



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Seminar Series

Archaeology, Museums,
Heritage & Material Culture



When

10 August 2018
3.15 – 5.00pm

Where

History Room S223
Main Quadrangle
University of Sydney

Seminar will be followed by
conversation and casual drinks
at the Forest Lodge Hotel (Flodge)

For more information contact:

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Dr Peter Hobbins

ARC DECRA Research Fellow
University of Sydney

What on earth is the archaeology of airspace?

The history and archaeology of military aviation have traditionally focused on the technologies of flight. Whether considering wreck sites or former airfields, aviation artefacts typically ground archaeological inquiry in the materiality of construction, modification and logistics. Rarely invoked, however, is the sensation of flight and the way technology both creates and governs the unstable realm of airspace. In this exploratory paper, I discuss the remnants of two Australian military aviation technologies from World War II.

The first is the Cotton Aerodynamic Anti-G suit, a rubberised flying suit designed to protect fighter pilots from 'blackout' during high-G manoeuvres. Integrating historical documents with the materiality of these relics, I argue that the physiological and psychological needs of aircrew determined the ultimate failure of the suit, despite its acknowledged technological benefits. Moreover, I question how the physical remains prompt a phenomenological re-imagining of high-G aerial combat.

The second case study considers the archaeological residues of the wartime radar stations which dotted the Australian coastline. I suggest that as an extension of wireless and radio navigation technology, these sites both projected and protected a new domain of Australian sovereignty – airspace. Taking cues from recent work in historical geography, can the surviving structures and artefacts of wartime radar stations prompt us to theorise an 'archaeology of airspace'?



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Seminar Series

Archaeology, Museums, Heritage & Material Culture

Join the Sydney Archaeology community for their semester 2 2018 seminar series on museums, heritage, material culture and archaeology.

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Dr Michael Westaway (Griffith) **Friday 03 August**

Bioarchaeological approaches to migration and mobility: recent research in Queensland.

Dr Peter Hobbins (USYD) **Friday 10 August**

What on earth is the archaeology of airspace?

Dr Ceri Shipton (ANU) **Friday 17 August**

An early origin for the Later Stone Age on the coast of East Africa: implications for human behaviour, cognition, and dispersal.

Prof Lynn Meskell (Stanford) **Friday 31 August**

Impasse management: Jerusalem, Palestine and UNESCO World Heritage in danger.

Katherine Woo (USYD) **Friday 07 September**

Shifting palaeoeconomies in the East Alligator River Region.

Dr Rebecca Jones (ANU) **Friday 14 September**

Reconceptualising human-animal relationships and transitions to domestication in Southeast Asia.

Alix Thoeming (USYD) **Friday 21 September**

Around the barbarian sea: settlements and outcomes in the Medieval Baltic.

Assoc. Prof Annie Clarke (USYD) **Friday 05 October**

Dr Ursula Frederick (ANU)

The Groote Eylandt Archaeology Repatriation Project.

Dr Peta Longhurst (Sydney Living Museums) **Friday 12 Oct.**

Materialising contagion: an archaeology of Sydney's North Head Quarantine Station.

Dr Ben Shaw (UNSW) **Friday 19 October**

The archaeology of the Massim, Papua New Guinea.

Dr Gert van den Bergh (UOW) **Friday 26 October**

Reworking old ground and reaching new depths: early mid-Pleistocene hominin presence in the Cagayan, Philippines.

Dr Alex Mackay (UOW) **Friday 02 November**

Archaeology of the Doring River catchment, South Africa: sketching 100 000 years of technological organisation.