

National Archaeology Week

Saturday 22 May 2010 at the MAGNT Theatrette

SEMINAR PROGRAM

10.00 – 10.10am REGISTRATION (Tea and Coffee)

10.10 – 10.15am WELCOME (Seminar Convenor)

10.15 – 10.45am **The Mound Builders of Darwin Harbour: What Archaeology tells us**

Dr. Patricia Bourke, Heritage Officer, Heritage Branch, NTG

Archaeological research shows us that for thousands of years, after sea levels rose to drown a river valley and form a harbour, Aboriginal people who lived here practised a tradition of mound building on the coastal plains of what is now known as Darwin Harbour.

10.45 – 11.15am **Piecing together Macassan encounters in the top End: Using archaeological shards to interpret the MAGNT Southeast Asian tradeware ceramic collection**

Joanna Barrkman, Curator Southeast Asian Art and Material Culture, MAGNT

Ceramics are one lasting marker of the former annual visits by Makassan and Buginese trepang fishers to the coast of north Australia. This presentation will examine examples of Chinese ceramic sherds that were brought to Australia by Makassan and Buginese seafarers. Using ceramic sherds that were collected by Mr Campbell Macknight from archaeological digs conducted at Wobalina Island (near Port Bradshaw), Ilyaugwamaja (Bowne Strait) and Drimmel Head (Mellville Bay) comparisons will be drawn with complete examples of tradeware ceramics held in the Southeast Asian Art and Material Culture collection of the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory.

11.15 – 11.45am **Knight's Folly, Bell's House and beyond: an excavation in unearthing Darwin's colonial history.**

Julie Mastin, PhD Candidate, Charles Darwin University

This is the story of a site, which although vacant now, was once a living place that was used and reused for over 100 years, mostly by people we know very little about. It is significant in Darwin, not only for its association with a notable person, John George Knight, but also as a unique example of innovative architecture in early Darwin. This site was not only the location of 'Knight's Folly' but also of 'Bells House'. Excavations at the site of the house provided a large collection of artefacts accumulated over decades, which although discarded as useless or broken, add to our knowledge of changing lifestyles.

11.45-12.15pm **LUNCH (BYO) Tea & Coffee Provided**

12.15-12.45pm **Darwin's historic Catalina flying boats of the RAAF and USN: history, archaeology and current management options**

Dr. Silvano Jung

In a pleasantly ironic twist, when only the latest production models of aircraft survive from WWII, Darwin Harbour has a unique assemblage of the earliest Catalina flying boat type. Altogether six Catalinas were lost in Darwin Harbour's East Arm during WWII. On 19 February 1942, three United States Navy Patrol Wing Ten Catalinas were sunk at moorings during the first Japanese air raid. Built in 1937, they are the oldest Catalina aircraft discovered in the world. In 1945, the Royal Australian Air Force lost three Catalinas due to ground accidents (one with fatalities) and a take-off crash.

How these aircraft were lost in Darwin Harbour is discussed and in conjunction with archaeological data, an identification for previously unknown wreck sites is determined. Fugro Spatial Solutions discovered the last missing Catalina in 2008 for the proposed Inpex development in East Arm, but such a remarkably and relatively intact discovery is under threat. The current developmental threat to ALL of the Catalina wreck sites in East Arm is assessed and alternative management options are suggested in an effort to conserve the archaeological material

12.45 -1.15pm **The *Florence D*: the discovery and survey of a World War II shipwreck in the NT**
David Steinberg, Heritage Branch, NTG

This presentation will explore the story behind the sinking and recent discovery of the *Florence D* shipwreck, a merchant ship sunk in a Japanese air attack on the 19 February 1942. When sunk the ship was carrying desperately needed supplies for MacArthur's men at Corregidor, Philippines. This presentation will explore the ship's history and its final mission. It will also account for the March 2009 archaeological expedition to the site that included the discovery and recording of the ship's structure and cargo.