

## Centenary Medal Recipients

Recipients of the Centenary Medal were announced in April 2003. Below find an extract from the media release of the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr John Howard, regarding the award of the Centenary Medal.

The Centenary Medal was created to recognise the achievements of a cross-section of the Australian community at the time of the Centenary of Federation in 2001 and to prepare for the challenges of the new century by honouring persons who have contributed to Australian society or government.

Nominations in the General List were brought forward during 2002 by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments and parliamentarians. These were assessed by an independent Council chaired by Professor Geoffrey Blainey AC. The Centenary Medal also recognises Australians born in 1901 or earlier who were alive on 1 January 2001 ('centenarians').

The total number of medals approved is 15,500 and they represent a cross-section of service to the nation both geographically and by type of service. The contribution may have been to the local community, a region, a particular activity or profession. Many who are being recognised have served selflessly and without regard for personal recognition for lengthy periods on a voluntary basis through, amongst other activities, the elderly, youth, rural fire service and emergency services, veterans and their families and indigenous Australians. The medal is also being awarded to those whose achievements have made a national or international impact through science, research or the arts.

Names of medal recipients can be found on the website: <http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/>.

Medal recipients in the archaeology, heritage management and related areas include:

Atholl Anderson  
 Peter Bellwood  
 Judy Birmingham  
 Alexander Cambitoglou, AO  
 John Chappell  
 Graeme Clarke  
 Graham Connah, AM  
 Iain Davidson  
 David Frankel  
 Jack Golson, AO  
 Jeremy Green  
 Colin Groves  
 Sylvia Hallam  
 Graeme Henderson  
 Isabel McBryde, AO  
 Betty Meehan  
 Vincent Megaw  
 John Mulvaney, AO CMG  
 Daniel Potts  
 Margaret Ragless  
 Frank Sear  
 Jim Specht  
 Matthew Spriggs  
 Sharon Sullivan  
 Alan Thorne  
 Robin Torrence  
 Alan Watchman

Donald Pate

## National Archaeology Week

At the 2001 Australian Archaeological Association AGM there was a proposal to hold a week of events and activities across Australia that would promote archaeology, in its broadest terms, to the wider public. This concept is not new and was modelled on the many promotional weeks that are held internationally. An internet search will result in numerous hits on official sites detailing such programs promoting archaeology. Rather than being state-based, the proposal encouraged a national approach.

With the endorsement of the Australian Archaeological Association (AAA), a National Archaeology Week (NAW) was born, and a national co-ordinator (Michael Westaway) appointed to work through the preliminary stages and develop a discussion paper for distribution to interested persons across Australia.

Broadly, the objective stated in that document was to develop greater public awareness of Australian archaeology in all its guises. Through public outreach the aims are to:

1. promote the protection and value of Australia's unique archaeological record (historic, maritime and Indigenous)
  2. encourage and enhance creative learning in schools encourage an appreciation of different cultures
  3. increase public awareness of archaeology's valuable contribution to our understanding of the past
- (Westaway and Zarmati 2002).

By late 2002 a number of voluntary state and territory sub-committees were established and programs were being developed. At the 2002 combined archaeology conference in Townsville (Land and Sea Conference), a report was tabled to the three major archaeological bodies in Australia (AAA, AIMA and ASHA) for further consideration and final endorsement.

Once the dates of 11-18 May were confirmed much of the hard work began. The individual character of each committee and their program of events reflected group membership, the various skills at hand and the support of particular agencies (museums, government heritage bodies, consultants etc).

A strong visual identity was developed by Liz McGrath in an eye-catching poster reflecting the diversity and vibrancy of archaeology. A consistent visual branding was important and repeated across printed promotional and display materials, including calendars of events, banners, and on the website. The website ([www.archaeologyweek.com](http://www.archaeologyweek.com)), developed by Luke Kirkwood and hosted by the Australian Archaeological Association, provided another powerful advertising medium and a platform to promote various sponsors including universities, state museums, some heritage agencies, heritage consultants as well as many other private organisations (Total hits between May 1-19 was 83,329). Moreover, there was positive media exposure that included television (*Totally Wild*), newspapers and various newsletters and government and private radio programs.

Nationally, approximately 130 separate activities were held promoting, in the main, work in Australia, but also highlighting the work of Australian archaeologists abroad. Activities were not restricted to city centres and occurred in numerous regions including Central Queensland, Sunraysia (Vic), the Kimberleys (WA), Armidale (NSW), Castlemaine Goldfields (Vic), and the Willandra Lakes (NSW). Approximately 200 archaeologists volunteered their services to promote NAW.



**Figure 1** Future archaeologists? The sieving team from Harristown State High School at the public Mort Street Well excavations in Toowoomba, Queensland (Photograph: Bryce Barker)

The inaugural NAW can be deemed a success, but things can always be done better. Many states are undertaking reviews of the NAW activities and areas where further work can be done include:

- the timing of the week and events;
- more effective use of media;
- better networking between organisations;
- the development of guidelines for various events;
- maximising use of the NAW website throughout the entire year;
- further development of NAW's association with schools and education.

The first NAW was very positive and many valuable relationships have been developed and common interests identified across the broad range of archaeological stakeholders. The aims described earlier were met, with each committee displaying different strengths. The challenge to organisers is to maintain the broad appeal as much as possible while being mindful of the messages that such a week presents.

Developing high quality programs, maintaining effective communication between states and the continued hard work of regional and local committees is vital in achieving these aims. Finally there were numerous equally vital individuals and organisations who provided support to NAW across Australia - our thanks go to you all.

#### Reference

Westaway, M and L. Zarmati 2002 National Archaeology Week. Unpublished Draft Discussion Paper.

Michael Westaway

#### Conference Report: 23°S - Archaeology and Environmental History of the Southern Deserts, 15-18 January 2003, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia

The first inter-congress of the World Archaeological Congress to be held in Australia took place at National Museum of Australia, Canberra, in January this year, with support from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological research. The conference focussed on the archaeology and environmental history of the southern deserts, in particular the Atacama and Puna deserts in South America, the Australian deserts, and the Namib and Kalahari deserts in southern Africa. The meeting provided a welcome opportunity to review and compare the human and environmental histories of these regions and to strengthen academic contacts between archaeologists and earth scientists - especially those based in southern Africa and South America. The four days of the conference brought together a WAC inter-congress and the final symposium of the UNESCO sponsored IGCP413 program *Understanding future dryland change from past dynamics* (<http://www.shef.ac.uk/~igcp413>). More than 90 scholars from 16 countries attended the conference and it successfully laid the basis for a stronger definition of desert research and greater emphasis on comparative and interdisciplinary research in the southern deserts.

The National Museum of Australia is to publish a selection of papers from the conference as an edited monograph. A



**Figure 1** Group photograph of conference delegates, outside the National Museum of Australia, January 2003.