

Time Travel Australia

Our Business is in Ruins

Newsletter Summer 2006/7

I have done it again - where has 2006 gone! Well, better late than never (again).

Now for a brief summary of 2006:

I led a walking tour to South America in March. After a few days on Rapa Nui and a fantastic walk along the north coast, we flew down to Patagonia (mostly trying to stand up in the wind, not necessarily walking). The walk on Perito Moreno Glacier was a highlight. We finished with the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu but included a beautiful walk to Huchuy Cusco prior to that. Another walking tour is planned for 2008.

Spain followed in May and then we moved on to Ireland. Oscar assisted me with the art history of Spain and I looked after the archaeology – and dining! Ireland was fantastic, not only because of the country itself but all but two of the group had travelled with me before and it was a very easy group to after. Highlights for me were the walk along the Antrim coast from the Giant's Causeway and in the rain to Carrowkeel Passage tombs. After about an hour's walk in the pouring rain we entered the tombs to find them perfectly dry – no leaks even after 5,000 years! Our visit to Northern Ireland provided both a wonderful spectacle and sad history. The confused and often conflicting situations in Derry and Belfast was a very sobering experience. The Bogside murals were enough to bring me to tears.

Later in the year we continued with our field work in northern Chile – at Chacalluta and a new site a few kilometres up the Lluta Valley. Chacalluta was fun particularly as we had an Army officer looking over our shoulder for the entire time. He ended up quite interested in what we were doing, particularly after finding some human remains and evidence that the site was used during the War of the Pacific in the 1890s. Good news also regarding the property in Calle Colon where over 50 Chinchorro mummies were located in 2004. The University now owns the site and the mummies will become part of an *in situ* exhibit in a new museum. World Heritage listing is our next objective.

We also continued mapping the Inca roads near Zapahuira. Enough evidence was found to suggest that surveying could go on for decades.

When Kioloa Diggers become Mungo Surveyors

Between 2003 and 2004 a bunch of amateur archaeologists – well that's what WE like to call ourselves – first met Chris Carter down in Kioloa on the south coast of NSW for an amateur archaeology 3 day weekend workshop. Perhaps it was digging out a rubbish tip that did it but we caught a bug – an ancient bug that requires all those afflicted to feel the need to dig. Several of us returned again and again and soon we become known as the Kioloa Diggers. Chris had no idea what to do with us as our incessant need to meet up and dig was never satisfied so he decided to give us a greater challenge. Teaming up with his mate, and fellow archaeologist, Doug Williams they organised an advanced amateur archaeological workshop – 10 days of real fieldwork in the Balranald and Lake Mungo National Park regions of southwest NSW. Mary Pappin of the Mutthi Mutthi tribal group and traditional owner of the surrounding lands invited Chris and Doug to investigate the region for any archaeological sites of interest.

Friday 14th October 2005

Seven of ten of us met at Maccas in Yass and our two 4WD convoy headed for Wagga Wagga where the new Nissan Patrol decided it needed a trip to the 4WD doctor to fix a breathing problem. After a few hours of treatment we headed west where we stopped for dinner in a roadside diner at Hay. Despite the setting sun we awed the flatness of the great Hay plains and made for the Colony Inn motel at Balranald our home for the next 8 days or so.

Saturday 15th October 2005

Day 2 and we were all pretty excited at the thought of the adventures that lie ahead. The girls all piled into the Chick Truck capably driven by Helen of Nissan while the boys made themselves comfortable in Chris' Toyota and Doug's Pajero and off we headed again in convoy first to collect The Pappins and then onto Waldaira, a 90,000 acre property 20km west of Balranald owned by Balranald's ex-mayor Steve Halloran.

Our first site inspection was an ancient lake bed - Waldaira Lake and its associated lunette or sand dune. Our plan over the next two days was to walk four transects along this massive lunette and mark and analyse anything of interest. Slathering ourselves in

sunscreen with insect repellent or insect repellent with sunscreen did little to curb the annoying plague of flies that followed us in haloes where ever we went. Good rains meant Balranald was experiencing its worst fly plague in ages. But unperturbed we grabbed our backpacks, water bottles, cameras, workbooks, pens and these attractive fluoro orange flags in the hope we would find something worth marking and recording. If nothing else the flags were fabulous fly swatters. During our time at Waldaira Lake we found middens (aboriginal rubbish dumps) with freshwater mussel shell, fish and bird bones, clay heat retardant beads and stone artefacts. We were also excited to find what looked like cranial sutures indicating a possible burial site – later discovered to be true and also previously recorded.

Monday 17th October and we changed sites to an ancient riverbed/ claypan not far from Balranald down the Prungle Mail Road – burnt orange cracked earth scorched by the sun, just as we were. Again we fanned out and walked 800m up the clay pan marking what seemed hundreds of stone artefacts, stone hearths, middens and bones. Dividing into two teams A and B we set up surveyors dumpy levels aiming to map out the entire region in detail. We each took turns at using the dumpy, holding the staff, and analysing, recording and photographing stone artefacts and hearths. There's something amazing about picking up a piece of rock and being able to say – a piece of grey (yes grey Helen not green) silcrete or perhaps FGS (fine grain siliceous) material with a clear striking platform, obvious bulb, so many negative scars, retouched with a feathered termination (if you want to know what I just said you'll have to come along on a weekend!). In fact making your own stone flakes and proceeding to cut your finger with them is also fun and proves just how sharp they really are. Two days, 4 dumpy station sites and GPS readings, 28 stone hearths and hundreds of artefacts later we said goodbye to the claypan and headed to Mungo National Park.

Wednesday 19th October 2005

I think I must be cursed because any time I have tried to indulge my other passion - astronomy - the gods have been against me and turned what would be beautiful clear dark skies into rain and clouds. It happened at Kioloa so why should it have surprised me that Mungo would be the same. It bucketed down the two days we were in Mungo and Doug tried to console us with the thought that very few people get to see Mungo in the wet and well it was spectacular just the same. Fortunately we took spare clothes with us as we got WET and caked in clay. A slippery wander across the "Walls of China" - lake Mungo's lunette - proved too much for some as they headed back to the 4WDs, dry clothes and Mungo Lodge. For the rest of us we got back into our cold, wet clothes and headed back out to play in the water and clay for

a second time. The rain certainly did make it easier to see the varying colours of stone artefacts as they stood out against the grey clay of the lunette. A visit to a local silcrete quarry where the evidence of aboriginal tooling could be seen was also a highlight. While no stars could be seen that night Jennifer and Doug entertained us with poetry no less. We couldn't leave even if we wanted to as the boggy, dirt roads had been closed due to the rain and were unpassable.

The next day was better as the sun tried to get the better of the clouds and we returned to another area of the Mungo lunette which is made up of successive layers of sand and mud called units. Each unit depicting another era in the time scale. It was not far from here that Mungo Man and Mungo Lady were found in the 1970s and the world's oldest ritual ochre burial site was found from around 40,000 years ago. And explains why Mungo is a World Heritage listed area.

We were fortunate to see water erosion in action as a large shell midden appeared before us with hundreds of fresh water mussels shells, emu shell, bird bones, otoliths and an entire fish skeleton long forgotten and lain discarded, covered by the earth for thousands of years. We took hundreds of photos and left Chris alone to enjoy the solitude and splendour of an encroaching thunderstorm over the Walls of China.

Fortunately the roads were opened when the sun came out and despite a slight detour - Helen decided the Nissan needed a real off-road challenge by attempting to drive over a post at the Mungo visitors centre and wedged it there – we were finally on our way back to Balranald. Now I like a good thunderstorm however not when I'm in it and driving back was one helluva ride home. I not sure what was worse sitting in the back praying we would get home safely, being Helen driving us safely home or being at the back of the pack. Seeing the other 4WDs in front slipping and sliding all over the road while trying not to stop so the avalanche of water and mud wouldn't bog us was not to be forgotten. But make it home we did and three cheers were given to our amazing drivers who got us there!

Friday 21st October 2005

Disappointing rain meant indoor activities and our map drawing skills were road tested. (Good tip – when map drawing ensure you have a 360° protractor – it will make things easier!) but when the sun came out again we headed off on a walk around the township of Balranald and the Murrumbidgee River to take in some historical sites and search for aboriginal scarred trees. A drive back to Waldaira and an old scarred tree was found not far from the homestead. The old dead tree had had its bark removed and the wonder of a 10X optical zoom digital camera proved the source of the chop marks had to have been metal

possibly by aboriginal hands or European settlers needing building materials.

Sunday 23rd October 2005

By 8.30am we were packed up and ready to head off for home after saying our thanks and goodbyes to Pam and Billy from the Colony Inn motel. The long drive back saw us stop for coffee at Hay, fish and chips at Wagga Wagga and an unexpected stop outside of Yass when the Nissan's asthma really kicked in and stopped short of breath on the highway. A call to the Nissan doctor and a towtruck whisked it and Helen and Catherine off home to Wollongong. We were so grateful the Nissan didn't stop on the rough roads of Mungo! The rest of us on the road piled into Chris' Toyota and headed for Bowral to where all our cars were parked.

An amazing adventure was had by all and it would be remiss of me not to thank Chris and Doug for orchestrating it all. Their tuition was excellent and we are now far more capable field workers having experienced it all. All that remains is writing up the report for National Parks and our adventure will be on record for all to read.

Thanks also to all my fellow Kioloa Diggers (now graduating to Mungo Surveyors) Catherine Fitzgibbon, Helen Fletcher, Ewan Lawson, Jennifer Lees, Ian MacKenzie and Harry and Deb Wooller.

Can wait to do it all again!

Lisa Yates

Courses – 2007

A Celtic Myth: History & Heritage of Ireland University of Sydney CCE – ph. 9036 4789)

Saturday 10 February 2007

Concentrating on the archaeology, this short course will introduce the heritage and development of Irish culture from the prehistoric period through to the 19th Century. We will examine a range of sites - from megalithic tombs & ring forts, through canals systems to monasteries, castles and cathedrals. We will conclude with a discussion at the idea of the Irish 'Celtic' culture – did it exist at all or was it a construct of modern historical processes?

Advanced Field Workshop:

Waldaira Station, Balranald, NSW

Sat 24 - Sun 31 March 2007

Contact Chris.

This hands-on workshop includes lectures, site survey and practical workshops to learn the basic techniques of site identification and surveying through instruction in the field. Work completed will

contribute to an Aboriginal Heritage Programme being conducted in association with the Pappin Family Aboriginal Corporation (traditional owners), Archaeo Analysis and Archaeology Australia. This workshop will continue work commenced in October 2005.

Accommodation will be in tents (provided). Fully catered but your own transport to Balranald is required. Transport in the field will be provided.

Scheduled Tours - 2006

Contact Chris Carter for details.

Please note dates may vary to suit flight schedules.

Fares are approximate and will be fixed 90 days prior to departure.

An Andean Adventure

22 days, departs 15 July 2007

Led by Chris Carter

Travelling through Chile, Bolivia and Peru this tour will provide a basic understanding of the cultures of the Central Andean Region of South America. While it would not be possible to follow a distinct chronological route, the theme of the tour will basically follow the Inka Empire from its southern periphery in the Atacama Desert to its inner sanctum in Cuzco. *En route* we will also visit a range of sites that present evidence of many of the cultures that either pre-date or were contemporaneous with the Inka. The tour takes in Easter Island *en route*.

An option is available to walk the Inka Trail (add four days).

Taste of the Sultans: A Culinary Tour

21 days, departs 15 September, 2007

Led by Louise Lathouwers)

Modern Turkish cuisine was conceived at the tables of the Ottoman Sultans, whose delicate tastes fashioned a unique fusion of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Central Asian culinary themes which in turn became the most sophisticated fare in the world.

Our tour explores the origin and practice of this excellent cuisine, sampling the delights of village cooking and experiencing the blend of flavours which places Turkish cookery at the forefront of world cuisine. We sail around the Turkish shores, cooking on board and watching cooking in villages around the coast with our guide and mentor, Suleyman.

Approx. \$7,850.00 ex Sydney

**From Mother Goddess to Gallipoli:
An Archaeological Odyssey**

22 days, departs 13 October, 2007
Led by Angela Besant

Turkey sits astride Europe and Asia and has for millennia been a meeting place at which cultures from north, south, east and west have passed through, blended and come into conflict. Beginning at the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations in Ankara, we will travel through the Turkish heartland of the Anatolian Plateau, home of the mother goddess at Çatalhöyük and the great Hittite empire, via the majestic Taurus Mountains to the Aegean Sea and some of the wonders of Classical civilization. Cruising the Aegean coast will allow us access to sites that are difficult to reach by road.

From the Mausoleum of Halicarnasus to legendary Troy, we will traverse the cities of the Aegean, visit the battlefields of Gallipoli and conclude with several days exploring the great city of Istanbul.

Approx. \$7,750.00 ex Sydney

Sth Vietnam & Angkor

18 days, departs 12 October 2007
Led by Chris Carter

Covering many aspects of Vietnamese history and culture from the Vietnam War to its distant past, this tour will also introduce you to Vietnamese music and dance, its superb cuisine and the spectacular beauty of the country and its people. We will visit sites ranging from the Viet Cong tunnels of the DMZ, the Citadel at Hue, the colonial city of Hoi An, the highlands around Dalat and the islands off Nha Trang. We will walk through the markets of Ho Chi Minh City and travel by boat up the Mekong and into Cambodia to visit the spectacular temples of Angkor Wat and the old city of Angkor Tom.

Approx. \$3880.00 ex. Sydney.

In the Wake of the Beagle: The Natural History of Patagonia

18 days November 2007
Led by: Ian Fraser

While you will be spellbound by the majestic Andes Mountains and the glaciers of the Southern Ice-field, this tour will also provide an opportunity to see some of the abundant wildlife from this unique region. This tour will focus on the environment, flora and fauna of this spectacular region. You will see glaciers, snow-capped volcanoes, ice blue lakes and wander through lush beech forests in search of wildlife - commonly seen species include Darwin's rhea, guanaco, grey fox, condor, skunks, armadillo and a variety of other birds. Marine species include dolphins, sea lions,

Magellanic and Humboldt penguins, sea otters and numerous waterbirds including kelp gulls, kelp geese, cormorants, lap-wings, sandpiper and the fittingly named 'flightless steamer duck'.
Fare: TBA

Please contact me via phone or email if you would like a copy of an itinerary or have any questions at all. Please contact Margaret or Anthony at Travelmakers (02 62474444) if you have any queries concerning flights etc.

Proposed Tours 2008

Archaeology in Mexico, Belize & Guatemala.

22 days, February, 2008

Al Andalus – Morocco & Sth Spain

22 days, May 2008

A Celtic Myth – the Prehistory of Ireland

18 days, June 2008

Walking the Inca Trails: Chile, Bolivia & Peru

23 days, August 2008

If you are a member of a club or interest group that may be interested in a lecture on archaeology, we would be happy to participate (provided we are given enough warning). We have given lectures to a variety of groups ranging from primary school to College students and including the University of the Third Age. These lectures are provided free of charge.

We would be happy to organise group or independent tours using one of our established itineraries or customise one based around our knowledge of particular areas.

Time Travel Australia welcomes comment on existing trips and new ideas for tours and/or courses. We rely on feedback from participants to enable us to continue updating the services we provide. Such feedback is also an important tool for us to maintain a high level of service.

If you have any news that would be of interest to our readership, feel free to forward items, snippets of news or photographs to the address below for inclusion in our next newsletter.

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