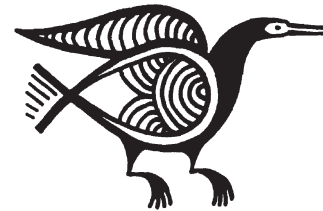


Saturday Seminar Series



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



NEAF

**The seminars will be
held online on Zoom.**

Members

Individual lecture	\$20
Entire series	\$60

Non Members

Individual	\$30
Entire series	\$90

View over Pella in Jordan.

DISPATCHES FROM THE TRENCHES NEW RESEARCH AND DISCOVERIES IN THE NEAR EAST

You spoke, we deliver! One of the key areas of NEAF member interest is new research and discoveries. So this October's four-part NEAF Saturday series takes us to the field, museum, and laboratory for a look at current archaeological work and its research significance.

Our speakers will bring us up to date on a range of periods and geographies across the Near East and Cyprus: from the dramatic rescue conservation of exquisite

Roman glass from Beirut, to the human and environmental story in the ancient Saudi oases desert oases of AlUla and Khaybar, the role we increasingly understand Pella played in the prehistoric 'Olive Age', the latest news from Early Bronze Age Khirbet Um al-Ghoslan fieldwork in Jordan, spectacular Cypro-Classical architecture newly discovered at Palaepaphos-Laona in Cyprus. We will also hear about planned research priorities for the 2023 field season at Pella.



Palaepaphos Urban Landscape Project.

Date	Time	Lecturer	Topic
8 October	10am	Dr Melissa Kennedy	Cult and Monumentality in Neolithic Northwest Arabia: The Mustatil Phenomenon
	11 am	Dr Craig Barker	Recent excavations at the Palaepaphos-Laona tumulus: rethinking Classical Cyprus (pre-recorded)
15 October	10 am	Dr James Fraser	Digging for oil in the Wadi Rayyan: New discoveries at a Bronze Age olive oil “factory” in Jordan.
	11 am	Dr James Fraser	Shattered Glass of Beirut: Responding to the 2020 Port Explosion in Lebanon.
22 October	10 am	Dr Peta Seaton AM	It’s the Pits – what they tell us about Chalcolithic Pella in Jordan
	11 am	Anne Dighton	The First Oil Age: Olive and the origins of horticulture – new insights from the southern Levant
29 October	10 am	Dr Ruth Ward	Cultic Pits and Sacred Spaces: New insights on Levantine pit-digging
	11 am	Dr Stephen Bourke	Life after 40: Researching Pella in Jordan in the Time of COVID



A view of one of the monumental rectilinear mustatils in Northwest Arabia.

8 October 2022

Lecture 1: Cult and Monumentality in Neolithic Northwest Arabia: The Mustatil Phenomenon

Dr Melissa Kennedy

Sydney: Saturday 8 October 2022 | 10am-11am

Abstract: North-west Saudi Arabia is marked by hundreds of thousands of diverse prehistoric stone structures, known collectively as the 'Works of the Old Men'. Of these, the monumental rectilinear mustatils have received limited attention. New fieldwork in the counties of AlUla and Khaybar, demonstrates that these enigmatic features are more architecturally complex than previously supposed, with chambers, entranceways and orthostats. These structures can now be interpreted as monumental ritual installations dating back to the Late Neolithic (6th millennium BCE). As such, the mustatils are amongst the earliest stone monuments of Arabia and one of the oldest and most widespread monumental building traditions known to date. This talk will outline the results of the Aerial Archaeology in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, AlUla and Khaybar projects, which have conducted the most in depth and comprehensive study of these structures to date.

Melissa Kennedy (Ph.D. 2012, The University of Sydney) is a Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia and is the Co-Director of the various AAKSA projects. She has undertaken fieldwork in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, Greece, and Australia. Her research interests lie in the Early–Middle Holocene archaeological landscapes of the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula.

Lecture 2: Recent excavations at the Palaepaphos-Laona tumulus: Rethinking Classical Cyprus

Dr Craig Barker

Sydney: Saturday 8 October 2022 | 11am-12pm

Abstract: For more than a decade the University of Cyprus' Archaeological Research Unit has been excavating the tumulus, they believe to contain a burial mound. The 2022 season however has revealed spectacular finds: a Cypro-Classical rampart of probably late 4th century BCE date on top of which the mound was constructed. Further excavations have revealed extensive fortification architecture and sophisticated stairwells. The structure is more than 160 metres long and the rampart walls 5 metres thick.

Laona has not one, but two monuments unique to late Classical Cyprus and the excavators have interesting ideas on the social changes in Cyprus that are reflected in both. It represents one of the most significant finds in Cypriot archaeology in years.

Dr Craig Barker is Manager of Education and Public Programs for the Chau Chak Wing Museum and the Director of the Paphos Theatre Archaeological Project. Craig received his doctorate in Classical Archaeology from the University of Sydney, and he has archaeological fieldwork experience in Australia, Cyprus, Greece and Turkey. Craig's interests include theatre architecture, the Hellenistic wine trade, Hellenistic funeral practices and perceptions of archaeology in popular culture. He has published on the Nicholson Collection's Cypriot material, stamped amphora handles and the history of Australian archaeologists in Cyprus. He presents the segment 'Can You Dig It' on ABC Radio with Rhianna Patrick each month.

15 October 2022

**Lecture 1: Digging for oil in the Wadi Rayyan:
New discoveries at a Bronze Age olive oil “factory” in Jordan.**

Dr James Fraser

Sydney: Saturday 15 October 2022 | 10am-11am

Abstract: As soon as Jordan lifted its COVID restrictions earlier this year, a team from the British Museum jumped on a plane to resume excavations at Khirbet Ghozlan. This talk presents new discoveries concerning the production of olive oil in Bronze Age Jordan (c.2600-2000 BCE), and the implications for understanding how rural communities survived during a so-called period of collapse.

**Lecture 2: Shattered Glass of Beirut:
Responding to the 2020 Port Explosion in Lebanon**

Dr James Fraser

Sydney: Saturday 15 October 2022 | 11am-12pm

Abstract: On August 4 2020, Beirut was rocked by one of the largest explosions in history. A violent shockwave ripped through the city when nearly 3000 tons of improperly stored ammonium nitrate ignited in the port. At least 218 people were killed and 7000 injured. The Archaeology Museum at the American University of Beirut (AUB) was one of the many cultural institutions affected. A display case containing 74 glass vessels was smashed against the floor. Thousands of shards of ancient glass were mixed with fragments from the display case and surrounding windows. This talk tells the story of a collaboration between the AUB and British Museum to reconstruct eight of these vessels, which are currently displayed in a special exhibition in London.

Dr James Fraser is Curator for the Ancient Levant and Anatolia at the British Museum in London. He has worked on archaeological projects in Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kashmir, Greece, Cambodia, Australia and the Solomon Islands. He received his PhD at the University of Sydney in 2016. In 2018, he published the monograph *Dolmens in the Levant* about megalithic tomb monuments from the Bronze Age, and the book was awarded the G. Ernest Wright Award for Best Archaeological Publication. Jamie currently directs a British Museum dig investigating a 4,500 year-old olive oil factory at Khirbet Ghazlan in Jordan.



Archaeological Museum Curator Nadine Panayot (right) assessing the fallen display case. Courtesy of the AUB Office of Communications and Archaeological Museum.

22 October 2022

Lecture 1: It's the Pits – what they tell us about Chalcolithic Pella in Jordan

Dr Peta Seaton AM

Sydney: Saturday 22 October 2022 | 10am-11am

Abstract: Pits are more than holes in the ground. They are the larders, cookers, and food-processors of prehistoric households. The talk will bring together results from the Wooster College Ohio, Hennessy and Bourke field results including the enormous structure on the lower slopes of Sartaba, and canvass its function and implications. Peta will outline new research and analysis on pits on Tel Husn and Jebel Sartaba where pits and their contents are revealing new insights about the emerging role of olive and other products in the pre-urban Jordan Valley, and provide a background to Anne Dighton's exciting botanical research in the lecture immediately following.

Peta Seaton is President of NEAF and an Honorary Associate of the University of Sydney. She was in the team for the first season of the Pella Archaeological Project in Jordan with which she has been a core field staff member in numerous field seasons up to the present.

She has a PhD from Sydney University with doctoral studies focused on the Chalcolithic sanctuary precinct at Teleilat Ghassul in the southern Jordan Valley. She works closely with the director, Dr Stephen Bourke AM on the prehistoric material from Pella.

A former Parliamentarian, she is published in and active in government and public sector policy. She serves on the Board of the NDIS and is a Board member of the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District, a past Chair of Hearing Australia, former Director of Bundanon, CARE Australia, the Menzies Research Centre and the Bradman Foundation.

Lecture 2: The First Oil Age:

Olive and the origins of horticulture – new insights from the southern Levant

Anne Dighton

Sydney: Saturday 22 October 2022 | 11am-12pm

Abstract: The olive tree is an unlikely plant to produce one of the world's first food commodities. The tree takes years to produce fruit, which is considered inedible without processing. Yet up to 8000 years ago, at the archaeological site of Pella in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, it seems this process may have been well underway. Much remains to be understood about this iconic tree and the nature and timing of its "domestication". In this seminar, we will discuss some of the new methods and approaches being taken to better understand the role of the olive tree and its fruit in these very early stages of human-olive interaction.

Anne Dighton is an archaeologist specialising in archaeobotanical and anthracological research, with a focus on the prehistory of food, including the origins of horticulture and its associated environmental impact. She is currently undertaking her PhD at The University of Queensland looking at the origins of olive and grape exploitation. Anne is the Project archaeobotanist for the Pella Project in Jordan and has also conducted extensive fieldwork in Turkey and Italy.

29 October 2022

**Lecture 1: Cultic Pits and Sacred Spaces:
New insights on Levantine pit-digging**

Dr Ruth Ward

Sydney: Saturday 29 October 2022 | 10am-11am

Abstract: Ritual pits for the first temple brick? Cleansing foundation pits with purifying fire? Pouring libations into pits of the deities? Such accounts found in ancient Levantine texts reveal prescriptive activities around pit digging that invite closer scrutiny by modern archaeology. Experimental archaeology and ethnographic studies have more recently shed light on the usefulness of pits for different functions, including crop storage and lime making, and on how different linings help preserve and protect organic contents. A growing body of pits relating to cult practice are being identified through archaeological excavations, revealing more about their varied uses in the context of sacred spaces.

In this session we will explore how ancient Levantine societies chronicled the function of certain pits, the role of more recent experimental archaeology in making sense of pit digging, and what Near Eastern case studies reveal about pit-digging in temple settings.

Ruth Ward has extensive experience as an archaeologist and researcher since 1990. Ruth's particular interest is in the belief systems of the Bronze Age in the southern Levant and in 2016 Ruth was awarded her PhD in Near Eastern Archaeology. Ruth's study of the symmetrical temples in the southern Levant during the second millennium B.C.E. sheds light on the unique role of pits within sacred spaces and associated settings. Ruth is a current NEAF councillor, and a senior member of the Pella Excavation Project.

**Lecture 2: Life after 40:
Researching Pella in Jordan in the Time of COVID**

Stephen Bourke AM

Sydney: Saturday 29 October 2022 | 11am-12pm

Abstract: In conjunction with the Jordanian Department of Antiquities, the University of Sydney has been excavating at Pella in Jordan since 1979. Pella has a very long occupational sequence stretching from the Neolithic (ca. 7000 BCE) through to the Late Medieval (ca. 1500 CE) periods. Research at Pella over the course of the last few years has been constrained by COVID issues, both here and overseas, but has continued nonetheless.

The following research highlights will be featured in the talk: Neolithic subsistence (olive exploitation especially); Chalcolithic/EBA animal husbandry (changes over time and potential meaning); Middle Bronze Age human teeth aDNA, isotopic and tooth morphology studies (surprising relations with Egypt); Late Bronze Age object studies (precocious links with early New Kingdom of Egypt), and Iron Age funerary practices (sharp change after the collapse of the LBA imperium). As well as these period-specific studies, early-stage results from studies on human population makeup through time (isotopes, peptides etc), alongside multi-period sequential radiocarbon analysis (C14), will be touched upon at the end of the talk, as together these more longitudinal analyses have the potential to reveal long-term patterns of variation in population and occupation across the millennia of occupation at the site.

Stephen Bourke is a Middle Eastern archaeologist with more than 40 years experience drinking in bars in various countries of the Middle East. He has directed excavations at Pella since 1992 and co-ordinates research at the site (mainly in the Neolithic through Iron Age, ca. 6500-500 BCE).

HOW TO BOOK

Please go to book via our NEAF website.

https://sydney.onestopsecure.com/onestopweb/V9P/tran?UDS_ACTION=DEFAULT&UDS_ACTION_DATA=988

You can register for the whole series at a discount, or book for specific Saturdays.

- NEAF Members: \$20 per session All 5 sessions: \$60
- Non-Members \$30 per session All 5 sessions: \$90
- All Students are free

Please note – a minimum of 20 attendees is required for each lecture for this series to run – our upper limit is 300 per lecture.

All lectures will be delivered by Zoom.

ZOOM MEETING ID

Once payment is received a receipt, Meeting ID and non-transferrable password will be sent to you.

On admission to the Zoom lecture, participants will be matched to names of financial participants. Please ensure your zoom log-in screen name correctly identifies you. If you are dialling in via telephone, please ensure the number listed when booking on our website is the same used when connecting via telephone.

FORMAT

Our Introduction will start at 9.55am.

The lecture will start at 10am and the second lecture will begin at 11.05am and finish at 12 noon.

There will be opportunity for questions following the lectures, time permitting.



A view of Tell Husn from the Chalcolithic excavations on Jebel Sataba. Pella in Jordan.