

BACKFILL

Minutes of the 2005 Annual General Meeting of the Australian Archaeological Association Inc.

Western Australian Maritime Museum, Fremantle, Western Australia
28 November 2005

1. Welcome

The 2005 AGM commenced at 5:15pm on Monday 28 November 2005 chaired by the President of the Australian Archaeological Association Inc., Judith Field.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Richard Fullagar, Lesley Head, Ian Lilley, Jay Hall, Donald Pate, John Mulvaney, Bruno David and Luke Godwin.

3. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2004 AAA AGM

The minutes of the 2004 AAA AGM held at the University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales, on 14 December 2004 were published in *Australian Archaeology* (60:84-91). Motion: 'that the 2004 minutes as published in AA60 be accepted'. Moved: Sharon Sullivan. Seconded: Jo McDonald. Motion carried nem. con.

4. Business Arising from Previous AGM

4.1 Ngarrabullgan Conservation Issues

Judith Field reported that she had received no further information concerning this issue from the committee co-opted at the last AGM. A report from Bruno David was read. The report stated that he had not heard from the Kuku Djungan Aboriginal Corporation. Bruno had sent them a heavy duty report months ago, and the solicitors told him afterwards that the mining threat would go to court, but it kept getting delayed. At this stage the mountain appears to be safe; it looks like we won't have to use the AAA funding that was offered last year. Bruno will keep the membership informed when he hears more.

4.2 Kenniff Cave Conservation Issues

Judith Field read the correspondence received from Luke Godwin in relation to this matter. John Mulvaney has now finished his submission to the Queensland Government and Luke has made some progress with consultation with various Aboriginal parties. One group has visited the site with a senior person and is very unhappy with things and wants to follow through. There is a factional element to this exercise so matters need to be handled carefully. There will be a meeting in the near future of various parties who have an interest in this matter (and others). The party who is very concerned intends to raise the matter at that meeting and a resolution has been drafted for the consideration of others attending. They also intend to note support and the strong interest of AAA in doing something, and I have explained the opportunity that Commonwealth legislation provides. So, either AAA can go alone, or wait a little longer and probably

secure support of a significant element of traditional owners in this matter. My regards to all for AAA this year – have a beer for me – so long and thanks for the fish!

4.3 National Archaeology Week

Members involved in organising National Archaeology Week thanked AAA for funding and establishing the NAW website, and asked AAA for \$2500 to continue funding for next year. Motion: 'that AAA support National Archaeology Week funding up to \$2500 for 2006'. Moved: Sean Ulm. Seconded: Peter Veth. Motion passed nem. con.

5. Reports

5.1 President's Report (Judith Field)

2005 has been a quiet year for AAA. We have endeavoured to keep the association on an even keel. As noted already, 2005 has been a tragic time as we have witnessed the loss of two key members of the archaeological community. Firstly, Dr Bruce Veitch whose contribution to archaeology and the communities he dealt with were far reaching and will be long remembered. Our condolences and thoughts are with his wife Fiona and young son Conall. Secondly, was the untimely passing of Dr Tom Loy who has proven to be an inspiration to both colleagues and students he came into contact with. Richard Fullagar represented AAA at the memorial service.

As we move into 2006 there will be new challenges for AAA, especially with the formulation of new legislation in various states and the need for the association to keep abreast of these changes and to meet the challenge of making a meaningful contribution to the agencies preparing the new laws.

The AAA Executive is now handing on the mantle of responsibility to the new AAA team and I would like to express my deep gratitude to Joe Dortch, Amy Stevens and Michael Slack for their contributions. Also to Sean Ulm for acting as a sounding board when I needed to toss around ideas.

5.2 Secretary's Report (Michael Slack)

In addition to the matters described in the President's report, the association held 11 meetings of the Executive in 2005 and attended to the following business.

Correspondence

AAA received 65 emails and 10 letters during 2005. Again, the greatest amount of correspondence concerned employment enquiries. National Archaeology Week attracted the attention of both individual students and school groups. On the basis of this steady flow of requests for basic information concerning

archaeology in general, the AAA Executive drafted a list of common questions and answers that will be posted on a specific school students webpage on the AAA website in the future. Other correspondence ranged from membership enquiries, subscriptions to *Australian Archaeology*, scientific advice, and queries of alternative archaeology.

Submission to the Victorian Government

The Secretary took the lead in drafting an AAA response to the proposed changes to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Bill (exposure draft) in conjunction with the Victorian State Representative. The response will be completed in the next couple of weeks to be signed by the AAA President. Any members who still wish to contribute to this issue can contact the Secretary.

5.3 Treasurer's Report (Joe Dortch)

The AAA financial year ending 31 August 2005 saw a loss, largely because of the timing of major items of income and expenditure. Firstly, substantial profits (\$6951) from the UNE AAA 2004 conference (Tables 1-2) arrived a few weeks after the end of the financial year. The UNE conference organisers should be congratulated for overseeing such a profitable conference. Secondly, the association paid two years of insurance premiums in one financial year (\$6224). Conference income and insurance expenditure should therefore improve in AAA's favour next year. However, AAA also printed excess journal issues this year, in anticipation of subscriptions that did not eventuate.

AAA has a new and highly profitable source of revenue from the DVD containing the first 30 years of journal issues (1974-2003). The DVD went on sale at the 2004 conference and the first run of 100 discs sold out within days. To date, the DVD has made a profit of around \$5000; that is, after allowing for the cost of digitising the entire past output of the journal and printing the first disc run. Future DVD printing will be substantially cheaper than these setup costs, and easily offset by maintaining the \$50 purchase price (at the same time, DVD sales may decrease slightly as many potential of the purchasers now own copies).

DVD sales will not pay for all areas of increased expenditure. Fortunately, AAA's major source of revenue, subscriptions, may

be improved relatively easily. Many of our 2004 members are yet to renew for 2005 and might appreciate more frequent renewal reminders. For example, a relatively small increase in income of around \$900, or 18 ordinary rate subscriptions, would have brought 2004-2005 subscription income to the level it was in the 2003-2004 financial year and brought AAA finances to break-even point.

In conclusion, despite new and growing areas of expenditure, conference profits and DVD sales have been excellent. AAA finances can return to a satisfactory level by encouraging subscription renewals more intensively and monitoring expenditure on journal printing.

Income

Most income is from subscriptions, providing \$900 less revenue than in 2004 (Table 2). No conference profits appear, because of the delay in payment from UNE. In fact there is an apparent deficiency of \$5005, due partly to a bank correction in September 2004 (the start of the AAA financial year) that effectively cancelled \$3605 of incomplete credit card sales vouchers (representing conference registrations) that were banked in August 2004, the previous financial year. The deficiency is also due to expenditure of \$1400 on conference travel subsidies in April 2005. Following the arrival of the UNE payment of \$6951 in October 2005, and allowing for the travel subsidies and a \$1000 float provided by AAA in July 2004, there is an effective conference profit of \$4551.

Bank interest derives largely from our two investment accounts, detailed below. Interest is lower because on two occasions the term deposit happened to mature when the Treasurer was on extended fieldwork and could not request the higher rate of interest offered for the next term. The DVD has increased sales revenue and represents a substantial proportion of AAA income this year. It may continue to provide income in future at a somewhat lower level than this year as many existing members now own copies. Copyright fee income is higher than last year thanks to clarification of issues with the Copyright Agency Ltd (CAL) and resubmission of copyright payment requests.

Table 1 Profit and Loss summary, 31 August 2005.

2004 \$		2005 \$
33,636	Total Income	31,580
44,356	Total Expenses	42,249
(10,721)	Operating Profit (Loss)	(10,669)
68,211	Retained Profits	57,491
57,490	Profit Available For Appropriation	46,822
57,490	Retained Profits	46,822

Table 2 Profit and Loss – Income.

2004 \$	Income	2005 \$
199	Copyright fees	743
4184	Net conference profits (deficiency)	(5005)
2264	Interest received	1410
1054	DVD/Back issue sales	9348
25,935	Subscriptions	25,040
33,636	Total Income	36,541

Table 3 Profit and Loss – Expenditure.

2004 \$	Expenditure	2005 \$
1408	Auditor's remuneration – fees	950
418	Bank charges	943
196	Bankcard charges	365
0	DVD production	4295
34,870	Journal printing	22,461
548	Database maintenance	0
154	General expenses	0
0	Insurance	6224
345	Internet fees	756
54	Licences, registrations, permits	54
3813	Printing, stationery and postage	3251
2550	Prizes	2950
44,356	Total Expenditure	42,249
(10,720)	Operating Profit (Loss)	(10,669)
68,211	Retained Profits – 1 September 2004	57,491
57,491	Retained Profits – 31 August 2005	46,822

Expenditure

As usual the greatest expense is journal printing (Table 3). This expense increased by 28% over the average for the previous two years (the 2004 figure represents two years' journal printing) due to AAA printing more journals in anticipation of demand. Insurance premiums were paid for 2004 and 2005 in this same financial year, so are approximately double their normal cost. Remaining expenditure represents normal operating costs for our bank accounts, internet fees, stationery and postage etc. Auditor's fees are reduced from previous years thanks to the efforts of the 2004 and 2005 auditor, who took a keen interest in the association and continued to rationalise the accounting this year.

Reductions in expenditure were also achieved in printing (mainly for National Archaeology Week), stationery and postage, database and general expenses. Registration remains the same. All other areas of expenditure are higher than before, and there are two new expense categories, DVD production and insurance. The two new expenses will not continue to be as high as this year. As noted, insurance payments represent two years of premiums, and DVD production costs will no longer include setup costs. Bank charges should have been lower due to the move to electronic banking. The reason for the increase is to be investigated with the Commonwealth Bank. Prize-giving may not be as high in future. The 2004 conference included a photographic competition that does not appear to be a feature of the 2005 conference.

For the current financial year, no major new costs are anticipated. Insurance costs should be somewhat reduced in future as the premium for the current financial year is now paid. Journal printing remains the largest expense but if subscription rates are improved, a similar level of expenditure on journal

Table 4 Balance Sheet, 31 August 2005.

2004 \$	Equity	2005 \$
	Reserves	
57,490	Retained profits	46,822
	Represented by:	
1 Sep 2004	Current Assets	1 Sep 2005
18,638	Bank Account	6756
22,345	CBA Term Deposit	22,784
16,507	CBA Cash Management Trust	17,282
57,490	Net Assets	46,822
	Bruce Veitch Memorial Award Fund	
0	Balance at 31 August 2005	10,000
0	Represented by funds held at the bank	10,000

Table 5 Investment Register.

Statement Date	Particulars	Amount Invested	Term Date
25/11/2005	Term deposit	\$22,784	180 days
25/11/2005	Commonwealth Cash Management Trust	\$17,282	Ongoing

printing (around \$20,000) should be sustainable. Alternatively, the future Editorial and Executive committees may identify ways to meet demand more accurately (e.g. if multiple smaller runs can be produced for similar unit cost).

Summary of Assets

As of 31 August 2005 AAA assets totalled \$46,822 (Table 4). This does not include \$5000 received from both Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton. The \$10,000 thus received in the 2004–2005 financial year is to provide an income for the Bruce Veitch Award for Excellence in Indigenous Engagement and is shown separately below. An account is to be established for these funds which are currently held in the AAA bank account. In the current financial year donations towards the Award fund were received from AACAI (Queensland Chapter) and Sean Ulm and Jill Reid, and Alcoa pledged \$1000. At 16 November 2005 the total in the award fund stands at \$11,000. Many thanks are owed to those who have donated.

The latest statements for the AAA long-term accounts (Table 5) show a combined balance of \$40,066, about the costs of two year's journal printings, which is the intended purpose of these reserve funds.

5.4 Membership Secretary's Report (Amy Stevens)

AAA had a total of 465 members in 2005. There were 93 new members for this year, made up primarily of students.

Membership initiatives this year involved a mail-out of subscription forms to all previous members and a further drive to increase student members with a mail-out of subscription forms to university departments and student archaeology

Table 1 AAA members and new members, 2000–2005.

Year	Members	New Members
2005	465	93
2004	560	110
2003	568	126
2002	497	83
2001	367	67
2000	363	38

Table 2 AAA membership types, 2004–2005.

Type	2005	2004
Ordinary	263	320
Student	95	119
Institutional	56	57
Overseas	18	25
Retiree	25	32
Sundries	8	7
Total	465	560

Table 3 AAA membership by state, 2003–2005.

State	2005	2004	2003
NSW	149	154	148
QLD	89	104	111
WA	62	47	44
VIC	58	66	81
ACT	49	66	81
SA	37	31	39
NT	14	20	17
TAS	6	9	7

societies. Despite these efforts, there was a drop in membership across most membership types and states. It would perhaps be of some benefit to have State Representatives involved in encouraging membership within their respective states.

AAA has offered a bonus journal for new members over the past three years. Given the large number of new members over that time, AAA has now depleted its stock of relevant back issues and this initiative needs to be changed to offer a different issue of the journal or discontinued.

5.5 Webmaster's Report

No Webmaster's report was received this year.

5.6 Editor's Report (Donald Pate)

The Editor of *Australian Archaeology* and the Executive of the Australian Archaeological Association were pleased to support the production of a Special Volume of AA for the December 2005 issue addressing 'Teaching, Learning and Australian Archaeology'. The volume was edited by Sarah Colley (University of Sydney), Sean Ulm (University of Queensland) and Donald Pate (Flinders University) and is an important outcome of the AAA Teaching and Learning Subcommittee.

In order to increase new AAA memberships and associated AA journal subscriptions, the editors continued to offer a complimentary copy of the Special 20th Year Volume AA39 (1994) with each new membership. When the back issues of this volume were depleted, the Special 50th Edition AA50 (2000) and the Special Volume honouring Peter White AA57 (2003) were provided to new members. The stocks for both of these volumes have now also been depleted. As of 16 December 2005, there were 112 new members who joined during the year.

Some hard copies of back issues dating from 1996 are still available at reduced rates. Alternatively, back issues of AA Volumes 1-57 (1974-2003) are available in a digital format on a single DVD disc. Order forms for hard copy back issues and the DVD can be found on the AAA website and in the December issue of AA.

The Editor thanks all members of the AA editorial team and journal contributors and referees for their contributions during the 2005 year. A special thanks to Sarah Colley and Sean Ulm for their editorial contributions to the Special Volume. Finally, thanks to Ian Murray at Graphic Print for his ongoing assistance with journal production.

This will be the last year for the current editorial team. I have served as Editor for the past seven years and have learned a great deal from the position. It has been a very rewarding experience, and I am pleased to assist the new editorial team during next year's transition. A team from the University of Queensland have expressed interest in taking over the editorial responsibilities of *Australian Archaeology* from 2006.

I would like to express my gratitude to Pam Smith who served diligently as co-editor from 2001-2004 and to Susan Piddock who provided valuable assistance to the editors in a range of areas over the years. Finally, a big thanks to other members of the editorial team who assisted with the production of the journal from 1999-2005. We look forward to the continued improvement of the journal with the election of a new editorial team.

5.7 State Representative's Reports

No State Representative's reports were received.

5.8 Media Liaison Officer's Report

No Media Liaison Officer's report was received.

5.9 Archaeology Teaching and Learning Subcommittee Report (Jane Balme)

The subcommittee has had a quiet year in 2005, but members continue to actively research archaeological education. The major activities in 2005 have been the circulation and analysis of a questionnaire by Sean Ulm on 'Australian Archaeology in Profile: A Survey of Working Archaeologists 2005'; and the publication of the Special Volume 'Teaching, Learning and Australian Archaeology', edited by Sarah Colley and Sean Ulm as AA61. These activities have raised some ideas for action which we need to put into practice over the next 12 months. The implementation of the suggestions for improvement should be the focus for 2006.

For instance, we need to get out information about the value of archaeology education more generally – that is, not just for those people who wish to become archaeologists, but its more general value for the majority of people who study archaeology at university, who don't become archaeologists. We also would like to publicise the role and policy of the subcommittee more generally and develop broader networks, especially among university archaeology providers, regulatory authorities and industry practitioners. The AAA website is a good starting point for this. There is currently no forum for sharing good teaching and learning practices on a regular basis and this needs to be set up. The final issue is the resourcing and provision of archaeological education and government policy and practice in these areas needs to be monitored continually, and support for positive changes encouraged through lobbying. We need to identify strategic options for the maintenance and development of archaeology education in Australia.

5.10 Code of Ethics Subcommittee (Richard Fullagar)

The AAA Code of Ethics Subcommittee has only one major item to report this year. It concerns issues raised in a published paper by Dave Johnston in the *Artefact* (2004 27:8-10). While we welcome his perspective, his article criticises the AAA Code of Ethics Subcommittee for 'lack of Indigenous consultation', a claim we deny. I am happy to continue in my capacity as Chair of the AAA Code of Ethics Review Subcommittee, if the new Executive agrees.

5.11 Discussion Arising

Peter White asked whether it was possible to offer the AA DVD at a 20-25% discount to new members. Joe Dortch said that as there were so many left-over 2005 copies of the journal that these should be used as an incentive first.

Sean Ulm proposed a motion of thanks to Michael Haslam for putting the DVD together. Seconded: Pam Smith. Motion carried nem. con.

The President of AAA, Judith Field put forward the motion that the reports be accepted. Seconded: Val Attenbrow. Motion passed nem. con.

6. Other Business

6.1 Annual Conferences for 2006–2008

Judith Field stated that although the Executive had worked hard on this issue the venues were not confirmed at this stage. She was aware that the University of Sydney would be willing to conduct a joint conference with ASHA and AIMA in 2007, and that Flinders had offered to organise another joint conference for 2008. At this stage the 2006 venue was uncertain and she had approached La Trobe and expected to receive confirmation before Christmas. Flinders had indicated that they could provide a backup if La Trobe declined, however Judith considered that to host two conferences in three years was too much work.

6.2 Prizes and Awards Subcommittee

As there are many prizes and awards in AAA the Executive has spent a lot of time soliciting nominations. The Executive formed a Prizes and Awards Subcommittee for 2005 and drafted guidelines for nominations the John Mulvaney Book Award. It is proposed that this subcommittee involve State Representatives from next year. There will be no Mulvaney prize this year as no nominations were received. The President of AAA urged for a more active response from members in the future. The President co-opted a new subcommittee for prizes and awards consisting of Sean Ulm, Ken Mulvaney and Fiona Hook.

6.3 Indigenous Support Fund

The Executive has been trying to negotiate with different conference organisers over the last two years to waive fees from conferences for Indigenous participants. There is a need for a policy to be in place to waive fees. AAA needs to be proactive to get Aboriginal people to conferences and assist members to achieve better outcomes. The President stated that she hoped AAA would officially establish a fund.

Robin Torrence supported the idea but was concerned in reference to the budget of such a fund. She asked if Judith could be more specific, that whilst there was a real need for goodwill, the fund needed to be a realistic thing.

Sean Ulm noted that there was already \$2500 per year that had been approved for this purpose.

Steve Free stated that as an Indigenous archaeologist he and his colleagues were self-funded to get to conferences, but that traditional owner groups really did need some money. He stated that he really wanted to see traditional owners from remote areas attend. Steve thought that AAA needed a statement on this matter on our website.

Judith Field asked that AAA be proactive on this issue.

Bryce Barker asked what the criteria would be, whether what we want is more than a statement and on what basis would funds be granted? Peter White stated that these issues need to come back to the Executive. Sharon Sullivan said that AAA should advertise the existence of the \$2500, draft criteria for its disbursement, and that the Executive should be tasked with consideration of these issues. Robin Torrence stated that this task should be with a subcommittee. Val Attenbrow stated that she thought an Indigenous person should be on any subcommittee dealing with this issue. Judith Field asked if Steve Free would be willing. Wayne Brennan stated he would like to participate and that this was a serious issue that required some creative thinking

to establish a strong foundation. Judith Field stated she would task Lara Lamb with establishing the subcommittee and co-opt Wayne Brennan and Steve Free.

Daryl Guse stated that we should really encourage research projects to build in this expense from their inception. Judith Field stated that many already do, and gave examples. Joe Dortch stated that there was already a process for subsidies but that it took a long time to get money, so he presumed what was being discussed was different. Judith Field stated that any fund needed to be available prior to a conference. Wayne Brennan supported this idea. Judith Field asked that AAA support the waiving of registration fees for unsupported Indigenous attendees in all cases. Sean Ulm suggested that an Indigenous engagement standing committee be established to have input into all committees, including the ethics subcommittee, as its issues pervade other areas. Peter White stated we should start with addressing the conference issue. Judith Field agreed and said the Executive should look at expanding the powers of the committee next year.

Judith Field proposed a motion 'that the conference attendance/registration fees for unsupported Indigenous attendees be waived for all future AAA annual conferences'. Seconded: Sharon Sullivan. Motion carried nem. con.

6.4 Bruce Veitch Award for Excellence in Indigenous Engagement

Judith Field stated that a meeting had taken place a few days ago to discuss this award. The award is to be in honour of Bruce Veitch for his contribution to Australian archaeology, and that Judith Field and Fiona Hook were currently writing a description of the award and building the fund. Judith stated that the award would be comprised of the interest generated from the funds received. She stated that the awards subcommittee and State Representatives would solicit nominations for the award and that the nature of this award was to recognise ongoing work and need not be documented in formal reports.

Fiona Hook then spoke about Bruce Veitch. She stated that having worked with Bruce for 13 years a major part of how he operated was his total respect of Aboriginal people and that they had always called the shots. After Bruce passed away she was approached by a number of companies to establish a fund in Bruce's honour.

Judith Field stated that the award would be formally announced at the conclusion of the conference session in honour of Bruce Veitch and that the first recipient would be announced at next year's conference. The awards subcommittee would be responsible for determining the recipient. The committee to oversee the Bruce Veitch award will be Fiona Hook, Shaun Canning, Ken Mulvaney, Colin Pardoe and AAA Executive.

6.5 Cossack

Sue Smalldon explained that Cossack is a very significant cultural landscape site and that the Western Australian Government was planning to build housing on the historic site. She stated that they had not examined alternatives, and asked for the support of AAA in opposing the Western Australian plans. Gaye asked that the President of AAA provide a letter stating that AAA opposed the construction of housing on this important archaeological site.

Sue McIntyre-Tamwoy suggested that this issue should be circulated more widely. Sue Smalldon stated that she would do so. The President of AAA stated that she was happy to draft a letter and that she would co-opt Alistair Paterson to assist.

6.6 Burrup Peninsula

Sue Smalldon stated that she was seeking AAA support to help save the Burrup rock art. She read a petition covering letter. Sue asked that a motion that 'AAA support the petition and provide a covering letter to accompany it' be put to the members.

Annie Ross stated that the petition required specific language and might require redrafting. Sue stated that this was only the case if it was to be presented to Parliament and that the petition was to go to the Minister. Ken Mulvaney stated that the archaeological community had been very quiet for 25 years and that a concern was that as this was an AURA petition a number of people who have had issues with one of the prime-movers have had problems signing. He stated that on the Franklin dam the archaeological community had contributed a great deal but that on this issue the community had brought shame on themselves. He urged members to sign regardless of the wording. Judith Field stated that if they wanted people to sign, they should get the wording correct.

The petition was then reread. Annie Ross asked whether AAA was in a position to 'call upon' people. Ken Mulvaney replied that we didn't need to be polite as the people the petition goes to represent us. Annie suggested in that case we use the word 'demand'. Clint Hammond stated that the wording doesn't really matter. Sue Smalldon stated that we just want to keep the pressure on. Jo McDonald stated that she and Peter Veth had written a report of the Aboriginal values of the Burrup but it had essentially disappeared. She said that AAA needed to do something as a community and that the rock art was extraordinary and highly significant.

Sharon Sullivan stated that she had been a bureaucrat for a long time and that the idea of a petition was great. She asked that further to this the President authorise a member to seek a meeting with the minister on this issue. She stated that as AAA was a national organisation that she could raise the issue the next day at a National Cultural Heritage meeting in Canberra.

Steve Free stated he strongly supported Sharon's proposal and that she should meet with the minister as soon as possible and have as much information as possible. Judith Field asked if Sharon could take the petition with her. Sharon stated that she could do so.

A motion was presented by the Secretary of AAA 'that AAA seeks a meeting with the relevant ministers regarding the Burrup Peninsula and endorses the Executive to take any further action on this matter, and further that the AAA requests the Chairman of the National Cultural Heritage forum to raise this matter with the Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage as an urgent matter'. Seconded: Val Attenbrow. Motion carried nem con.

6.7 Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Bill Exposure Draft

The Victorian Government has proposed new cultural heritage legislation to which AAA has prepared a response. Any members who had an interest in this issue were encouraged to make contact with the Secretary of AAA.

Sue McIntyre-Tamwoy stated that Oona Nicholson was currently drafting a response on behalf of the Victorian Chapter of AACAI. The AAA Secretary stated that he would make contact with her and combine efforts.

7. Election of Editors of *Australian Archaeology*

The President of AAA opened nominations and discussion concerning election of editors to the floor. Bryce Barker expressed concern that as member of a small regional university he did not feel they had any opportunity to participate in the national body. Although Bryce stated that he saw the need for the Executive to be in the same place for organisational reasons he considered that the same requirements did not apply to the editorship of the journal. Bryce saw that a role in the editorship of *AA* as the only way that a small university could participate in the AAA executive. He stated that AAA was in danger of becoming the association of major universities in capital cities and that membership of country people might dwindle if they were not able to participate. Bryce further stated that he was against the idea of block nominations and wanted to be a part of AAA.

The President supported Bryce's concerns but noted that the reason that the capital city universities had dominated AAA Executives was because they had a critical mass. Bryce stated that in relation to the editorial board there was no logic to having all members from one institution. Judith Field welcomed the nomination of a team that involved regional members. Annie Ross stated that there was nothing to stop Bryce nominating for a position. Bryce expressed concern that the nominations for these positions were effectively filled before the AGM by the organisation of blocks.

Jo McDonald stated that forming and being on committees, the Executive and running of the AGM were incredibly hard duties and took a lot of effort. Organisation of block nominations were, in her view, a way to expedite a long process. Jo stated that people should just nominate, and that a block is just an option, not stopping others from getting involved.

Sean Ulm proposed a team nomination from the University of Queensland. He stated that he had organised a team prior to the AGM and had sent out an email to members of the existing editorial committee (including Bryce) as a courtesy. He stated that editorship was an incredibly difficult thing to do, and that he was confident that his team could make the journal work. He would be happy to withdraw their nomination if another team wished to nominate.

The President of AAA asked whether Sean Ulm was prepared to have Lara Lamb as an additional short report editor of the journal so that a regional university was represented. Sean readily agreed. Peter White nominated Lara Lamb in such a position. The nominations put up by Sean Ulm and duly elected:

Editors – Sean Ulm, Annie Ross
 Editorial Assistant – Geraldine Mate
 Short Report Editors – Chris Clarkson, Catherine Westcott, Lara Lamb
 Book Review Editors – Ian Lilley, Jill Reid
 Thesis Abstract Editor – Stephen Nichols

Sean Ulm asked that AAA thank Donald Pate and his team.

8. Election of Officers of the Committee

The following AAA Officers were elected for 2006:

Executive

President – Alistair Paterson

Secretary – Fiona Hook

Treasurer – Adam Dias

Membership Secretary – Annie Carson

Public Officer – Luke Lowery

Webmaster – Samantha Bolton

Media Liaison Officer – Kelly Fleming

State and Territory Representatives

ACT – Steve Free

NSW – Wayne Brennan

NT – Daryl Guse

QLD – Lara Lamb

SA – Lynley Wallis

WA – Shaun Canning

VIC – Nikki Stern

Public Officer – Luke Lowery

9. Close of Meeting

Annie Ross asked for a vote of thanks from the floor for the outgoing Executive. Jane Balme asked for a vote of thanks for the conference organisers. The Public Officer of AAA closed the AGM at 6:45pm.

Conference Reports



Figure 1 Conference participants at Quillagua, the driest place in the world, in the Atacama Desert, Chile, October 2004. Between 1964 and 2001, mean annual rainfall at Quillagua was 0.5mm per annum (Photograph: Mike Smith).

THE 2ND SOUTHERN DESERTS CONFERENCE, ARICA, CHILE, 10–14 OCTOBER 2005

Mike Smith

Readers of *AA* might recall that a major conference – ‘23^{OS}: Archaeology and Environmental History of the Southern Deserts’ – was held at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra in 2003 (see *AA*56:53–54). Two years down the track, the Chileans have kept the momentum going with a second ‘Southern Deserts’ conference on the theme of ‘Human-Environment Interactions in Southern Hemisphere Deserts: Past, Present and Future’. This was organised by the Centro de Investigaciones del Hombre en el Desierto (www.codecite.cl), and sponsored (within Chile) by the Universidad de Tarapacá, the Corporación Regional de Desarrollo Científico y Tecnológico, the Millennium Centre for Advanced Studies in Ecology and Research on Biodiversity (Universidad de Chile), CONICYT, Casino Arica, and the Regional Government of Tarapacá, with international support from PAGES and IGCP500.

The conference was held in the oasis town of Arica, on the arid coast of the Atacama Desert in northern Chile. Despite a major earthquake in September, it was a very successful meeting.

National Museum of Australia, GPO Box 1901, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia

Over four days it brought together 74 scholars from 13 countries, primarily showcasing the drylands archaeology of Chile, Bolivia and Argentina, but with strong comparative studies from southern Africa and Australia. The Australian contingent – several of whom gave keynote addresses – included Heather Bult, Matt Cupper, Pauline English, Kath Fitzsimmons, Paul Hesse, Peter Kershaw, John Magee, June Ross, Mike Smith and Steve Webb. The importance of these meetings is that they lay the groundwork for stronger comparative and interdisciplinary research in these deserts and build a network of research contacts across continents. Notwithstanding this, the highlights of the Arica meeting were pre- and post-conference fieldtrips along the spectacular arid coastline, into the Andes to 5100m asl, and across the core of the Atacama Desert to San Pedro de Atacama (Figure 1). Conference papers are to be published in the journal *Chungara Revista de Antropología Chilena* (ISSN 0716-1182), which is available online as a full text ejournal at www.scielo.cl.

Readers interested in comparing Australian deserts with the Kalahari and Namib in southern Africa should definitely keep an eye out for the 3rd Southern Deserts conference, to be held in Namibia in 2008 with fieldtrips along the hyper-arid Skeleton coast and across the northern Kalahari into Botswana. Details will be posted on the IGCP500 website as they become available (see <http://igcp500.ouce.ox.ac.uk>).