

## In conversation with Graham Connah

EDWARD HIGGINBOTHAM

*At the age of 75, Graham Edward Connah, fifteen years after retirement, still has a busy schedule of international conferences, papers and other publications. He is Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at the University of New England, Armidale, NSW, and a Visiting Research Fellow at the School of Archaeology and Anthropology at the Australian National University, Canberra. In some respects this interview is a curriculum vitae, the course of a life, but it is not simply a list of positions held or papers published, but an exploration of the high standards, goals, motivations and decision-making of a world-renowned archaeologist. He is of course a member of the Cambridge diaspora of the 1950s and 1960s. He learnt his archaeology under some of the renowned names of world archaeology.*

*From the interview, it will become obvious how lucky we are to have had Graham's contribution to historical archaeology: life could so easily have led in other directions. Historical archaeology was nurtured from its infancy in Sydney but there was also a different 'Voice from Armidale'. Some have been critical, but it might be wiser to understand the reasons for strongly held views and the benefits they might impart. One of those benefits was indeed the founding of this Journal.*

### BRITAIN

**EH:** Good morning Graham. Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for the ASHA Journal. We're here in Canberra, at Graham's residence. This interview is taking place on the 6th of November 2009.

Graham, you were born in Cheshire on 11 August 1934. Can you tell us a little of your mother and father and what they did and also how they encouraged you to go into archaeology?

**GC:** I don't know if they encouraged me at all; nobody was encouraged to make such a stupid move back in the 1940s and 1950s. My father was a survivor of the First World War, otherwise I wouldn't have been around and he worked for the London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company in a sort of moderately senior clerical capacity in Liverpool.

My mother, like many women at that time, had given up work when she married in the 1920s, but was a commercial artist who'd worked for a firm called Lees, in Birkenhead, who designed and made tapestries. They were probably one of the best tapestry companies in Britain. I suppose the major influence of the two really would have been my mother who was a tough woman; she was Anglo-French. Her own mother had been a survivor of the 1870 Siege of Metz in France during the Franco-Prussian War and my mother's idea of the world was one where you made your opportunities and you didn't let the world push you around.

**EH:** You went on to win a scholarship to the Wirral Grammar School in 1946. I'm assuming that Wirral Grammar was a public school, is that the case?

**GC:** No, it was actually a government-funded grammar school that had started in the early 1930s. One of its principal claims to fame was that it had produced Harold Wilson, who eventually became a prime minister. It was, I suppose, in many ways a good northern British grammar school.

**EH:** So did this school give you opportunities that you would not otherwise have had, had you not won that scholarship?

**GC:** Oh I think so. Yes, otherwise one would have been flung into what was then called the secondary modern educational system. So the grammar school opportunity was important.

**EH:** How did you become interested in archaeology?

**GC:** Well I was always interested in it; I sort of grew up with it I suppose you'd say. I mean I can remember even at the age of 8 or 9 the books that had bits of archaeology in them. The first excavation I ever saw, I think I was probably 13. The year was

1948 and I was taken to see an excavation in Chester which I subsequently then participated in as a minor helper. I was taken to see it by a man that I knew in a village near where I grew up, called Tom Price; a rather curious character who was an ex-British Army Gurkha officer, who had been in India. So people like him and particularly a woman called Nora MacMillan were influential. She was actually an invertebrate zoologist who worked in Liverpool Museum, mainly on mollusca. I had quite a lot of encouragement from her; she wasn't an archaeologist but she understood the nature of primary scientific research and the importance of its presentation in published material. She regularly published. She died only a few years ago in 2003, in her 90s, with a bibliography that started back in the early 1930s. That was an important influence. But at the Wirral Grammar School itself we had a number of good teachers, I mean there really were exceptional teachers; there were some pretty bad ones as well but the good ones included one who was a



*Graham with an antique firearm, working on a collection of weapons at Liverpool Museum (United Kingdom), 1956. The collection had narrowly survived the bombing of the museum during World War II but needed urgent conservation and re-cataloguing (photograph Keith Priestman, courtesy Graham Connah).*

geography teacher who had lost his job in, I think, the University of Exeter in the 1930s because of the cutbacks during the Depression; one who was probably most influential in my case was a man who taught history, who was an Oxford product, a man called Edward Hodgkinson. None of these people had anything really to do with archaeology particularly but ....

**EH:** But they encouraged you...

**GC:** But they were helpful. I think this is often forgotten nowadays that the roads into archaeology are far more diverse and in fact need to be far more diverse than is sometimes now the case.

**EH:** When you were at school how much time did you actually spend on excavations?

**GC:** Oh, it was quite a lot, during school holidays. I worked in Chester with Graham Webster, who subsequently was at the University of Birmingham. Webster was a good stratigraphist, working of course on Roman and Medieval deposits up to 6 metres deep in an urban environment. I also did workroom jobs, learning to draw pottery and things like that. I worked with Terence Powell, who was a prehistoric archaeologist at the University of Liverpool, and with the West Cornwall Field Club. These were things I did in school holidays. But in between those I spent a lot of time visiting archaeological sites of just about every sort you can imagine in various parts of Britain. One of the advantages I had was that my father's position as a railway employee was sufficiently senior that as one of his family I was able to travel for free on the railway system, which in those days was still very extensive.

**EH:** You won a scholarship to Selwyn College in Cambridge in 1953. At that time Cambridge required men to complete their compulsory military service before entering the university and in your case you served in the Royal Navy. When you actually got to Cambridge in 1956, how were you influenced in the courses you took?

**GC:** There are several things I need to say here. One, I didn't actually win a scholarship to Cambridge and you know the Cambridge system sufficiently well to know what I mean here. I actually had a scholarship from the county in which I grew up, a Cheshire County Major Scholarship it was called. So they paid my costs and so on. But my entry into Cambridge was as a Commoner at Selwyn College. I went to Cambridge because I wanted to do archaeology. The only places you could do a full degree in archaeology in those days was either at Edinburgh, which was rather European-oriented, or in Cambridge which, with the influence of Grahame Clark and Charles McBurney and others, realized that there was a big world out there beyond Europe. Having got to Cambridge, the pressures on me were fairly extreme; my family insisted that one had to be able to earn a living. There were no jobs in archaeology in the 1950s, or virtually none, and therefore I was prevailed upon to do the history tripos so that I could become a school teacher. I faithfully did history for two years running, as far as I could avoiding modern history and doing medieval and ancient history instead. It was only at the beginning of my third year that I got tired of this and decided that I would change to the archaeology tripos but do the whole thing in one year flat and then do finals straight off.

**EH:** So that was a two year course that you did in one year?

**GC:** That's right but in fact I had not done first year archaeology either; so I was actually competing with people who had been doing it for three years. This was I suppose a desperate move because I realized that if I didn't do something I wasn't going to get into archaeology at all. Then surprisingly, when I'd finished, Cambridge turned around and offered me a job for three years as a graduate research assistant. I stayed only two years at that job because I went off to more interesting things.

**EH:** You graduated in 1959.

**GC:** Yes, BA in 1959, MA in 1964.

**EH:** I wanted to talk to you about David Clarke because you worked with him as a colleague in the 1960s. Now I later studied at Peterhouse, Cambridge, with David Clarke. How did you find his approach to the New Archaeology influenced you, or was it in its formative years?

**GC:** I think it was very much in its formative years. The end of the 1950s was a strange period in archaeology, certainly in the Cambridge scene. I think we felt that things had developed to a fairly sophisticated level, particularly with the work of Grahame Clark who at that time was one of the major figures in European prehistoric archaeological research and publication. I don't think many of us could then see how things were going to progress. There was a feeling, I think, in the late 1950s that increasingly we would be dependent on input from the natural sciences. We felt that aspect was going to develop but I don't think we quite realized there was going to be the explosion of theoretical concerns that characterised the so-called New Archaeology. David Clarke I knew. I have often wondered whether people realize that basically David Clarke was, as an undergraduate anyway, a very good conventional archaeologist. He knew the succession of the European Bronze Age and things like that far better than many of the rest of us did, so it wasn't that he was jumping off into the deep end in some great new developments. He could compete at the levels that were then current and he then moved beyond that, initially with his matrix analysis, partly influenced I always thought by a friend of mine called Bill Easterbrook who was at Selwyn as I was and was doing postgraduate work in physics, particularly on computerisation. It was from Easterbrook that I got the notion of matrix analysis and passed it on to David Clarke, although David always claimed afterwards that he thought it up himself. David Clarke I regarded as a person who was a good friend, a good person to know, and we even did a little bit of work together and published a paper jointly in the early 60s. He talked better than he wrote; I don't think as an author he was all that remarkable quite frankly.



*Graham with Paul Ashbee (right) at the excavation of a Bronze Age burial mound, Milton Hill, Wiltshire, (United Kingdom) 1958 (photograph A.D. Underwood, courtesy Graham Connah).*

**EH:** When I was at Cambridge Grahame Clark was the Master at Peterhouse. He, of course, was a pioneer in environmental archaeology. Now I understand that you actually went on one of his very well known excavations?

**GC:** Hurst Fen, which was in East Anglia. I wasn't at Starr Carr. I was working on other things at the time he was doing Starr Carr.

**EH:** Graham, while you were at Cambridge, during vacations you again went on fieldwork and excavations. Who were the people that helped you in gaining experience?

**GC:** I suppose the most important through the four years 1956 to 1959 would have been Paul Ashbee, who was then doing what we'd now call contract excavations, rescue excavations on Neolithic and Bronze Age burial mounds, mainly working in Wiltshire on the chalk. I was particularly interested in the specific techniques of excavation in chalk and so I worked with him in 1956 as a volunteer. He used to work for about seven weeks each summer. Then in '57 I worked with him again, when he got me paid as an assistant, and then in '58 and '59 I was his assistant director and again paid, rather better. Ashbee, I think, was influential in that he was a good stratigraphist, a good excavator in the sense of understanding the material, what the Americans call the dirt, in a way that some archaeologists I've found over the years have not been. Paul also was a good publicist, he published his material regularly, in spite of the fact that he didn't write that well; his prose was somewhat clumsy for instance but he turned what were basically rescue excavations into research projects in an incredible fashion and not only published them in a series of worthwhile papers but also wrote a number of synthetic books on the subject of the prehistoric burial mounds. So Paul, I think, would have been influential, although at the time perhaps I would have denied the fact. He was a man who I worked very happily with till '59 and after that when I was working for Cambridge I went off on my own; although it's long forgotten now I excavated a British causewayed camp, a Neolithic site, in Wiltshire, in '61. It was published eventually in 1965.

**EH:** With your Cambridge background and having graduated in 1959, you worked for a short period at the university. What career choices were basically available to you and what opportunities did you take up?

**GC:** Oh basically at the end of the 1950s there was really nothing. I have to qualify that slightly; Brian Fagan, who was a contemporary in my year, went off to Zambia. He got a post there. Who else was there? Richard Wright eventually finished up in Sydney, having gone there via East Africa. There were nine of us, I think, in my final year of whom probably four or five found some sort of a job in archaeology. There were no jobs around, I mean there were museum jobs occasionally – difficult to get; there were odd jobs with the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments that I'd worked for briefly one summer for about six weeks in a temporary capacity. I remember once applying for a job with them, because Grahame Clark insisted I should do so but it was completely unsuitable. What they really wanted was an architectural historian but the situation was so desperate that Clark, quite rightly, would pressure people into applying for any jobs that came up; you know, you had to get in somewhere was his attitude and he was right. So I worked for the University of Cambridge for two years on an archaeomagnetic dating project, which was being run jointly by the Department of Geodesy and Geophysics and the Department of Classical Archaeology. I supplied and measured the magnetic samples from archaeological sites, drove all over Britain and into Western Europe: Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. It was a dating project that seems to have died after I left it.

**EH:** But you did work then with David Clarke, didn't you?

**GC:** That was just us in our spare time as it were; in fact we worked at night-times on that. The magnetic measuring

equipment that I had in a cellar under the Classics Museum near Peterhouse was susceptible to the traffic on the roads outside and so we would start work about 1 o'clock in the morning each time.

## AFRICA

**EH:** Cambridge was a place you chose over Edinburgh because of its international spheres of research, where you thought Edinburgh was more insular at that time. That probably opened up opportunities for you in other places in the world. One opportunity in particular came along. Would you like to talk about that?

**GC:** Yes, a curious matter really. You have to understand the situation at the time in West Africa. This was the very early days of independence for a number of African states, particularly in West Africa; first was Ghana in 1957 and Nigeria became independent in 1960. At that time there was in Nigeria a Federal Government department called the Department of Antiquities, directed by a man named Bernard Fagg. Now Fagg had a brother who worked at the British Museum, William Fagg, who was also reasonably well known. They were both, I think, and certainly in Bernard's case, products from Cambridge, from Cambridge archaeology, in their case of the 1930s. Fagg was trying to build up a research capacity in newly independent Nigeria, where basically we were almost in the position that European archaeology had been in 150 years earlier. We knew nearly nothing, we couldn't date anything. Almost no archaeology worth the name had been done and so Fagg wanted to attract people into Nigeria. He got Thurstan Shaw there, who subsequently became professor at Ibadan. He got Frank Willett there, who was later the Director of the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow and he got myself there and also a man called Robert Soper who nowadays is still somehow surviving in Zimbabwe, and there were others. Bernard Fagg therefore was interested in making appointments to research positions in archaeology for the Nigerian government; the positions were expressly to do research. They advertised one such position in early 1961 – I was one of the applicants, surprisingly I got it. I went out to Nigeria in October 1961 and stayed there for ten years.



*Graham with the (reduced) wet season staff of the Federal Department of Antiquities, Benin City, Nigeria, 1964 (unknown photographer; courtesy Graham Connah).*

**EH:** The Benin bronzes in the Museum of Mankind always had a fascination for me when I was at Cambridge. What did you achieve during your ten years in Nigeria?

**GC:** Well, the first three years I worked for the Department of Antiquities. I remember meeting Bernard Fagg in Cambridge

before I went out to Nigeria. Of course things were very ad hoc in those days, nothing like as much systemisation as we now get with appointments. Bernard obviously decided that I was the person he wanted and I remember having dinner with him in Cambridge and he said, 'Oh, when you get there what do you want to do?' And I said, 'Well, nobody seems to know anything about anything. Benin City is a place that is known for its artwork but there is nothing known of the material cultural background of the artwork. I'll start in Benin.' He said, 'That's a good idea. Horrible place, terrible climate, nobody wants to go there but it needs to be looked at'. And so, with his blessing, I went and excavated in Benin City for three years; working for six months or so each dry season and working on analysis during the wet seasons and taking bits of leave at the same time. In Benin I was able to set up a chronology extending back almost a thousand years and again this was an urban environment with quite deep deposits in some places, although we had some difficulty initially finding them. Very difficult place technically to excavate: tropical red sand, very hard in the dry season, unworkable during the wet season, very little stratigraphic information readily apparent. A bit of a myth that you couldn't get stratigraphy from such deposits; in fact you could. The other myth was that you couldn't isolate adobe mud structures in such deposits; well you could. But these things were difficult to do and they certainly weren't tasks that beginning excavators would have succeeded at. Now, luckily, I had by then quite a bit of excavation experience. We managed to do fairly well in Benin. I eventually published a book with Oxford University Press about the Benin work. It came out ten years later in 1975, after various papers etc.

**EH:** To do this excavation work you gathered together a team of local people, who tended to follow you from season to season. At some point I think you realised that there was a need to not just do research but to teach archaeology to African students, so that they could carry on the research and also the fieldwork. How did you put that into practice?

**GC:** Well that was much later. I should stress that the work in Benin was for the first three out of ten years. The next seven years were spent at the University of Ibadan, where I was hardly ever present because I was actually over 2000 kilometres away, up around Lake Chad, working on sites there. So the research continued until about 1968 and a bit after that too. The people I worked with were Nigerians. I didn't have any European assistants. None of the Nigerians who worked with me had a university education; their best education usually was a School Leaving Certificate. Indeed, many of them were illiterate in English, although they might in some cases be literate in Hausa or some other African language. So, I worked with people whose skills had to be developed as one worked and from the point of view of manual skills in excavation some of them became exceptionally good. In 1964 I left Benin and I was appointed as a Research Fellow at the University of Ibadan, subsequently a Senior Research Fellow. I worked then in Borno near Lake Chad, doing seven excavations over a number of years, including several major ones. That work also was subsequently published, in 1981.

But you asked about teaching. What happened there was that the appointments for several of us, including a man named Steve Daniels, myself and Thurstan Shaw, who held the chair, were research appointments but by the late 1960s we were becoming concerned that we really ought to be training Nigerian archaeologists. We were late to come to that point of view, I think, because for a long time we felt we didn't have enough raw material to use as a training medium; there wasn't enough known about West African archaeology to be able to teach it to undergraduates and we didn't really want to be teaching them European prehistory. So it was only by about 1968 that we had got to a point where we could start to give lectures in Nigerian and West African archaeology, initially to students in the History Department. By 1970 we'd managed to

get the university to create a Department of Archaeology, which significantly we were successful in getting put into the Faculty of Science, not in the Faculty of Arts, which so often is a restrictive place to have archaeology departments. We then started teaching undergraduate students, all Nigerians of course, and they became some of the first successful archaeologists in the country. However, in the middle of 1971 I left Nigeria.

**EH:** You say that archaeology in Arts Faculties is restrictive, whereas you think it would be better to have it in Science Faculties. What do you mean by that? What advantages would there be if archaeology was in a Science Faculty?

**GC:** One basic advantage, and I speak from experience here after working at an Australian university for many years, is the matter of funding. It seems to be generally recognised that scientists need laboratories, they need microscopes, they need funding for chemicals and all sorts of equipment; whereas if you're in an Arts Faculty you're dealing with people who are historians, sociologists, political scientists, people in English literature, whatever, people who don't recognise the necessity for such equipment, people who think that a laboratory is something that's out of place in a Faculty of Arts. But whether you call it an archaeological workroom or you call it an archaeological laboratory, you still need properly equipped working facilities. So that's one reason; other reasons are to do with attitudes of colleagues in other departments that one has to deal with on intra-university committees. My remarks might be somewhat dated now because so many universities have changed their structures into Schools, or grouped together subjects in different ways, so that the old damaging dichotomy between arts and sciences is no longer quite there. But I really had a problem. I occasionally had undergraduates at New England who wanted to do Honours in a BSc rather than a BA, and I was able sometimes to have somebody working on, for instance, archaeobotany where obviously they needed to work with both the Botany Department and the Archaeology Department, yet they were in two different faculties. So there were odd cases like that where we managed to get around it, but it was difficult.

**EH:** Leaving Nigeria in 1971 led to a different chapter in your life. As an introduction to that I'd like to ask you about when you met your wife, and about your children and what influence they may have had on your decision to leave Africa. So when did you meet your wife, Beryl?

**GC:** In the October of 1961, on a passenger ship called the *Accra*, somewhere in the Bay of Biscay I think, on our way to West Africa.

**EH:** So this was going from Southampton or...

**GC:** Going from Liverpool to Lagos, a fourteen day trip in those days. It hasn't happened now for many years; it takes about five or six hours to fly nowadays.

**EH:** And so when did you marry Beryl?

**GC:** Fifteen months later, in February 1963. She was in Nigeria, and had been there before me, as a midwifery tutor, training classes of Nigerian midwives in a government hospital in the western Nigerian city of Ibadan, where I subsequently worked at the university.

**EH:** So how would you describe her influence on your career?

**GC:** Hm, that's a good one. I suppose she kept me sane, as much as anything.

**EH:** She was your sea anchor.

**GC:** Yes, I suppose inevitably. She also participated in some fairly rough fieldwork, in various parts of Africa and in Australia, as well as doing the indices of most of my books. In particular, working in the conditions of the 1960s in West Africa could be difficult. Those were trying times, for instance during the 1960s we lived through the so-called Biafran War,

thirty months of civil war. We were fortunately on the winning side, so that the war didn't really affect us too much. But the Nigerian Civil War, as it is more correctly known to historians, was quite a difficult period, one nevertheless where we were able to continue even with field research (as long as we kept clear of the fighting) and certainly able to continue with university research. That took some doing; looking back on it, it was not an easy period.

**EH:** You brought up three children. Your first one was born in Africa, I think you then adopted two others?

**GC:** We adopted two others, yes.

**EH:** Do they have families of their own and are they in Australia now?



*Graham Connah and Beryl Fletcher in Ibadan, Nigeria, January 1963, shortly before their marriage there (unknown photographer, courtesy Graham Connah).*

**GC:** The ones we adopted were actually adopted from New Zealand. At that time there was a friend of ours working there in midwifery, who had problems finding adoptive parents. It's probably a difficult thing to believe these days but that was the case at that time, in that place; so we adopted two New Zealand children who were unrelated to one another. They were adopted virtually at birth. That was in 1969. By 1971 we were still in Nigeria; we had a son who was eight years of age, whose education obviously needed some attention, which it wasn't really getting in that environment, and we had two other children who were effectively twins, who were almost two years old. We thought it was time to move on, in spite of the fact that I had tenure at the University of Ibadan.

Now the situation in 1971; there had been a virtual explosion of archaeological appointments, particularly in Britain and America, through the 1960s but by '71 American employment was drying up. They'd appointed a lot of people from outside and American archaeology was developing far beyond what it had been; this was the so-called period of the New Archaeology after all. Also by 1971, in Britain, the development of archaeology had taken on a strongly parochial

flavour; it was all British or Western European, or Mediterranean archaeology. Really, nobody was interested in anyone with a knowledge of African archaeology, which is why people who had been working in Africa tended to go off to Canada, to America and to various other places. There were really no appointments in British archaeology for Africanists as one would call them. There was at that time only one such job in any British university and that was at the University of Birmingham, a position that was subsequently abolished. So that was the situation, one just had to go somewhere else unless one wanted to stay in the African scene.

## AUSTRALIA

**EH:** You had to change location basically for the education for your children.

**GC:** Yes.

**EH:** So what opportunities arose to allow you to do that?

**GC:** Well, in 1971 I applied for, and was successful in gaining a lectureship at the University of New England in northern New South Wales and worked for a couple of years there with Isabel McBryde before she left and went to the ANU at the end of 1973. At that point when she left I was able to start a separate Department of Archaeology; we'd previously been part of a Department of Classics and Ancient History. This was made possible by the fact that Isabel had been there for some twelve years and had created a very good foundation for a separate department, that was about to come into being when she decided to leave. But I got left holding the baby and subsequently built the department up. At first the department literally consisted of myself. By the time I retired in the mid-1990s there were, I think, almost a dozen of us: academic, technical and administrative staff. So it was a long haul and in so doing I felt strongly that the archaeology we taught had to have its feet firmly grounded in Australian soil; so initially we taught Australian prehistoric archaeology, at which I'm certainly no expert and never was, and subsequently I got people appointed who were, and I then moved sideways into Australian historical archaeology in the mid-1970s. And I was essentially trying to make sure we taught an archaeology in which we could involve our students in the field and also give them some potential for subsequent employment when they left as graduates, particularly if they left as Honours graduates, which has become the minimum qualification for archaeological employment in this country.

**EH:** We'll go back a little over that ground. You mentioned that Isabel McBryde had brought the situation to a particular threshold, but with her departure to ANU you felt you were dropped into the deep end. I understand that you did actually teach African, Australian and European prehistory but obviously you wanted to emphasise the Australian prehistory. Who did you take on to broaden the expertise that you had and to broaden the education that was available at UNE?

**GC:** Before we lose sight of it, yes, I did teach some African archaeology but I was concerned that anybody doing such courses would not particularly improve their chances of subsequent employment. So it's not a thing I stressed, but in my own research it remained important and I went back to Africa on a number of occasions; twice as a visiting professor at a Nigerian university in 1978 and 1981, and I worked in Egypt in the 1980s and then subsequently worked in Uganda in the 1990s etc. etc. So I was still involved heavily in African field research until the middle of the 1990s and in publishing African material both then and since. But from the point of view of running the department and the courses we taught, I tried to make sure we emphasised the Australian aspects. The first person I appointed therefore (in 1974) was Iain Davidson, whom most people would know of. He has recently retired from

the University of New England. I appointed him particularly because of his interest in faunal analysis and the fact that he came from what in those days we referred to as the Eric Higgs Stable in Cambridge.

**EH:** By taking on Iain Davidson and his emphasis on Aboriginal prehistory and also laboratory work you were able to get involved in historical archaeology.

**GC:** I should correct you slightly there, Iain, like myself, came to Australian prehistoric archaeology as an outsider. His background was in the so-called European Palaeolithic but he was very much a hunter-gatherer person, which I was not. I'd mainly worked on agricultural and urban societies in Africa, so that is why I particularly wanted him and he was also a product of what became known as economic prehistory in the early 1970s, very much a Cambridge development at that time.

**EH:** With Higgs and other people.

**GC:** Particularly with Higgs, yes.

**EH:** You scaled the ladder of university positions, becoming Foundation Professor of Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology in 1985. During this time you applied for other university positions, for example in 1976 for the foundation professorship at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and in 1981 for a post in Calgary, Canada. What were your intentions in applying for these posts?

**GC:** I suppose that the main reason was that in either case they would have given me improved access to African archaeological work. It is very difficult to continue an involvement in African archaeological research from an Australian base. There's the practical difficulty of the extraordinary expense of travel from this distance, which wouldn't have been the case from South Africa and wouldn't have been as serious a problem from Canada. However, I failed to get either of these positions, although I was on a short list of only two people in both instances. In the South African case I breathed a sigh of relief when I was unsuccessful. South Africa in the mid-1970s was not an attractive place and I don't think my background in 'Black Africa' would have been acceptable. In the case of Calgary a person was appointed who was already sitting there. In both instances my application was an attempt to improve my contact with African work. However, the University of New England, hard taskmaster though it was, with external-student teaching and so on, remained generous with study leave. I had three, year-long, study leaves during the twenty-three years I was there and I made use of them; in each case working in Cambridge for long periods of time, and with trips to Africa, and writing; preparing stuff for major publications.

**EH:** I think we're lucky in Australia that the university allowed you that research time to continue your research in Africa, but we're fortunate that you stayed because of your influence in historical archaeology. What made you take up historical archaeology?

**GC:** Several things I suppose. When I got to Australia in 1971 I turned to Aboriginal archaeology because I had to teach it to students and I had to involve them in fieldwork. In 1972, '73, '74 and '75, each year, I ran a training/research excavation on different shell middens, on the northern coast of New South Wales. But by 1976 things were beginning to change; Iain was there and I had Mike Rowland, who was a New Zealander and now works in Queensland. He was there for a couple of years with us as a research assistant but we got him involved in some teaching too. He rapidly adapted to Australian material. And then, in 1977, we appointed Sandra Bowdler who was very much an Australian prehistoric specialist and she was with us for four years at New England. So, by the mid-1970s I felt I was a little bit freer to choose what I did and I felt that Australian historical archaeology was a field that very much needed development. Apart from the work of Judy Birmingham in and

around Sydney in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, there was virtually nothing else happening so far as I can recollect. So this was a field that was crying out for attention, particularly in a rural setting, and therefore in 1976 I turned to the examination of an 1840s sheep station and a house which was in ruins, near Walcha. We worked for three weeks, more in a recording and survey role than in excavation, although we did a bit of excavation.

**EH:** This is Winterbourne, isn't it?

**GC:** This is Winterbourne, and we published that in 1978 and it would be one of my earlier publications in Australian historical archaeology, although the earliest I ever published was in the *Armidale and District Historical Society Journal* in 1977, a paper entitled 'Wool, water and settlement'. It was a sort of analytical discussion of the relationship of these factors on a nineteenth-century wool-growing property near Armidale, a place called Saumarez.

**EH:** It's now a National Trust Property.

**GC:** Yes, that's right. So that was an early piece. No excavation at all, it was just wandering around looking at the remains of buildings with an old man who'd known the property back in the 1920s; so combining the oral, the documentary and the archaeological evidence.

**EH:** Your other field schools; after Winterbourne you later excavated at Saumarez, you also excavated at a watermill near Guyra?

**GC:** That's right, Bagot's Mill. Three years we did out there.

**EH:** And you've also, more recently, done Lake Innes House at Port Macquarie.

**GC:** Yes.

**EH:** We've gone on ahead of ourselves a little. When I met you in the 1980s through committee membership of the Society, you were always promoting the need for publication of archaeological work; you indeed encouraged me to publish. How did this influence your approach to historical archaeology and your work for the Society?

**GC:** Yes, good question. By the time I met you, which I think was at the first ASHA Conference in 1981, in The National Trust Centre in Sydney, you were one of the speakers and I was one of the speakers as well. I was already involved with ASHA, which was very much a small scale, Sydney-University-oriented body, at that time. The Society already had the ASHA Newsletter, I think it originated in the early 1970s. There was an interest on the ASHA committee, in which I got involved, in founding a journal and because I'd been an assistant editor for three volumes of *The West African Journal of Archaeology*, which we'd started in Nigeria in 1971, I perhaps unwisely volunteered to be the foundation editor of a journal for the Society. I edited it for six years and subsequently edited a seventh volume and I stressed throughout that it was to be an *Australian Journal of Historical Archaeology* (subsequently changed to *Australasian Historical Archaeology*). I avoided calling it a journal of Australian historical archaeology, if you see the nuance?

**EH:** Yes.

**GC:** In other words, I felt the interest should be in historical archaeology in its broadest sense; that one had to lift the interest to a national level and ultimately to an international level. It took many years, I think, before ASHA as a society became anything like a national society. And it's still, I think, significant that there has not been a conference in Perth, for instance, in Western Australia; though I think there's now talk of having one there in the future. And I think we still have some way to go to lift Australian historical archaeology to a point where it is on the international scene, and that's one of the reasons why I recently published Lake Innes in a BAR volume overseas, to try and contribute to that.

But anyway, as you were hinting, from the very beginning I stressed the importance of publication. I felt that publication was being neglected and this particularly was the case because of the very rapid growth of commercial archaeology, as the British quite rightly call it, consultancies and so on: in America and Britain, in Australia and New Zealand, even in South Africa. This has been a development since the late 1970s and, because consultant archaeologists have to earn their living, they really don't have the time to publish and sometimes the work they are doing is not appropriate to use in such a way. They tend to publish far less than is usual in academic archaeology. And so we've seen, I think, a change in the character of archaeological work; with perhaps 90 per cent of historical archaeologists in Australia now involved as consultants, or as heritage people working for governments of one sort or the other. The proportion of us who are university academics, I think, is very small and so one recognises the problems that people have as consultants.

But in the early 1980s, when I was getting the journal going, I felt that we had to have a readily available vehicle that would encourage people to publish. Consultants who really wanted to make a place for themselves in the profession would surely want, from time to time, to produce some of their more interesting work in publications. So there had to be a suitable publication outlet and we really didn't have one; the ASHA Newsletter wasn't refereed, the new journal I made sure was, double refereed, from the very beginning. In addition, other journals weren't really interested in historical archaeology, which even as late as the early 1980s was still regarded as a poor relation of prehistoric archaeology. There were disparaging remarks made by some Australian prehistorians about the pointless activity of what the Americans called 'tin can archaeology'. The journal was, perhaps, the most important contribution that I was fortunate enough to make to Australian historical archaeology. Setting aside my excavations, publications and teaching of the subject, I think the journal was of major importance. By now, almost twenty-five years on, it has contributed in a massive way; some hundreds of papers have been published and, at least in some cases, they might not have been published if the journal hadn't existed.

**EH:** I suppose all of us who go through university are imbued with the importance of publication but when we get out in the consultant field the standard can fall, especially if the government bodies that regulate the archaeological excavation permits don't insist on the highest level of publication. However, do you think there is a distinction between academic archaeology and consultant archaeology? Do you think that consultant archaeology can address the research issues that are researched in universities and do you think there should be closer liaison between both consultants and universities?

**GC:** That's a lot of questions and they raise some fundamental issues which are not often considered; too many things are taken for granted. I should first of all admit bias, my career has essentially been as an archaeological researcher and teacher, and sometimes an administrator. In short, research and research publication have been my major involvement. Now in that respect I have been, I suppose, singularly fortunate, in that in every position I've had I've been able either to spend all my time on research and its outcomes, or reasonably substantial amounts of time. We're now in a situation as I've just said, where the greater number of archaeologists do not have what they would no doubt regard as that luxury, and commercial archaeology has been the major development of recent decades. There are those who have accused me in print of being prejudiced against consulting work. I think those comments were probably unjustified. I'm not prejudiced against consulting work but I have my misgivings about the way that commercial archaeology has developed.

In contrast, in Britain there has been a tendency to set up regional archaeological research units. For example, there is a

well-respected one in Wessex. This has led to the creation of regional appointments; you've had archaeologists employed full-time in such service units or in local government. Although there has also been a considerable development of commercial archaeology in Britain, I long felt it was unfortunate that, in the Australian case, we did not develop similar regional archaeological services. Not just archaeological administrators working in heritage for governments but people who are actually employed to look after archaeological investigations made necessary by development in, shall we say, the north of New South Wales, or the Gippsland area of Victoria, or whatever. Instead of that there has been this ad hoc business of commercial archaeology where, as far as I can see, anybody with even the most basic degree in archaeology can set themselves up as a consultant, and there have been even cases where it's claimed that non-graduates have done consulting work.

Clearly therefore, there is not the peer reviewing and academic monitoring that one might have expected if people had proper appointments in archaeological units, under local government or under environmental departments of government, or whatever. If that were the case, the standards, I think, would have been more under review, under continual scrutiny. As it is, we seem to have developed a situation where archaeology has become a saleable commodity. I'm not necessarily against this but I feel things could have developed in another way that might have been more beneficial to the discipline; because, when we come back to my obsession with publication, a great deal of the work that is done in the name of consulting archaeology does not get fed into the body of published material. In short, it is not actually contributing to the discipline as a whole.

**EH:** So, let me recap here: you're looking at a historical situation in which the funding for consulting archaeology has been development-based. Now I think that as historical archaeology matures we're beginning to realize the bias that's in that focus and are correcting it by various means. Also I think people recognise the problem of grey literature, the reports that consultants like myself have produced, and are realizing the need to make those more available by various means.

**GC:** Yes, one of your questions touched on something I didn't answer, and that is the business of collaborative work of one sort or another between the academic aspects of archaeology and what I call the commercial aspects. That has begun to happen in some institutions and I think that with careful control it is an important development. I've long thought that archaeology was not just a reproductive discipline where you trained future archaeologists, but also an educative discipline that was as good as any other in training people to use their minds, people who would then go into employment of all sorts, not necessarily as archaeologists. Nevertheless, if we're going to think one of the roles of archaeology departments is to train future archaeologists, then we ought to have closer ties between those university departments and the consulting aspects of the discipline, because that's the sort of work most of them are going to finish up doing.

**EH:** From my position in consultant archaeology, the amount of excavation that someone like myself will do provides a lot of research material for university students – if it was available to them.

**GC:** So the answer really is – we don't have this I think – we ought to have situations where universities could, from time to time, turn around and say, 'Alright, we have a year-long fellowship that we will offer to consultant archaeologists. Here you are, Joe Bloggs, you come and sit down at our university for a year, do whatever research or writing that you want to do, but we would hope that while you're here, at the most, a quarter of your time is spent contributing to our teaching'. Now that sort of research fellowship flexibility as far as I know we haven't seen develop sufficiently in Australian situations.

**EH:** Well let's hope that universities and consultants take note of that comment.

**GC:** I think there has to be generosity on the part of universities, they have to give something if we're going to solve this thing. We are dealing here with a situation where universities are perennially short of money.

**EH:** I think a better understanding is needed of the amount of material that consultant archaeologists gather, and the need for university students to further research that material. I think it's important to set a standard of excavation and recording and cataloguing, so that it is easily available to students and their thesis work, rather than working from the ground up, so to speak.

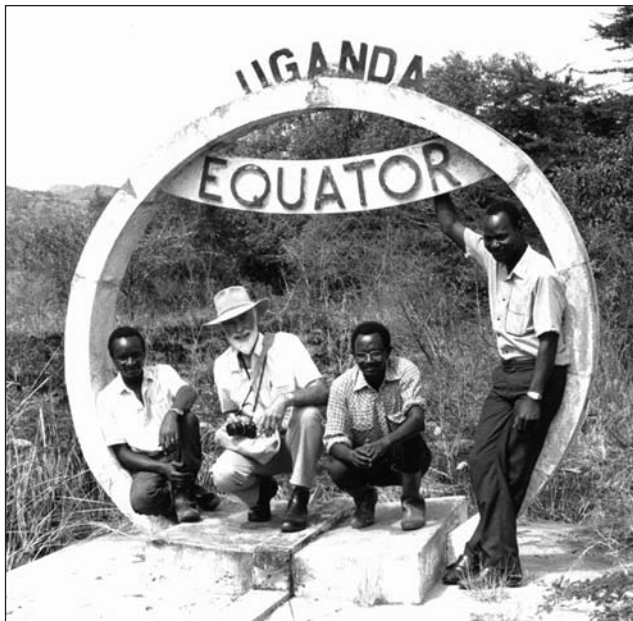
When I first arrived in October 1980, it was clear that Judy Birmingham was the person that you had to know in historical archaeology. From Armidale, you also had a major contribution to make to the Society. You were intent on developing historical archaeology for UNE and its region?

**GC:** It wasn't necessarily a regional thing, it was a matter of practicality and what could be afforded in terms of cost of transportation. So that was the hard reality of it. I got involved in ASHA, I'm not quite sure when, but I think it was probably 1977 and it was actually because of Ilma Powell I think. It was Ilma who encouraged me to attend meetings of ASHA and join the committee.

**EH:** I remember you commenting to me, when I was a committee member, that you had to come all the way down from Armidale and it was a big commitment for you.

**GC:** It was, but Ilma was very encouraging and as Treasurer of the society she even used to try and defray a small part of my expenses in attending those meetings.

**EH:** I want to hear more about your major field projects in historical archaeology. Those of us outside of academia probably know you best through your fieldwork. We've already mentioned Winterbourne and Saumarez and Bagot's Mill. You had two other projects; I think you also did some work at Regentville; would you like to describe that before we go on to Lake Innes House?



During archaeological fieldwork, Uganda, 1989. Left to right: Peter Bisaso, GEC, Ephraim Kamuhangire, Thaddayo Owuora. Peter and Ephraim were from the Ugandan Department of Antiquities and Museums, Kampala. Thaddayo was from the British Institute in Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya. (photograph Andrew Piper, courtesy Graham Connah).

**GC:** Well, Regentville was my great experiment in collaborative archaeology. I felt that, by putting the resources of the Sydney University archaeology setup together with those from New England, we could accomplish something on a larger scale than we could working separately; and indeed, that was the case. We were able to run the 1985 training excavation at Regentville on fairly large scale. We had a lot of students there from both universities. Judy Birmingham and I co-directed the thing. Subsequently I went off to other work, particularly by 1986 I was excavating in the Egyptian desert in a place called Qasr Ibrim, an urban site near the Sudanese border. So I was only involved in Regentville for one year. Of course Sydney University continued and, as is well known, worked on it for some years subsequent to that. My work there was published in 1986 and I published it particularly from the point of view of my own research interests at that time. I was mainly concerned with the apparent discrepancies between what I called the historical reality and the archaeological reality, that is to say with the contrast between what was known from the documentary evidence and what was ascertainable archaeologically. So that was my interest in that particular site and this is an interest I've had with other historical archaeological sites. I've been interested in the methodological and theoretical implications of historical archaeological sites from the point of view of archaeology more generally.

**EH:** One could ask how your archaeological fieldwork has contributed more knowledge than would have been available if you'd just done extensive historical research. How do you think your fieldwork has contributed beyond what was already known from historical documentation?

**GC:** I think the quick answer to that is that quite often I've regarded contributing to history as a secondary issue. My major concern was to use historical archaeology to illuminate archaeology, rather than to illuminate history. The Lake Innes work for instance. It went on for some years, for we did a long period of recording from 1993 till 1998 except for 1996, then three years of excavation, seven weeks each year. My major concern there was to ask questions about the visibility of socio-economic status in the archaeological record. We had a fairly substantial documentary record, including the diary of a young woman who actually lived at the place during the relevant time. I was concerned to test the archaeological visibility of documented socio-economic status. And that's an aspect that has involved a lot of people in historical archaeology in the United States for instance, and in other places; it's nothing new, it's just that I'd been wanting to do this in an Australian context. Now in the process we may well have added to an understanding of what an early nineteenth-century rural property of that sort was like, i.e. contributed to the historical data, but my main concern was to use the site to contribute to archaeological understanding.

**EH:** What avenues did you explore to elucidate status from archaeological evidence? Was it ceramics, was it building sizes, was it other evidence?

**GC:** Well, all of those. One of the things I looked at in my publications, for instance, was the contrasting sizes of living spaces allowed to servants at different levels and comparing them with the situation in the main household of the family whose property it was. But the ceramics I also looked at closely, working there in conjunction with Alasdair Brooks, known to people here for his very considerable knowledge of British nineteenth-century ceramics. So yes, buildings, material used in the buildings, living space, the associated artefact assemblages, particularly ceramics, but also glass.

**EH:** So you gathered together a large team of colleagues and workers for the Lake Innes project. However, during your years at UNE, not only teaching internal students but external students also, you have mentioned that it was extremely hard work, but that one of the things that kept you going was the



enthusiasm of the students. So how would you like to acknowledge their encouragement?

**GC:** I think it was of major importance; I haven't any doubt at all. In the early 1970s, students who were studying with us wanted to participate in excavations although they were not a formal part of any course. As time went on, once I got involved with historical archaeology, I tried particularly to develop the practical aspects of the courses themselves. I ran these courses at second- and third-year undergraduate levels, so that students doing a course of historical archaeology with me would participate in actual field projects, usually not excavations although they could be. For some years, for instance, we worked at a property called Newholme which actually belonged to the University of New England, which had the remains of nineteenth-century structures in the form of buildings and so on. I would take students out there for a whole day, or several days, and allocate different ones, or pairs of them, to particular buildings and ask them to draw plans, to draw elevations of the walls, do a structural analysis in terms of chronology and utilisation of materials, that sort of thing. And then, as the course progressed, with lectures and the rest of it, I would have a component where they chose a topic of their own and produced a report on something comparable and it could be anything they liked. Usually it was field-based but sometimes I would stipulate topics that were museum-based because I felt, I still feel, that artefact studies based on museum collections are neglected in this country. I would say to them: 'Choose anything you like and write me a report about six thousand words long, it's got to be illustrated, it's got to be about the physical evidence not just about the documentation'. And I had all sorts of things. I had a man who wrote about the Queensland railway system, one woman who did a study of flat irons, another one who investigated a hot air engine of all things, one who wrote about a fountain in Singleton, and so on.

**EH:** And you published some of that work.

**GC:** I published some of that work, yes. One year I chose the nine best out of about eighty of these projects and published a little book called *The Archaeology of the Historical Artefact*, which has long been out of print. And I fully intended to pull together some of the site studies also and publish them, but the inhibiting factor, apart from time, is the fact that I would need the permission of the people who wrote those things and I no longer have contact with most of them; very sad, one loses contact with people. That point about student influence I think is very important. Once I got students involved like that, this is how Lake Innes started, it started as part of a field-recording course in 1993 and it wasn't until I got an ARC grant for it in 1999 that we started excavations. But the students who had been involved in those courses became personally identified with the site, and they came back year after year. And that sort of identification is one, whether it still exists I doubt, but it's one I remember operating in Britain in the 1950s, when most excavations were done with volunteer labour. They got no payment at all, yet the same people would come back year after year. And you see we had a lot of external students at New England like this, and amongst them there were school teachers, nurses, engineers, architects, all sorts of people.

**EH:** I appreciate your explanation of how that project got going. I think it's a way that we should repeat more often but from the consultant's point of view I think it's also necessary to have students participate in the rescue excavations that we do.

**GC:** Yes, I think so.

**EH:** There are so few opportunities for research excavations. I'm running an excavation at Belgenny Farm, which has now gone for two seasons and yes, you get a dedicated crew that will come back. I think the important factor here is to coordinate sufficiently with universities to enable students to come along, which is sometimes difficult with the timetable in rescue excavations because that is set by the building program, but

surely we can work together more closely.

**GC:** One of the difficulties there for most academics is that one is always constrained by the academic timetable. Timetables in universities tend not just to be set for individual departments but for a faculty or school or a number of related departments, simply because the nature of Australian university undergraduate degrees is broader than in some overseas countries. People are not just studying archaeology, they can't in many degree structures. They've got to combine it with other subjects, they might be doing courses in history as well, sociology or geography, or other things; so the timetable becomes the major difficulty. Students are often unable to participate in an excavation during term time.

**EH:** A book that we haven't mentioned is of course *Of the Hut I Buildded*.

**GC:** Which was my attempt to produce a book on Australian historical archaeology that would give people a starting point. Whether anyone still looks at it I don't know, it's now way out of date of course. Several years after I did that book, Cambridge University Press who published it asked me to do a more general book, selecting maybe fifty major historical archaeological sites in Australia. But that made me realise one of the problems I haven't mentioned about the emphasis on consulting archaeology as it's developed in this country. I had to decline the request because I realised that such a book could not be written unless one could access a lot of unpublished grey literature. And to do that one would have travel to all the state capitals to look at heritage libraries, and even then one couldn't guarantee one would be getting a representative selection of material. A similar problem has arisen in North America. Brian Fagan in one of his books says that he was criticized when he produced a book on ancient America because he'd ignored consultants' reports in the grey literature. He responded by saying that his readers needed to be able to look at the sources he had used if they were going to carry on their interests, and if the sources were not published, the readers couldn't access them.

**EH:** I should mention that Sydney University have funding from the Heritage Branch to digitise the grey literature. So a lot of the early reports that came out of Sydney University and the consultants who had been working prior to 1990 will probably see the light of day in the next few years.

**GC:** However, that will eventually create severe digital archiving difficulties but immediately from the point of view of access, yes, it's a very important development. The British have done this, as you probably know, their ADS and OASIS services provide access to literally thousands of reports.

**EH:** In 1995 you took what you called permanent study leave from UNE. This has allowed you to continue to publish and to lecture on both your African and Australian research interests. In your Retrospect in *Antiquity* in 2006, you concluded with some remarks on the purposes of archaeology. You stated that the major purpose of the subject must be to help people to understand both themselves and other human groups. Can you elaborate on what you mean by this?

**GC:** I was influenced in this view by my African work. In the earlier years of working there, over forty years ago, I found that Africans in newly independent countries, including their governments, were interested in finding out more about their identities, about what we would now call their heritage. So I did what I did because they wanted to know what I could find out, and I came to realise that for human beings to really appreciate their lives they must be aware of who they are and where they are; they must be sympathetic to their histories and their environment, their own backgrounds.

**EH:** So, a sense of place.

**GC:** A sense of place and a sense of background. This was my motivation in the book that I published in 2004, called

*Forgotten Africa*. It was meant to be a popular text; four and a half million years of the African continent in sixty thousand words and sixty-seven illustrations is mad really. Yet, significantly it has been translated into French and into German. There is an Italian edition imminent and a Portuguese translation has been prepared for publication in Brazil. So, I had presumably got something right; I felt as an archaeologist one must be contributing more directly to people's understanding of these things. Part of my motivation there I suppose is the undoubted peril that humanity is faced with in the world we live in; the peril of humanity drowning in its own fecundity; an explosion of population, so that there are now three or four times as many people in the world as there were when I was born seventy-five years ago.

**EH:** You mean we can see from the archaeological perspective that many societies have failed because of overexploitation of their environment. Is that a message that you feel you need to get out?

**GC:** Very much so. I feel that human beings must understand better where they are and where they've come from and how we got to be in the sort of situation we are now in. And I honestly think the situation we are now in is a desperate one. Overpopulation will not only strain food and other resources but is rapidly destroying the environments we live in, impacting on climate, causing extinction of species, and leading to severe politico-social dysfunction. I could go on and on. As human beings we are overall failing, so archaeology to my mind becomes a highly relevant subject, because only through archaeology can human beings begin to understand how we got to be this way.

**EH:** And where we're going in the future. And in your Retrospect again, in *Antiquity*, I believe you said that we really need to concentrate on getting the message out to the general public and showing them how important archaeology is. But how do you publicise archaeology, how do you publicise it as important?

**GC:** It's a good question. One has to accept that many of us in the academic sector are not necessarily appropriate people for what would be called popularisation. Some are better than others, but for the people who are able to do it and have the personality and the presentation to do it successfully, I think the use of the media, television particularly, can be very productive. There have been several people, for instance, in British television who have been very successful in marketing British history. They have been successful because they have the right approach. Now not all of us have that. I mean I'd be the first to recognise that, even in *Forgotten Africa*, where I aimed to write about the African past that wasn't recorded in the documentation or the oral traditions, I wasn't all that successful. To be a popular general writer you've got to have something a bit different. And as I say in the last sentence of a book that I've got in press at the moment: 'In the end archaeology is a literary discipline', because that's the vehicle through which we present our stuff. I use the word 'literary' in the very broadest sense and we do need people who can explain on television and on videos and on whatever other form of outlet.

**EH:** So explanation is actually the ultimate necessity.

**GC:** And interest. Archaeology can be a very dry subject, but it can be made into a genuinely exciting subject. I dislike the word exciting, it's used far too liberally these days; every publisher on the back of every book says it's an exciting book when it's usually absolutely boring. But there is an excitement

I think in research and discovery, presented in the right way. Lay people relate to this and, after all, we have a situation where society, in much of the western world, is fairly highly educated. We don't really need to trivialize things for people.

**EH:** Especially since human inquisitiveness is a basic motivation and people need to satisfy that and that's why we enquire.

**GC:** That is very true and you can see evidence of this I think on television. For example, there is the British TV programme called *The Antique Roadshow* and there's an Australian one called *Collectors*. In both those instances people are seeking information about things, inevitably including their monetary value, what we would call artefacts. Now archaeologists have become so heavily involved in theory and methodological issues, that they sometimes forget that the ordinary person is primarily interested in such things, things people made, things people used in the past. We shouldn't overlook that.

**EH:** For me, the primary interest in archaeology is to work out how people have responded to historical contexts with their decision-making, because we all have to make decisions related to our time and place.'

**GC:** And yet we live at a time when there is a great tendency, with the public and even with some intellectuals and academics, there's a tendency to make judgements of the past on the basis of contemporary morality and standards, instead of those of the relevant period.

**EH:** I think we can look at those sorts of questions from history, although archaeology provides us with an opportunity to look at the decisions that a group makes. But in historical archaeology we can understand personal decision-making, and if we can understand why people did things in the past we can apply the same rationale to a current or future situation.

**GC:** I think so. I come back to my concern that too often we judge the past by our own standards. Some people might say that's fair enough; I feel rather that one should judge the past by the standards of the relevant time. Now that's going to be difficult.

**EH:** Even with Australian heritage and history, we romanticise it. We preserve the best things but not the things we don't find attractive, like industrial sites.

**GC:** Everybody writes their own history.

**EH:** That's right but we need to educate the general public in the value of their cultural heritage; what do they want to be preserved in thirty years' time?

**GC:** I think, however, it's changed now, enormously. In the early 1970s somebody in the Kempsey Historical Society asked me if I thought that the then-neglected ruin of Trial Bay Gaol was worth preserving and would the public be interested in looking at it. I have to admit that I replied that in the context of the prevailing public opinion I didn't think so. Yet, in a very few years attitudes had changed so much that Trial Bay Gaol became a much-visited historic site in the care of the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service. So I think attitudes have changed and they've changed a great deal.

**EH:** You're obviously aware of the nomination for World Heritage Listing of convict sites. I'd say that the world heritage listing of convict sites is a good example of how attitudes have changed. But we will conclude there.

**GC:** I think so.

**EH:** Graham, thank you very much.

## Graham Edward Connah: Publications and Appointments

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## JOURNAL EDITING

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- 1971–1973 Assistant Editor. *West African Journal of Archaeology*.
- 1983–1988 Editor. *Australian Journal of Historical Archaeology*.
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## BOOK REVIEWS

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- 1987 *The Purposes of Archaeology*. Inaugural lecture, University of New England, 13 October 1986, University of New England, Armidale, 16 pages.
- 1995 *Lake Innes House, Port Macquarie*. Department of Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology, University of New England, for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. (Guide leaflet).
- 2001 *Rediscovering Africa*. The Fourth Museum of Antiquities Maurice Kelly Lecture, delivered at the University of New England, Armidale, 24 October 2000, pp. 30, figs 15.

## ACADEMIC CAREER

### Degrees

- 1959 BA (Cambridge)  
1964 MA (Cambridge)  
1983 DLitt (New England)

### Appointments

- 1959–1961 Research Assistant, University of Cambridge.  
1961–1964 Archaeologist, Department of Antiquities, Federal Government of Nigeria.  
1964–1968 Research Fellow, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.  
1968–1970 Senior Research Fellow, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan.  
1970–1971 Senior Lecturer, Department of Archaeology, University of Ibadan.  
1971–1973 Lecturer, Department of Classics and Ancient History, University of New England, Armidale, NSW.  
1974–1985 Head of Department of Prehistory and Archaeology, University of New England, Armidale. (Senior Lecturer 1973, Associate Professor 1976). (1983: Research Associate, African Studies Centre, University of Cambridge).  
1985–1995 Foundation Professor and Head of Department of Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology, University of New England, Armidale.  
1995–1996 Visiting Fellow, Humanities Research Centre, Australian National University.  
1996–present Visiting Fellow, School of Archaeology and Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, Australian National University.  
1998 & 2000 Visiting Scholar, Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University, Sweden.

### Honours

- Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (FRAI).  
Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London (FSA).  
Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities (FAHA).  
Member of the Order of Australia (AM).  
Australian Centenary Medal.  
Session in honour at 19th Biennial Conference of Society of Africanist Archaeologists, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, September 2008. This to form the basis of a Festschrift.