



ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD CLUB NEWSLETTER

JUNE – SEPTEMBER 2023

Executive

Chairperson: Patricia Groenewald

Treasurer: Dawn Green

Assistant Treasurer: Jenna Larangeira

Secretary: Malefeu Lethuba

Social Media Coordinators: Gemma Poretti and Chieh-Ya Ho

Important Notices

- AGM on Wednesday 25 October 1pm–2pm
- Congratulations to Malefeu Lethuba for submitting her Masters Dissertation!
- 14 November: ArchSoc lecture given by Dr Tessa Campbell (read more in the 'Upcoming Events' section!)

Greetings Fellow AFC Members,

The final Term of 2023 is drawing to a close and exams are fast approaching. Before everyone finishes up their final assignments and retreats for Consolidation, the AFC Executive would like to recap some of our most exciting memories and moments over these busy last few months!

FRIDAY TEAS

Our Friday Teas have been well-attended and a great success this year!

They have been a lovely way to end off the week by connecting with other AFC and Department members, and have served as an invaluable platform to explore all things archeology in a casual and friendly setting.

Some of the year's more memorable teas have included:

- A Bone Identification Game
- An enlightening talk on Heritage Impact Assessments in Cape Town by a guest speaker

- A round of Archaeology Charades
- An engaging discussion on the politics of European museums
- Personal artefact show-and-tell

YEAR-END TEA AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The final tea of 2023 will be held on **Wednesday 25 October from 1pm–3pm**.

The first hour of the event will serve as our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and will cover all important Club matters, including:

- Voting for new Executive Committee positions
- Treasurer’s Report
- Summary of Year’s Activities

The second hour will consist of an end-of-year celebration where we will host an Archeology Quiz and enjoy some snacks and (non-alcoholic) drinks.

The Executive understands that many members will be in the throes of exam revision at this time, so please note that the event is not mandatory. However, should you wish to participate in the vote for the 2024 Executive Committee, please do attend the AGM from 1pm–2pm.

RSVP to Malefeu Lethuba (lthmal001@myuct.ac.za) by **Tuesday 24 October** .

We look forward to seeing you there!

PRESTWICH MEMORIAL OUTING

On Saturday 16 September the AFC had the privilege of partnering with the South African Archaeological Society for an extraordinary outing to the Prestwich Memorial on Buitengracht Street in De Waterkant. This historic site holds a special place in the heart of the archeology of Cape colonial settlement, and our visit was a poignant reminder of its enduring importance.

Prestwich Memorial stands as a living testament to the rich but sadly often overlooked history of what is now the bustling city of Cape Town. Dr Antonia Malan and Jim Hallinan, our knowledgeable guides, offered us a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the excavation of the ‘forgotten’ underclass burial ground that was unearthed during the development of an apartment building in 2003. They also discussed interesting details about the fraught public participation process that played out over the fate of the site and its human remains.

For students of archaeology, the Prestwich Memorial serves as a valuable lesson. It underscores our dual responsibility of preserving the past and making it accessible to the public. It is a reminder that our discipline goes beyond mere exploration – it is a commitment to the responsible and ethical stewardship of our heritage.

Thank you to Antonia and Jim for their invaluable insights, and to the South African Archaeological Society for joining us on this special outing.

HUMANITY

Iziko's new exhibition on human evolution



On Wednesday 27 September the Iziko Museum came alive with an amazing celebration, marking the long-awaited opening of its extraordinary *Humanity* exhibition. This event had been years in the making, and it did not disappoint!

The festivities kicked off with a burst of energy, featuring vibrant musical performances and a delectable assortment of African food and drink.

As the evening unfolded, attendees had the privilege to wander through the exhibition at their leisure. The meticulously curated displays, packed with fascinating information and interactive elements, left no stone unturned. It was an immersive experience, a captivating narrative of Human Evolution told from the unique vantage point of our shared African origin.

What truly etched this event in our memories was the final section of the exhibition where a live art installation took centre stage. Here, members of the Khoesan First Nations offered healing treatments to guests and engaged us in eye-opening conversations. The exhibition brilliantly celebrated this indigenous heritage, shining a spotlight on its vital role in the grand narrative of Human Evolution.

Humanity is both visually stunning and wonderfully informative – highly worth a visit!



Read more about the exhibition here: <https://www.iziko.org.za/exhibitions/humanity/>



HAPPENINGS ABROAD

Summer in the Northern Hemisphere

Patricia Groenewald

Thermo Fisher Factory training in Bremen

I felt like Charlie from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory when I had the opportunity to visit the Thermo Fisher Factory in Bremen, Germany in July this year. The purpose of my visit was to attend two weeks' of training in using the Isotope Ratio Mass Spectrometers that we have in the Isotope Lab. They were fascinating courses, and highlighted the world-class nature of our facilities. I wasn't allowed to take photos inside the factory, because it is where they manufacture and test the machines and new applications. The other attendees came from Germany, Brazil, Sweden and South Korea. There is a lot to see in and around Bremen, and I've included some photos. I visited the Lead Vault (see the last photo), but decided not to include photos from inside it because they include images of mummified remains. Apparently the potassium nitrate that seeped up from beneath the floor before the flagstones were put

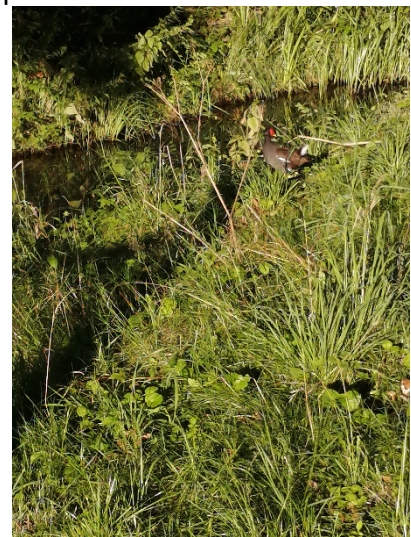
in place caused the bodies to mummify inside their coffins and preserved their features. It caused quite a stir when some curious journeymen who were working in the vault sometime between 1693 and 1698 lifted the lids!



My first view of the factory



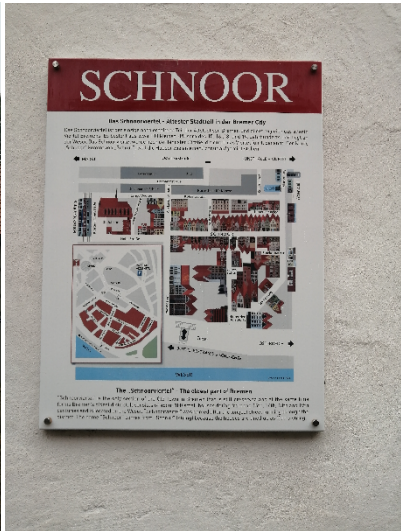
Can you spot the Spiderman statue?



Some of the wildlife – not so different from South Africa



Nelson Mandela Park



The oldest part of the city



The main tourist area of Bremen



The statue of the Musicians



A sweet-making demonstration



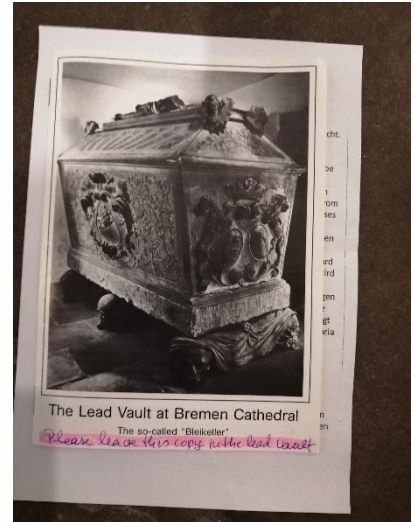
The date above the door is



Bremen's St. Peter's Cathedral



View from one of the towers

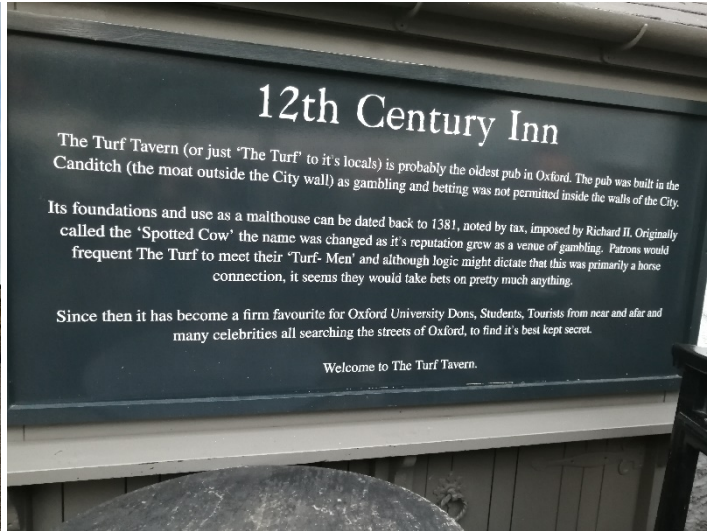


Pamphlet about the Lead Vault

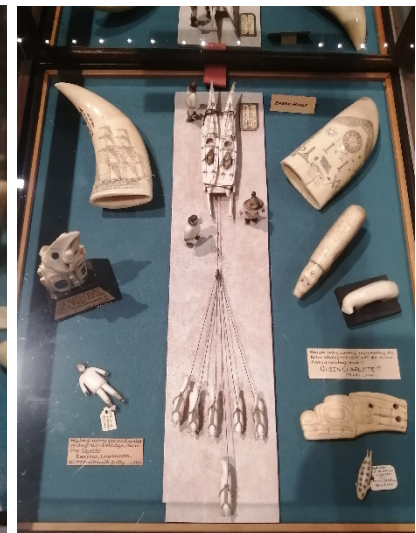
Radiocarbon sample preparation in Oxford

Oxford is the oldest University in the English-speaking world. There is evidence that teaching took place there as early as 1096, and the oldest colleges were established between 1249 and 1264 (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/history>). Of course, with such a long history, I had to attend a Ghost Tour, and was very ably guided, along with two other visitors, by Tom McDonnell. We heard about ghosts who haunt the libraries and glide along on their ankles because the floor was raised, and about how King Charles had his seat in Oxford during the Civil War, and the trouble his soldiers got into. We also saw the alley with the lamp and door frame that inspired the opening scenes of C.S. Lewis' "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". I also visited the various museums around Oxford, which are fascinating. It wasn't all sight-seeing however. I spent most of my days in the Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit preparing my samples for radiocarbon analysis. Having spent time at iThemba Labs in Johannesburg, I enjoyed seeing a different method of preparing the graphite and spending time getting to know some of the students and staff who work in this space. I have way too many photos to share all of them here, but I've picked a few highlights.





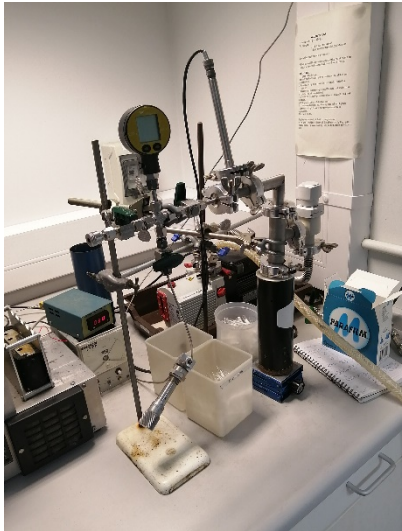
Sight-seeing around Oxford



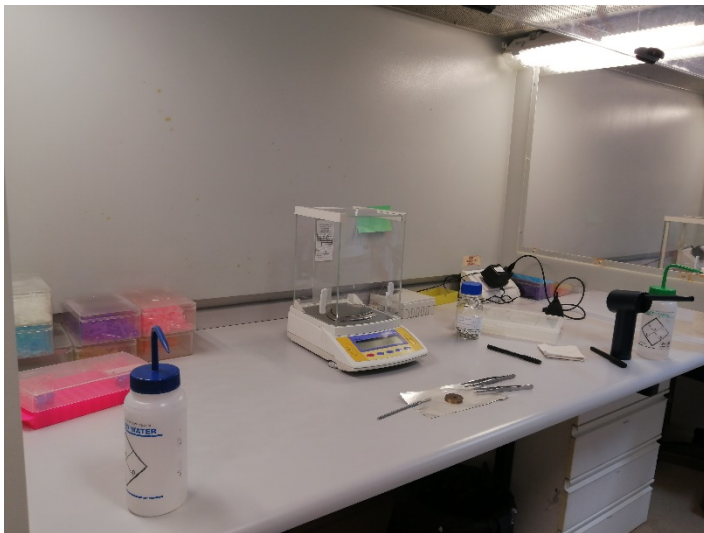
The Natural History Museum and one of the exhibits in the Pitt Rivers Museum



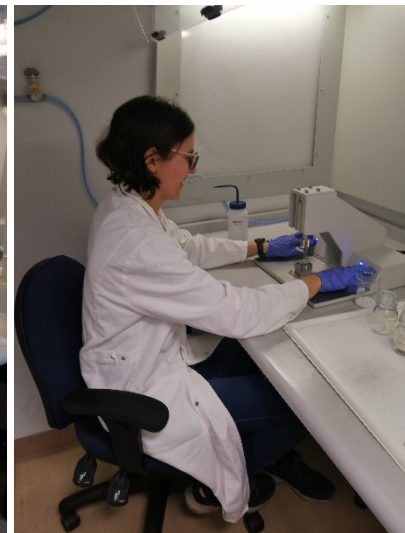
The Pitt Rivers Museum



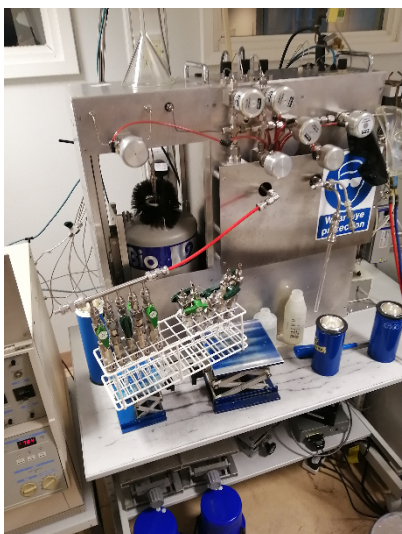
The line used to check the pressure in the graphitisation tube after combustion and the AMS



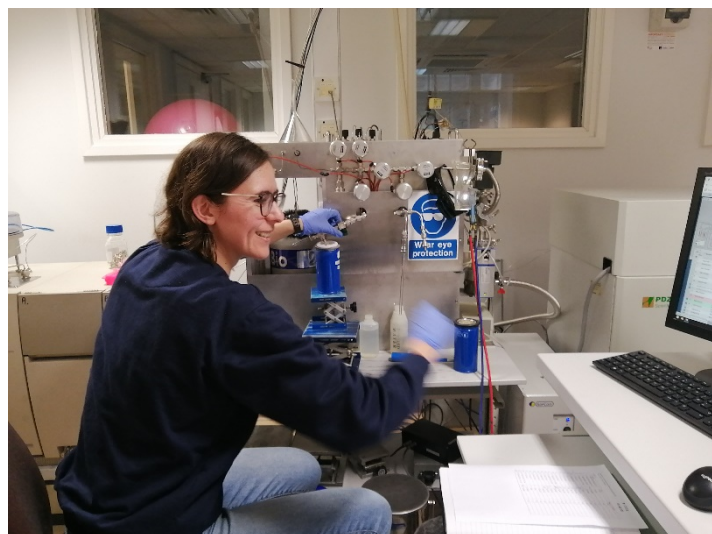
The weighing station I used



Punching the graphite into the cathodes



Preparing the graphitisation tubes



Collecting the CO₂ gas after combustion of a sample

Visiting Barcelona

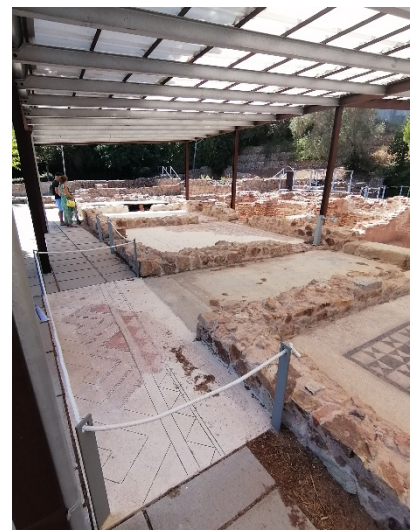
To conclude my trip, I visited family in Barcelona. It was very interesting to see the re-imagining of some spaces and the protection of other sites. The basilica in the last row of photos is “Basílica de la sagrada família”, the construction of which began in 1882. The final tower is expected to be completed in 2026. If you plan to visit Barcelona, it is worth reading up on the architect who took on this project, Antoni Gaudi, as his work is a prominent feature of the city.



An old bull-fighting arena that is now a mall



Ruins of a temple in a courtyard



Ancient Proteins in Copenhagen

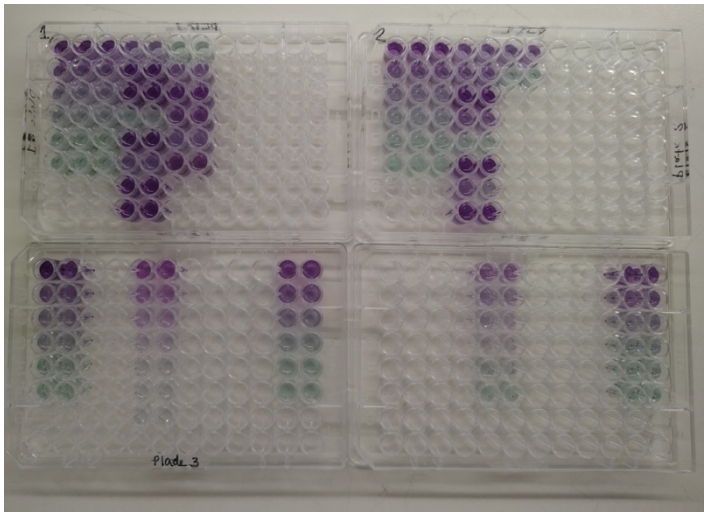
Malefeu Lethuba

I went to Copenhagen, Denmark from the 16th to the 27th of August. The idea for this trip was brought up at a workshop held at UCT earlier this year (February) aimed at integrating studies within human evolution across Africa and the rest of the world. I shared an Airbnb with students I met from the workshop in February (Keane and Nomawethu from UCT; Christina from Kenya; Daud from Tanzania). We were introduced to a relatively new field in archaeology, palaeoproteomics (ancient proteins). In Copenhagen we attended a 9-day intense Summer



School aimed at applying proteomics to various fields. The class was very diverse, with students from South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Mexico, Sweden, USA, UK, France, Netherlands and Denmark. The course was divided into three parts: lectures, lab work and report writing. On the final day we went to the mass spectrometry facilities. On the second to last day, the University of Copenhagen organised a 1-hour canal cruise across the city where we saw multiple landmarks and sites (Little Mermaid statue, Copenhagen Opera House, Amalienborg Palace, the canals of the Christianshavn neighborhood).





Greece & Italy

Gemma Poretti

I went overseas for the first time in June 2023. It was a hybrid trip: one part Greek family holiday; and one part mass gathering of geoscientists for my very first international conference.

I grew up culturally Greek but I had never been before. My visit was therefore, in many ways, an uneasy exercise in cultural heritage, both personal and public.

We did most of the touristy things that people typically associate with Greece, including a guided tour of Athens. We saw the Acropolis, the Acropolis Museum, the Agora, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, and Panathenaic Stadium – all of which are built entirely out of marble. It was incredible to see these structures up close and learn more about classical archaeology, which in all honesty I had never really known much about. The only unpleasant part about our tour was the heat! Southern Europe was experiencing extreme, unrelenting temperatures during our visit. Luckily, we were saved by my mother's cousin who works for a tourism company that transports guests between sites in an airconditioned car. This was one of the ways having family in Greece changed everything.



The Agora



Temple of Olympian Zeus



Panathenaic Stadium



The Acropolis



Odeon of Herodes Atticus (amphitheatre)

The colossal archaeology was no doubt impressive, but it was also special to see first-hand where my grandparents came from. My *yiayía* (grandmother) was born and raised in a small village in the western mountains of Greece called Kyra Vgena. According to my grandmother, the village was founded in the late nineteenth century when a handful of people fled inland to escape persecution by the Ottoman Empire. I tried to verify this story but a Google search led me nowhere, so do accept it cautiously. My grandmother grew up as the second oldest of eight children in a poor farming family. At nine she was forced to leave school to help her father in the tobacco fields. Her childhood home is practically unrecognisable today, having been upgraded and renovated by her four younger brothers, now living in Germany, who maintain the residence as a holiday home.

My great uncles gave us a tour of the mountains, their Volkswagen bakkie hauling us up to the summit far more swiftly and comfortably than their young bare feet ever could. Here, we picked wild *rigani* (origanum) and collected spring water. We also had a look at the little stone shelter the siblings had to sleep in when it was their turn to herd the sheep up that way. The building lies in ruins now, but I watched it rebuild itself in my grandmother's teary eyes as she recounted her memories of the space: *This is where I built the fire and tried to warm my feet in winter. This is where I prepped my meal of bread and cheese. This is where I made my bed of pine needles.*



Personal archaeology: My grandmother's childhood herding house

After the family holiday, I was off to Rome for the twenty-first conference of the International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA). INQUA is a large, international community of earth scientists focusing on the environment and climate of the Quaternary period (~last 2.58 million years). A conference is held every four years so that the community can meet to share new knowledge and research. My Masters research focuses on high-resolution reconstructions of rainfall seasonality from archaeological charcoal so I submitted an Abstract for an oral presentation. My Abstract was approved, as was my application for financial support by means of an INQUA Fellowship. I am incredibly grateful to INQUA as this support covered my registration, accommodation, and subsistence during my time in Rome.

I arrived in Rome a few days early as I knew I would not be able to do any sight-seeing while conference was in session. I led my own unofficial Lizzie McGuire Heritage Tour at the Colosseum and Trevi Fountain, both of which were bustling with people but still wonderful experiences. The Vatican was truly spectacular, possibly my favourite tourism site of all my time in Europe. I admittedly do not know much about art history, but was so in awe of everything – from the marble statues, to the paintings, to the tapestries.



The Colosseum



The Vatican

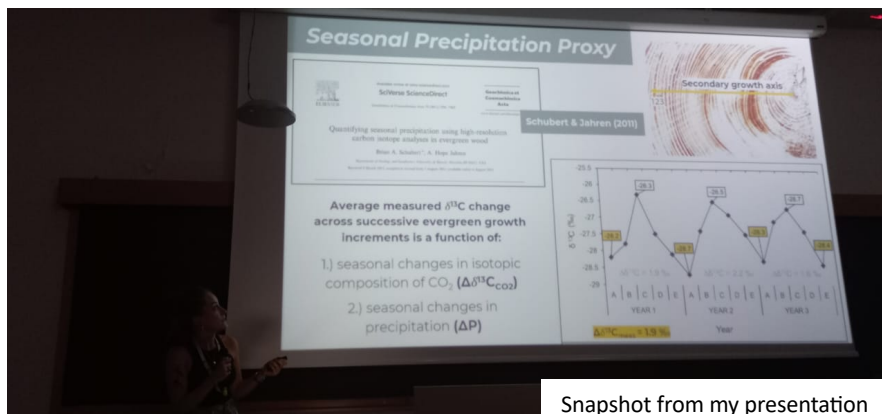


Trevi Fountain

The conference was formally opened by the President of Italy, in the midst of the Cerberus Heatwave. Many of the venues at the Sapienza University of Rome were without air conditioning and so folding fans were provided in our swag bags. Wherever I turned I saw flashes of black and white flapping frantically at damp faces, doubtful that they would survive the week.

The science presented in both the oral and poster presentation sessions was vastly diverse, ranging all the way from seismic geohazards to community resource management in India to representations of science and the environment in the written and visual arts. My favourite session focused on unravelling the environmental legacies of colonialism. Several cases were presented from Australia and North America, but I think this kind of research definitely has a place in South Africa.

My presentation went off smoothly on the second last day of the conference, despite my staying up until 3:30am that morning to prepare (major lesson learnt: it may be best to forego a three week holiday before one's first international conference!). Rome is a rich, beautiful city and I am so thankful I had the opportunity to attend INQUA this year. Hopefully the next one is somewhere less sweltering, although I have heard rumours that it might be in India!



Snapshot from my presentation

RECREATION OF THE *PARADISE* T-HOUSE IN THE SIMS 4

Jenna Larangeira

It can be difficult in Archaeological studies to visualise the site one is researching. In my undergraduate studies I often found that I could not engage with content without visualising it in my mind. This is why I decided to use Sims 4 to build the house found on the Paradise site in Newlands Forest. I am a visual learner and built this house to help the third-year students visualise the site that they were learning about.

I used the information found in VASSA (2019) to reconstruct the main house. The floor plans and probate inventories were particularly useful as I could build the house and place objects as accurately as possible. Notable aspects of the main house are the *Voorhuis* and the kitchen.

Lastly, I used the Sims 4 'Create a Sim' function to make Salomon Bosch and his wife Gesina Martens to bring the house to life. This can help students, as well as educators, engage with history in a more personal and intimate nature.



LILY'S HONOURS RESEARCH AT THE SOCIAL HISTORY CENTRE

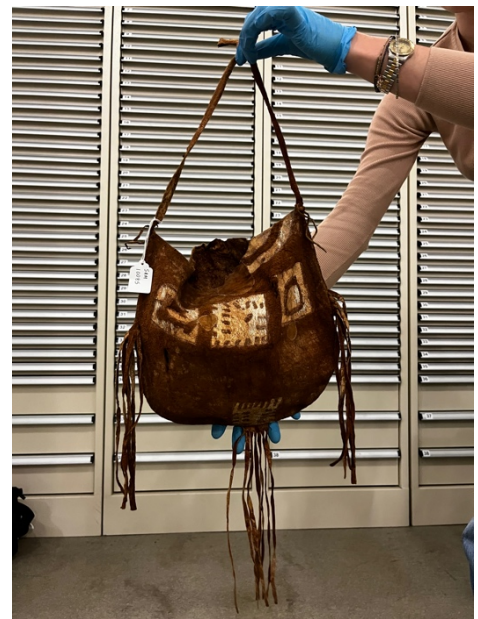


For her Honours thesis, Lily is researching San bags in Western Cape rock art. The number of rock art panels featuring bags in this area is astounding, yet bags have never before been the focus of any rock art study in South Africa. This pioneering exploration carries the potential to unlock a valuable trove of knowledge in this specialised field.

Part of Lily's work required a visit to the Social History Resource Centre in Cape Town. During her visit, she had the opportunity to

closely examine and photograph select San bags from their collection. The experience was both informative and enlightening. These bags, exemplars of meticulous craftsmanship, unveiled a wealth of intricate details – from geometric motifs to finely executed beadwork and ornate tassels.

Wishing Lily all the best for her thesis, supervised by Prof. Judith Sealy and Dawn Green, which will be submitted on 1 November!



Chat more with Lily about her project: rbxjul001@myuct.ac.za

UPCOMING EVENTS

OUTING – BUFFELSFONTEIN VISITOR'S CENTRE, CAPE POINT

Saturday 11 November | 10:45am for 11:00am

Origins of Early Southern Sapiens Behaviour Exhibition.

Showcases the culmination of some 30 years of archaeological research in the southern Cape undertaken by Sapience Scientists, Professor Christopher Henshilwood, Dr Karen van Niekerk, Professor Sarah Wurz, and their research teams.

Their remarkable discoveries highlight the rich archaeological record of the main excavation sites at Blombos Cave, Klipdrift Shelter and Klasies River, which were occupied between 120 000 and 50 000 ago – a key period in the evolution of modern human behaviour. The

exhibition provides a unique multi-sensory experience, which sheds light on the complex and fascinating evolution of early *Homo sapiens* and their cognitive and cultural abilities.

The availability of Petro Keene to provide a guide tour is still being confirmed.

We understand that many AFC members will be writing exams during this time, but if anyone is interested they are welcome to attend:

RSVP: Lyne vicult@mweb.co.za
(There will be no ArchSoc fee.)

ARCHSOC LECTURE

Tuesday 14 November | 18:00 for 18:30 – SAAO Auditorium, Observatory

(R10 for student non-members; please RSVP to Patricia grnpat004@myuct.ac.za for catering purposes)

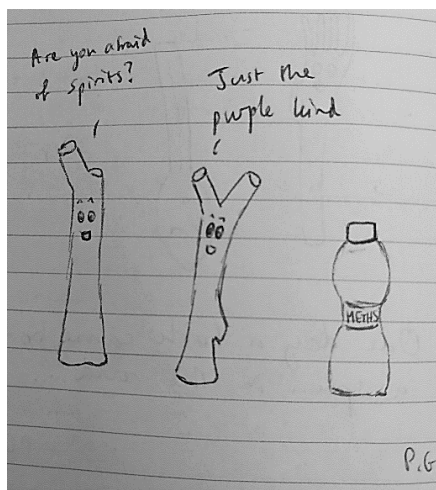
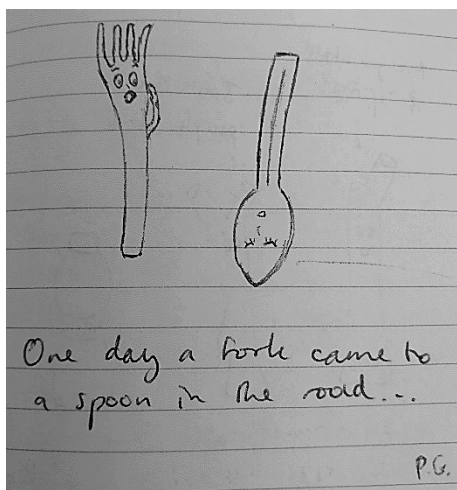
TITLE: Ancient disease in South Africa: what bioarchaeology and ancient DNA can teach us about tuberculosis, leprosy and brucellosis in the past.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the enormous and multifaceted impact disease can have on our lives. While COVID-19 is new to our species, we have a much longer history with some of our other pathogens. The antiquity and/or nature of these relationships, as well as their impact on past populations are, however, not always well understood. We can investigate these questions using multiple tools that include historical literature, bioarchaeological analyses and ancient DNA. This presentation will focus on what we can learn about the emergence, spread and evolution of three diseases – tuberculosis, leprosy and brucellosis – in South Africa.

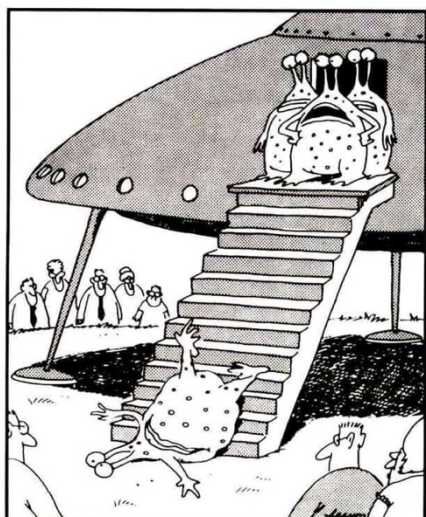
PRESENTER: Dr Tessa Campbell

Dr Campbell is a research fellow in the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, as well as an assistant curator in the archaeology department at Iziko Museums of South Africa. Her broader research interests concern investigating the history of disease in South Africa, how colonialism and inequality have shaped the course of health and disease in a local context, understanding the cultural cost of development and how developer-led archaeological has impacted archaeological practice.

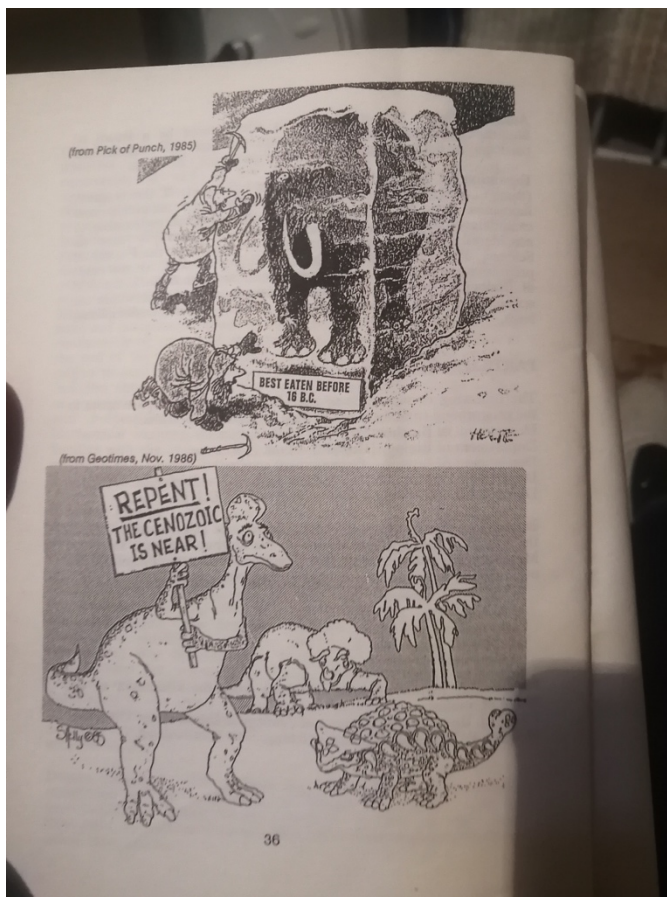
LAUGHS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

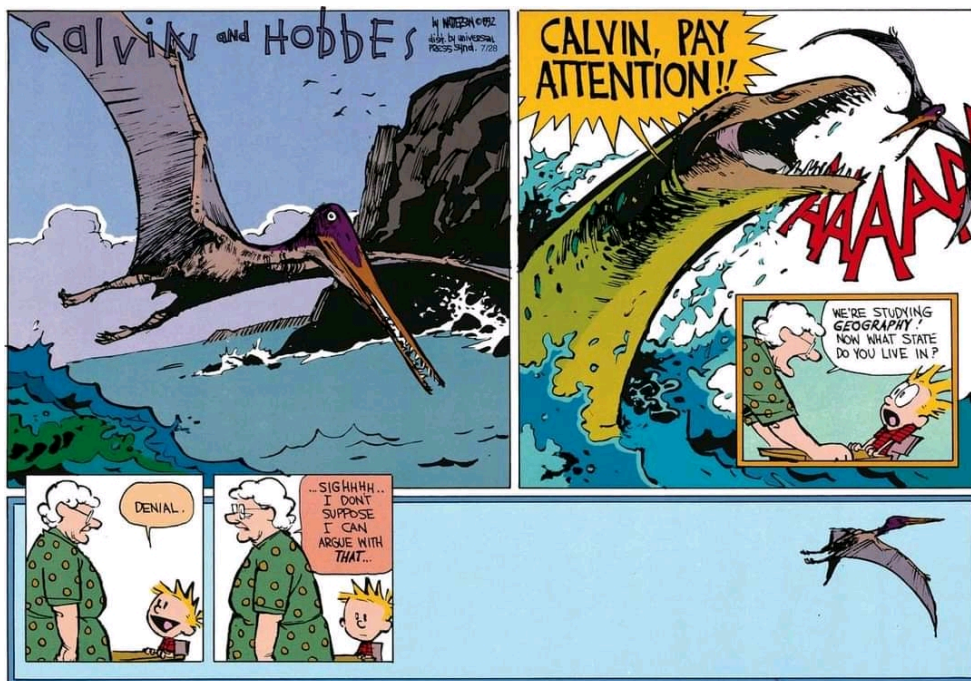


Notebook doodles from early in Patricia's PhD



"Wonderful! Just wonderful! ... So much for instilling them with a sense of awe."





JOIN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMUNITY

- Follow AFC on Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/uct_afc/
- Follow us on Twitter (X): https://twitter.com/UCT_Archaeology
- Join The South African Archaeological Society:
<https://www.archaeology.org.za/membership>
- Join South African Archaeology Student Society (SAASS):
<https://www.saassarchaeology.com/contact-us-join>

