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Welcome to all our members and friends!

2010 has been an interesting year; we have moved further into an advocacy role for archaeological heritage but, sadly, with few gains.

Our committee is small but indomitable and have all worked hard to keep CAS afloat. My heartfelt thanks to them all; to Dianne Dowling who has brought great skill to the role of treasurer and inventiveness to encouraging our membership, especially with new membership cards. Dianne has been the editor of Old News for over a year with very fine results. We appreciate members sending in items of interest and thank those of you who have sent your own stories of interesting archaeological places.

Peter has been a tower of strength as Vice President, inspiring and assisting with talks, events and comments on ACT development plans and vanishing heritage sites.

Kat tantalises us with her adventures overseas and has suggested an annual CAS award to a student with a project undertaking or promoting local archaeology so we are developing this very good idea.

Bob's ideas and support are appreciated and he is assisting with preparing some of our records for archiving. Farewell and thanks to Laura Breen and Kat for their ideas and support throughout the last years.

John Bundock joined us to steer a program of field trips and his dedication to planning a trip to Adelong Goldfields and Gundagai and providing background information was a treat. We look forward to more exciting experiences in the coming years. Louise Halsey of the Adelong Falls Conservation group was a most attentive host and used her network to get special admission to local museums. CAS showed its appreciation by making a donation to the group.

Once again our lecture series, in conjunction with our colleagues in the Centre for Archaeological Research, has been a resounding success. We have had speakers on a wide variety of topics and consistent audiences. CAS prides itself on providing an informal and friendly atmosphere for these talks and our speakers respond with great illustrated talks that we can all understand and enthusiastic responses to questions.

This year we have begun planning a project to compile the history of CAS in time for our 50th anniversary in 2013. We plan to contact past members and hope some of our newer members can help to jot down reminiscences and confirm our date line as well as assist with oral history recording. Please let me know if you would like to be a 'buddy' to one or a group of members in a cohort.

Our outreach program this year included a contrived 'dig' at the ACT Heritage event at Elmgrove in Gungahlin. Three of us poor old crocks and my youngest daughter dug a hole and salted it with everyone's spare items. Excavating was very popular

with the young fry but they were too excited to learn any respectable technique – stabbing for treasure was the norm. Many thanks to Trish Saunders for her patient supervising of the horde for the duration and to her loyal but intermittent assistants.

I am resolved not to do this again as it is too hard on a few souls and does little to attract potential members. It is also a bit misleading as CAS has no specific activities for junior members.

Some members joined a walk to the ACT Border Markers in Gungahlin which was led by Peter Dowling. As ever, Peter had provided background information and prepared well, but his erudite talk had to compete with the shamblings of an echidna on the slope behind him, but visible to all the excited participants.

CAS also carries National Archaeology Week in Canberra, the third week of May each year. We organised walks and talks, to Birigai and London Bridge with the National Trust (ACT) and to our old favourites the Ginninderra Blacksmith's Shop and The Valley in Gungahlin. Trish Saunders gave a talk on the Youth Hostel Australia development of The Rocks archaeological site in Sydney.- a great talk on a spectacular site which subsequently won the Australasian Society for Historic Archaeology award for excellence in presentation. We will keep seeking support from our colleagues in the national institutions in the hope of sharing the load and expanding the selection of events to promote archaeology in ACT.

Last year we advocated for conservation and study of archaeological collections with little result. This year we provided comments on the vulnerability of archaeological sites in the various Molonglo developments with pleas to at least fully record, excavate and analyse historic sites so these can be interpreted and presented for the new residents. We have a hunch that understanding the lives of the people of our past helps us to settle into new communities and support each other, and to feel like we belong to a society with a proud history.

Unfortunately our endeavours to recover information and inform interpretation for the 12 Mile Homestead site in North Weston were unsuccessful. After a year of reminders to the ACT government, we did visit the site with reps from the ACT Heritage Unit and ACTPLA and were invited to submit a proposal to do an extensive excavation to seek evidence of the former buildings. These proposals take quite a bit of time and effort to prepare, with costings, especially when we have full time jobs to keep us busy. We submitted, then revised the proposal after feedback, but were advised after some months that the ACT government had no funding for this project.

Hopefully 12 Mile will be recognised somewhere near to its location with the information already to hand. It must be close to the planned public open space in the new suburb to stand a chance of being saved from oblivion. Planners rule supreme and if a site is within a choice potential suburban area, one which will fill government coffers when the land is sold, there is no chance of conserving or even interpreting a historic site of significance to Canberrans.

And hopefully CAS will get another opportunity to work with students from the University of Canberra and ANU as lecturers from both institutions had agreed to promote and take part in the project.

At the invitation of the Chief Minister, CAS also submitted a proposal for excavation, conservation, interpretation and reconstruction at 'The Valley' homestead. This was

acknowledged and passed to the ACT Heritage Unit for assessment against their priorities and the months tick by as we wait for a response.

We also sent comments on the proposed Eastern Broadacre development. Many thanks to Marilyn Folger for sending information based on her wide research to make sure we catch the opportunities to advocate for recognition of archaeological heritage. Karen Williams from Oaks Estate also shared her research and CAS's comments sought recognition of the location of Timothy Beard's homestead 'Quinbean' within the new development. CAS also advocates generally for in-depth cultural heritage surveys and the interpretation of historic sites within all new developments.

We have taken some opportunities for joint lobbying with the National Trust (ACT); in particular we ask the ACT Government to consider seeking input from reputable heritage groups such as ourselves during the survey and planning stages for future developments. We send in information and make suggestions but are largely put off. If we get copies of cultural heritage reports they have been through the ACT Heritage Council and ACTPLA and have been signed off so there is no capacity for change, unless some unexpected evidence is unearthed in the course of development. This is far too late to have any impact on the promotion and interpretation of history within developments. CAS would be happy to receive drafts through the Trust as part of their pre-eminent role in local heritage and their capacity to seek and provide comments from colleagues.

To those of you reading this who haven't been along to meetings, please come and introduce yourselves to our friendly committee. We appreciate your support, from being an enthusiastic audience to taking part in some of our events. And we are always looking for help with our program, so don't be shy, we really are a great bunch of people and we would love to help you gain experience that might help you get a job one day.

On behalf of the committee, I wish you all happy and peaceful festive season and look forward to continuing our adventures in 2011.