Demystifying the story of HMAS Sydney

The long delay in solving Australia’s ‘greatest maritime mystery’ with the discovery of the wreck of HMAS Sydney can be sheeted home to a lack of resources rather than the difficulty of the search, according to Flinders University archaeologist Mark Staniforth.

Coordinator of the Maritime Archaeology Program at Flinders, Associate Professor Staniforth said the $4.5 million funding eventually provided by the Federal Government to the Finding Sydney Foundation project is in stark contrast with the $400,000 annually allocated to preserve the rest of the nation’s 5,500 wrecks.

“The technology that found HMAS Sydney had to be brought in from overseas, and it is an indictment of the level of Government funding that that sort of equipment is completely beyond the reach of archaeologists, and archaeology students, in Australia,” Associate Professor Staniforth told Flinders Journal.

While the locating of the wreck is enormously significant in terms of interest to Australian society, Associate Professor Staniforth said Sydney’s popular reputation as a great maritime mystery was never really justified.

“If you look closely at the documentation, most of what has happened so far simply confirms what the German sailors were saying in 1942; where it sank and how it sank are issues that were known pretty soon after the event,” he said.

“It looks as if the captain simply made a fundamental mistake in getting too close to the German raider Kormoran – HMAS Sydney continued on page 2
In setting out to explore the ideas and beliefs of modern Muslims, Professor Riaz Hassan gave himself a huge task; it should be no surprise that the result of interviews of 6,300 people in seven countries has produced evidence of complexities and variations that defy the stereotypes of the West.

In his book *Inside Muslim Minds*, Flinders University sociologist Professor Hassan describes aspects of Islamic practices in some countries as ugly, and says they stem from interpretations of the Koran that are at odds with its central aims. Islam has at its heart an intellectual notion of great beauty, Professor Hassan said: “the creation of a community that is just and ethically based”. Yet he agrees that practices carried out in the name of the Muslim religion include abuses of Shariah law, cruel punishments and misogyny, extending to the social and physical segregation of women.

Professor Hassan said there are huge inconsistencies in Western perceptions of, and attitudes towards, Islam. America, for instance, supports some of the most puritanical regimes in the Muslim world, yet it is Iran that has been identified by George W Bush as part of the Axis of Evil. While Iran is admittedly the world’s only theocratic Muslim state, Professor Hassan said it is also in many ways among the most moderate of Muslim nations.

Professor Hassan last year published an analysis of the role of suicide bombings in global terrorism.  

![Professor Riaz Hassan](image)

*Inside Muslim Minds* ($45.00) is published by Melbourne University Press.

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**Demystifying the story** …*continued from page 1*

Sydney was shot to pieces and sank quickly.” At a depth of 2.5 kilometres, HMAS Sydney is unlikely to be disturbed any time soon. But the assumption that the remnants of the warship enjoy protection as a ‘war grave’ is also mistaken, according to Associate Professor Staniforth. “There is no legal protection for a war grave underwater,” he said.

Associate Professor Staniforth said that like wrecks around the Australian coastline, HMAS Sydney’s protection under law stems from the Commonwealth Shipwrecks Act, a status that is automatically extended to all shipwrecks once they are 75 years old. Because HMAS Sydney had 10 years to go before it became officially historic enough to be protected, a special case was made and historic shipwreck status was recently granted by the Federal Minister for Environment, Heritage and the Arts, Peter Garrett.

![A gas mask on the sea bed](image)

Photos courtesy of The Finding Sydney Foundation www.findingsydney.com

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**Researcher takes a look inside Muslim minds**

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![Professor Riaz Hassan](image)

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The trip to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands was one of the most valuable, confronting, challenging, enlightening and enjoyable experiences of my university study. I could never forget it.

Before participating in the program, I was ignorant of Indigenous culture and practices, completely unaware of the nature of their current predicament and had met very few Indigenous people. After being accepted to participate in the program this year, I completed the university topic Teaching Indigenous Australian Students which provided an opportunity for interesting, confronting and personally confronting learning about Indigenous people, culture, practices, historical treatment and their current situation. In addition to this, we were provided with some interesting and useful introductory sessions before our trip, as part of the topic.

Nevertheless, nothing can teach you as effectively as experience. I found it difficult to form preconceptions about the school and community I was to visit, but all those I had were smartly shown to be largely inaccurate once I arrived at Yalata, about 200 kilometres west of Ceduna in South Australia.

Whilst on the APY Lands I was welcomed into the community and the school by Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members. The environment was supportive and friendly. Accommodation was well organised and very comfortable. I spent time within the school in lessons, staff meetings, talking to students, helping students, participating in sport activities, art lessons, excursions, whole school activities, and school service provision. The school students are very friendly. They were very interested in me and very quickly adjusted to having me around. I spent time within the community at community events, cultural activities and the local women’s support and art facility. These experiences were enjoyable and I felt included within community and school life.

The most striking thing I noticed about the people in the community is how similar they are to mainstream Australians. They have similar likes, similar habits, similar problems and similar needs. There is more sameness than difference. This, in itself, I found challenging to my subconscious ideas, misconceptions, subconscious prejudices and conceptions of school, teaching and learning. I found this aspect of the experience the most enriching and useful learning I have ever done.

Whether or not I choose to return to the APY Lands, this experience has opened my eyes and my mind and will make me a better teacher and a better person, no matter where I go. Nonetheless, the best advertisement for teaching on the Lands is to go there. As a student considering this employment opportunity, it is almost a necessary preview of what it would be like, without which it is near impossible to make an informed choice about a teaching post in a remote Indigenous community.

Kelly Roberts
Bachelor of Education, Secondary (Graduate Entry)
The allure of US politics: a first-hand experience

Bree Willsmore is a person who makes the most of opportunities. So, during a recent internship in Washington DC she not only gained a first-hand insight into the inner workings of American politics but also joined Barack Obama’s campaign for President. And she liked what she saw in the young Senator from Illinois who will make history later this year if he is elected America’s first black president.

But Obama must first secure the Democratic Party’s nomination for President and it was in that campaign that Bree got personally involved. She rang the Obama campaign office, volunteered to help out and soon found herself on a phone – trying to disguise her Aussie accent – as she canvassed Texans for their vote in a forthcoming primary contest.

“Everyone talks about Barack Obama’s charisma and oratory but what really struck me, what I wasn’t expecting, was that he was so rational with his policies, he has such a good grip on what has to happen to the country,” Bree, who also attended a Hillary Clinton campaign rally, told Flinders Journal.

“I really hope that Barack Obama wins the Democratic nomination and then the Presidency. I think he’s going to achieve great things for race politics in America and is also the right person for US foreign policy which is really important at the moment with the Iraq war,” she said.

Working on Barack Obama’s campaign was not the only taste of grassroots American politics that Bree enjoyed during her seven week stint as an intern in the offices of Democratic Congressman Tim Ryan. She spent a long time talking to the Congressman’s Ohio constituents when answering the office phone – one of a list of duties that also included running errands and undertaking research and analysis on bills before Congress.

“I spent so much time speaking to the constituents that I wanted to see Congressman Ryan’s district and convinced a colleague to make the five hour drive required to get to Youngstown in north-east Ohio,” Bree said.

“Youngstown was an eye-opening experience because I saw a completely different side to America than Washington DC, a piece of middle America with its wide streets and big houses. But Youngstown is also a tough area that now has quite high unemployment even though Congressman Ryan has been successful in encouraging new high-tech industries to replace the traditional manufacturing businesses that were relocating overseas.”

Bree, who is studying a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of International Studies at Flinders found the US to have a “richer political environment” than Australia.

“As you walk through the corridors of Capitol Hill, the political system is so infectious – you can’t get enough of it while you are there. There is so much going on, with so many people involved in the political process, it just blows you away,” she said.

“Having studied the US political system, to then travel to Washington DC and become completely immersed in it meant that everything we had learned suddenly became a reality.”

Peter Gill

A rich insight for interns

Flinders’ Head of American Studies Department, Professor Don DeBats, launched the Washington internship initiative nearly a decade ago and 45 students have since worked in the offices of both houses of the US Congress. Some of those students have subsequently taken up careers as ministerial advisers in Canberra, political advisers in South Australia, officials in a range of Government departments, or are studying higher degrees. Two graduates have subsequently returned to positions in the US (one in the Australian Embassy) and another to Albania as a foreign policy adviser.

Professor DeBats said it was “a tribute to the participants over the nine years of this program that the interns have built up an excellent reputation and are very well regarded in Washington DC.”
Flinders University researcher Claire Drummond has called on the South Australian Government to provide a greater level of support if the newly implemented healthy eating guidelines for school canteens are to be successful.

A three-year PhD study by Dr Drummond has revealed the absence of sufficient financial and organisational assistance by the State Government has made it increasingly difficult for primary and high schools to run a sustainable, healthy tuck shop.

"Despite Premier Rann pushing for healthy eating programs to be introduced in school canteens – and the new guidelines are a clear example of that – there has been a limited long-term commitment from the State Government to ensure these programs are both sustainable and profitable once implemented," Dr Drummond, from the University's Department of Paramedic and Social Health Sciences, said.

"Establishing a healthy canteen is both time consuming and costly for the schools that do it, therefore it is virtually impossible to do without the support of volunteers," she said.

"Many canteens are also housed in small, old and cramped rooms which is not conducive to creating healthy meal alternatives."

"For many schools it is easier to sell pre-prepared foods such as pizzas, pies and pasties, which are easy to prepare and can be on sold with limited assistance in the canteen, however these products are not a part of the new guidelines."

Flinders University nursing academic Sabina Knight will have a hand in shaping the future of Australia’s health system following her appointment to the Federal Government’s National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission.

The membership of the 10-strong Commission charged with advising the Federal Government on reform of the national health system was announced by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in late February and consists of leading thinkers in health in Australia. While the Commissioners each have areas of specialised and complementary knowledge, Ms Knight said the appointments were made on the basis of broad experience and capacity to think strategically.

"Our role is to think big, and to consider what would be the frameworks of the health system to serve Australia’s future. We want to develop a plan that will solve problems in the system long-term," she said.

Ms Knight said her long experience of the varied demands of remote area nursing has given her some useful insights.

"Because the challenges of remote health nursing require innovative responses, the lessons we have learned have a lot to offer the national system – we also have a pretty solid idea of some of the gaps in the system," she said.

Ms Knight is a Senior Lecturer in Nursing at the Centre for Remote Health in Alice Springs, a joint centre of Flinders University and Charles Darwin University. A remote area nurse since 1978, she has worked in western New South Wales and with many of the health services in Central Australia and the Northern Territory.
Flinders participates in Indigenous treaty

Flinders University academic, Daryle Rigney, was party to a ground-breaking treaty between Indigenous nations last year when he represented the only Australian Indigenous nation to ratify the document.

Associate Professor Rigney signed the United League of Indigenous Nations (ULIN) treaty – a document which had been designed to strengthen economic, environmental and cultural bonds between the world’s Indigenous nations – on behalf the Ngarrindjeri people during a meeting in the United States. At the same ceremony, Associate Professor Rigney, who is a Senior Lecturer with the University’s Yunggorendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research, was named as joint co-chair of the interim governing board of ULIN, a position he still holds in partnership with a senior member of his nation’s government.

“It was a truly inspiring and humbling experience for me. I was extremely honoured that the nation, through the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority recognised the work I have been doing at the international level and entrusted me with the responsibility of representing our interests,” Associate Professor Rigney said.

Associate Professor Rigney reported on his experience at the treaty signing at the European-Australian Global Leadership Program held at Flinders earlier this year.

Signed by 11 Indigenous nations, the treaty recognises each Indigenous nation’s sovereignty as a self-governing entity and establishes an international political and economic alliance to recognise and affirm their inherent rights of self-determination and self-governance.

Associate Professor Rigney said the treaty established nation-to-nation dialogue between Indigenous communities around areas of common interest such as the impact of climate change on their homelands, the promotion of trade and commerce amongst Indigenous nations, and the protection of cultural properties and human rights of indigenous peoples.

Since the inaugural signing of the treaty, more than 30 additional nations have signed the document, which he believes is a powerful statement by Indigenous nations.

“As a member of the Interim Governing Board of the United League I have a responsibility to outreach to other Indigenous nations in Australia to invite them to consider their involvement through the appropriate governance structures of each of their respective nations,” he said.

“By committing ourselves to join together we have taken the steps needed to create a strong, international Indigenous economy in the future,” he said. “And, by engaging in and sponsoring joint research by Indigenous scholars on the goals and strategies of Indigenous self-determination, the United League will help all members to create a strong legal, political, social and economic program of education.”

Teaching tomorrow’s leaders today

Flinders University has teamed with the Australia New Zealand School of Government, the State Government and Carnegie Mellon University to offer a new postgraduate qualification aimed at the political and public sector leaders of tomorrow.

A new Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA) will be designed to deliver the skills required to operate successfully at the highest levels of the public service with an emphasis on management, policy analysis and development, and service delivery.

Flinders Institute of Public Policy and Management (FIPPM) will be responsible for hosting the course, drawing on a curriculum specified and partly delivered by the Melbourne-based ANZSOG. FIPPM staff will deliver core and elective topics into the program, and there will also be a contribution from Carnegie Mellon. On completion of the course, students will be awarded a degree from Carnegie Mellon, mirroring other ANZSOG-associated degrees awarded by leading universities interstate.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Andrew Parkin, said the EMPA would be offered for the first time in 2009 and is expected to be supported by 10 scholarships, every second year, from the State Government.

“Flinders’ involvement in the new Executive Master of Public Administration is recognition of the University’s leading role in public-sector education, research and community engagement in South Australia,” Professor Parkin said.

“The relationship with ANZSOG and Carnegie Mellon also adds another dimension to Flinders’ teaching partnerships,” he said.
Research commercialisation software launched

Flinders University has joined forces with a US-based company to promote its innovative software for commercialising research to universities and research institutions on international markets.

The collaboration between Flinders University and Innovista Systems was announced in early April at the formal launch in Adelaide of Flinders Partners, the research commercialisation arm of the University.

Flinders Partners Managing Director, Anthony Francis, said the relationship with Innovista is one of the first international collaborations for the newly formed company, Flinders Partners, which was established to bring good ideas and advanced research together with the marketplace to develop viable products.

"The ASK software provides a platform for analysing research projects, assessing market readiness and advising on the steps still required before the product can be offered for sale," Mr Francis said. "ASK will be a very useful tool for the university sector which has a history of generating great ideas and research initiatives, but has been less successful in successfully delivering viable products to market," he said.

"The collaboration with Innovista Systems will incorporate our commercialisation software with the intellectual property management system of the US company, and both ASK and the combined software package will then be marketed globally," Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Chris Marlin, said the joint venture with Innovista was an excellent example of the way in which the merging of the former Flinders Technologies and Flinders Consulting into Flinders Partners would underpin a new era of research and development collaboration between researchers, the investment community and the business sector.

A long commitment to public life

Diana Laidlaw personifies the view that university can continue to play a part throughout one’s life; her latest chapter is as a member of the University Council. Graduating from Flinders with a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Politics, History and Fine Arts in 1977 – and later bestowed with an honorary doctorate by the University – Dr Laidlaw found her interest in the creative arts was put to work in the Legislative Council of State Parliament where she backed the establishment of tertiary creative writing courses. She now reflects on the continuing success of Flinders’ program with some pride.

As a University Councillor, Dr Laidlaw was also instrumental in setting up the University’s flourishing association with the Australian Book Review.

"The way the relationship with the Australian Book Review has been pursued is a credit to Flinders, and I hope it will continue beyond the inaugural three years," she told Flinders Journal. Currently, Dr Laidlaw is discussing other ways to promote the creative arts with Professor Faith Trent, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Humanities, Law and Theology, and is also working on a project with the Library.

After a 20-year career in State Parliament, including nine years as the Minister for Transport, the Arts and Status of Women and four years as Minister for Urban Planning in Liberal Governments, Dr Laidlaw has accumulated a wealth of experience and contacts that she now applies to Flinders’ advantage as an ambassador and “resource” for the University.

Diary date

TUESDAY, 13 MAY 2008
Elliott Johnston Tribute Lecture
Land Rights, Native Title and the ‘Limits’ of Recognition: Getting the Balance Right
Mr Graeme Neate
President, National Native Title Tribunal

5.30pm-7.00pm: The Meeting Hall, 25 Pirie Street, Adelaide (Behind the Adelaide Town Hall)

RSVP, 6 May 2008: sandra.brooks@flinders.edu.au
Hosted by Flinders School of Law and Yunggorendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research
With 45 years experience of teaching and research in anatomy, artist Hans Arkeveld knows the body, inside and out, and in all three dimensions.

The depth of his knowledge is reflected in the works on display in the Flinders City Gallery in an exhibition of drawings, sculpture and mixed media pieces entitled Transient.

Opening the show, Flinders University neuroscientist, Professor Ian Gibbins, said that while Arkeveld’s art can be seen as part of a tradition of anatomical representation going back to Da Vinci, it also shows the body interacting with the world.

“Whether in anatomy or in fine art, the portrayal of the human body cannot exist in isolation from the physical environment, the environment that both restrains the movements of the body and provides it with almost boundless opportunities for exploration,” Professor Gibbins said.

On display, he said, “are the interactions between the representation of the body and the elements of the physical world that surround it, support it, enclose it.”

The technical virtuosity of the works is blended with provocation and wit.

“Hans has claimed his muse to be Sulo, patron saint of the wheelie bin, source of found objects, otherwise to be discarded, but now discovering new life as reconstructed devices in a reconstructed world,” Professor Gibbins said.

The Flinders City Gallery is located in the State Library on North Terrace, Adelaide. Transient runs until April 27.

Charles Gent

Love makes money

Critical acclaim doesn’t necessarily bring commercial success in the film world, but at the very least Alex Frayne got to dance with Julie Christie.

A Flinders’ Screen Studies graduate, Mr Frayne moved from making short films to his first full-length feature with the recently released 95-minute Modern Love. The lead actor, Victoria Hill, and director of photography and writer, Nick Matthews, are also Flinders graduates. Shot at Milang on the shores of Lake Alexandrina in South Australia, the moody and suspenseful film received excellent reviews and has been shown at film festivals around the world.

Attending screenings of Modern Love in Moscow, Germany and North America gave Mr Frayne the opportunity to rub shoulders with some of his heroes, including directors Wim Wenders and Werner Herzog and actors Gérard Depardieu and Julie Christie – with whom he also danced.

“It’s very easy to get distracted from the job of promoting your own film and finding sales agents,” Mr Frayne said. Despite the razzle-dazzle, he did find agents in Canada and Europe. Modern Love also earned a theatrical run in art-house cinemas in Melbourne and Wellington, and has now been released on DVD. Profits from the sales will be put into Mr Frayne’s next feature film, which he expects to release in 2010.

While pursuing a career in film is not easy – only one or two local films ‘break out’ to achieve international distribution each year – Mr Frayne said Australian filmmakers are comparatively fortunate. He points out that filmmakers from countries like Iran continue to make their films under practical and political duress, while in America there is no public funding at all to support film.

“It’s time for Australian filmmakers to step up – we’re really pretty lucky,” he said.

Modern Love is available on the Internet from easydvd.com.au

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