 20/01/2013).

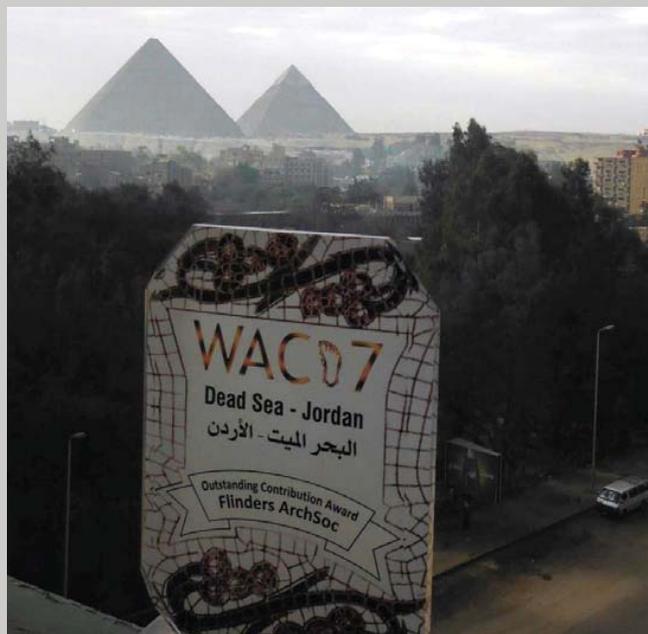
A note from the President

Welcome to new and continuing ArchSoc members for 2013. This year is proving to be as busy and exciting as 2012 was for activity. I would like to thank the committee of 2012 for their dedication and enthusiasm to ArchSoc as we have seen the opportunities grow, and membership numbers reach unprecedented levels. ArchSoc is now the largest and most active student archaeological society in the country. This is only achieved through the hard work of the members and the committee. We are now looking at generating an affiliation network with similar organisations across the country and around the world. I would like to welcome the new committee for 2013, and I look forward to working with you all in the coming year.

A catch phrase in the Archaeology Department is 'get involved'. The Flinders Archaeological Society plays an important part in realising this. Many members are graduate students and ArchSoc is often the first port of call for project volunteers. We conduct many fundraising activities in order to support our events and professional development opportunities. Involvement with these projects is a great way to meet like-minded people, industry partners, future colleagues and potential employers. For those students new to the archaeology program you will likely find friends with similar interests, and those who have experienced the many nuances of academic study amongst the membership. In this way ArchSoc also forms a support role as you embark on a new adventure. All I ask is don't be shy. Come along to things, introduce yourself and start chatting. ArchSoc activities are displayed on the notice board outside HUMN 112 so keep an eye out for what is going on. There is also the newsletter *Digit*, Facebook page, Twitter account (@FlindersArchSoc) and Blog (<http://flindersarchsoc.com/>) for keeping up to date with events and activities.

I look forward to meeting with you all throughout the year. As ever, we welcome suggestions for social events and professional development ideas from you, the ArchSoc member.

Andrew Wilkinson



This trophy was awarded to the ArchSoc members for their outstanding contribution at WAC-7. Some of us were lucky enough to go to Egypt after WAC-7! (photograph: Jordan Ralph 23/01/2013).

The latest discovery of a Neolithic human burial in Gua Harimau, Lenggong Valley, Malaysia

Hsiao Mei Goh

In January 2010, I surveyed the cave site of Gua (cave) Harimau with the assistance of the research team from the Centre for Global Archaeological Research (CGAR) affiliated with the University Science Malaysia (USM). As part of a larger PhD project, this survey aims to identify the archaeological property of the Gua Harimau, and the data generated from this survey will be integrated into the formulation of a heritage management plan for this site. A fortuitous discovery of this survey was a half-exposed human burial found in front of a small entrance in the west part of the cave. This burial was found in a disturbed context in which part of the burial deposits were dug out. Later, in February 2010, a rescue excavation unearthed a 50% complete human skeleton buried with a round-bottom earthenware vessel. This human skeleton, later labelled as GH 12, was assessed as an adult male and the radiocarbon dates derived from a charcoal sample associated with the skeletal remains indicate GH 12 as an early Neolithic burial dated to $5\ 080 \pm 50$ BP (Beta 275680).

another one metre wide opening is found in the west of the cave (Figure 2). This cave is well known for its archaeological significance since the 1950s (e.g. Williams-Hunt 1951, 1952). Research indicates that early humans used this cave extensively as a cemetery during the late Holocene. Between 1987 and 1995, at least 11 human burials dated to between 1 700 and 4 900 years ago were uncovered from this cave over three seasons of excavations (Chia & Zolkurnain 2005; Zolkurnain 1998; Zurania 1988).



Gua Harimau is a limestone cave situated in the Lenggong Valley – a UNESCO World heritage Site in the state of Perak located in the northern Peninsular of Malaysia (Figure 1). It is the largest cave found in the valley thus far, covering an area of approximately 350 square metres. Gua Harimau has two entrances – the main entrance is well lit and facing south with a horizontal opening about 18m wide whereas



Figure 2. The front view of Gua Harimau (photograph: Hsiao Mei Goh, January 2010).

From the excavation, a 50% complete human skeleton associated with an earthenware vessel was found. Given that the partial skeleton found during the excavation was incomplete, the exact boundary of the burial area remains undetermined (Figure 3). GH 12 was buried in a north-south orientation and the intact bone articulations suggest that the remaining skeletal parts were still in-situ. Surprisingly, the mortuary goods were relatively scarce compared to the previous burials found in Gua Harimau, since the burial of GH 12 contained only one round-bottom earthenware vessel within the burial area (Chia and Zolkurnian 2005).



Figure 3. The GH 12, found at the depth of 50-70cm from the surface (photograph: Hsiao Mei Goh, February 2010).

GH 12 was found lying in the supine position in a north-south orientation with the head pointing north. Several fragments of earthenware were found on the left of the remains (Figure 4). The skeletal remains were incomplete and found in fragile condition, but based on the appearance of the bones and teeth, they belonged to a human adult. Most of the fragmentary bones in this burial were from the upper body, as there were no lower limbs preserved. The left portion of the mandible showed a robust mandibular body and a prominent mandibular angle, giving a masculine impression, and suggests a male (Figure 5). On the mandible, the second and third molars were present in their sockets, which means that he would have been older than 20 years old. The enamel had a reddish brown discolouration while the roots retained their natural colour, which may suggest a habitual consumption of betel nut. Sex estimation was made on the sexually dimorphic features of the mandible as the rest of the remains were severely fragmented.

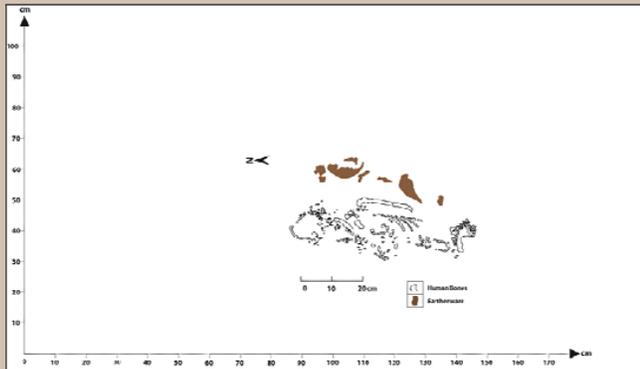


Figure 4. The burial area and the associated finds of GH 12 (illustration: Hsiao Mei Goh).

A total of 15 pottery sherds weighing 352.3g were found scattered on the left of GH 12. These pottery sherds were found in two clusters and further laboratory analyses indicated that these sherds all belong to a single vessel. The reconstructed vessel is a round-bottom globular vessel with cord marked decoration found on its base (Figure 6). The vessel is dark brown in colour, grog tempered with a plain everted rim. It is approximately 240 mm high and 165 mm wide with a large orifice of 140 mm. Further study on this vessel indicated that it is comparable to the pottery collections previously found in the Lenggong Valley where vessels of similar shape, decoration and finish have been found in other cave sites.



Figure 5. The left mandible shows a robust mandibular body and a prominent mandibular angle, indicates GH 12 as a male (photograph: Hsiao Mei Goh, February 2010).



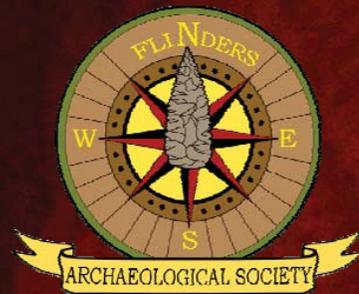
Figure 6. The earthenware vessel reconstructed from the pottery sherds found associated with GH 12 (photograph: Hsiao Mei Goh, September 2010).

Previous studies conducted by Chia and Zolkurnain (2005) suggested this cave as the largest prehistoric cemetery in the Peninsular Malaysia during the late Holocene, between 4,000 and 1,700 years ago. The latest radiocarbon dates obtained from the GH 12, has extended the early occupation of this cave from the presumed date of 3,000-4,000 years ago back into the mid Holocene. Interestingly, the associated mortuary items of GH 12 burial were scarce compared with the previous 11 burials. Whether this indicates variations in burial practices in Gua Harimau during the terminal Mid Holocene-Late Holocene, or whether there might have been some other associated mortuary items that have been removed by anthropogenic factors still remains uncertain. Given that the remains of GH 12 are poorly preserved and the burial area was partly disturbed, the biological and cultural information retrieved from GH 12 is therefore fairly limited.

References

- Chia, S. 1997 Prehistoric pottery sources and technology in Peninsular Malaysia based on compositional and morphological studies. *Monograph of Malaysia Museums Journal* 33.
- Chia, S. and H. Zolkurnian 2005 Gua Harimau, a prehistoric cemetery in Lenggong, Perak. In M. Zuraina (ed.), *The Perak Man and other prehistoric skeletons of Malaysia*, pp. 363-383. Penang: Universiti Sains Malaysia Press.
- Williams-Hunt, P. 1951 Recent archaeological discoveries. *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 24:186-191.
- Williams-Hunt, P. 1952 Archaeological discoveries in Malaya. *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25(1):181-190.
- Zolkurnian, H. 1998 Urutan kebudayaan prasejarah lembah Lenggong, Hulu Perak, Perak pada Zaman Holosen. Unpublished MA Thesis, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang.
- Zuraina, M. 1988 Indigenous Malaysia bronze manufacture or not? Short notes of new evidence from Gua Harimau in Perak, North Malaysia. Paper presented at the International Conference of Ancient Bronze Drums and Bronze Cultures in Southern China and Southeast Asia, Kunming.

Email
archsoccommittee@gmail.com
Blog
www.flindersarchsoc.com
Facebook
www.facebook.com/flindersARCHSOC
Twitter
[@FlindersArchSoc](https://twitter.com/FlindersArchSoc)
Flinders Web
www.flinders.edu.au/ehl/archaeology/archaeology-society.cfm
Mailing list
www.listserver.flinders.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/archsoc



DigIt