

The Flinders University Intensive Program in Underwater Cultural Heritage Management (FUIP-UCHM)

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2001 *Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage* (2001 Convention) on leadership in maritime archaeology in the Asia-Pacific region. This paper describes one model for the implementation of Article 21 (*Training in Underwater Archaeology*) of the Convention 2001, which involves teaching and training of maritime archaeologists in the Asia-Pacific region. The model involves the AusAID funded Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) – Fellowships *Flinders University Intensive Program in Underwater Cultural Heritage Management (UCHM)*.

The Maritime Archaeology Program at Flinders University was awarded funding from AusAID, the Australian federal government's overseas aid organization, to bring 11 mid-career professionals involved in maritime archaeology from the Asia-Pacific region to Australia for a 6 week training program in early 2009. Mid-career professional training fits squarely into the philosophy of flexibility that underpins the teaching of maritime archaeology at Flinders University, as well as going some way to fulfilling social justice and equity aspirations. It is hoped that this model can be adopted and adapted by other countries and organizations in the Asia-Pacific region as the basis for effective collaboration and co-operation in the training and teaching of underwater archaeologists.

Introduction

According to the UNESCO Bangkok website, “As of today, there are only a few trained professionals from the entire region actively involved in protecting and managing the underwater archaeological heritage. Without a concerted and sustained effort to build the region's professional capacity, it is not possible to expect that the concerned underwater heritage will be protected” (UNESCO 2011). The 2001 Convention is expected to result in a substantially increased demand for well trained and qualified maritime archaeologists and underwater cultural heritage managers, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. Training in underwater archaeology is clearly a very important issue, particularly in countries which lack trained and experienced maritime archaeologists. This is recognised in Article 21 (*Training in Underwater Archaeology*) of the 2001 Convention, which states:

Parties shall cooperate in the provision of training in underwater archaeology, in techniques for the conservation of underwater cultural heritage and, on agreed terms, in the transfer of technology relating to underwater cultural heritage.

The recently developed UNESCO Tutorial on the Rules concerning activities directed at Underwater Cultural Heritage provides an explanation of the Annex of the 2001 Convention and illustrates the 36 Rules in the Annex. Rules 22 and 23 address competence and qualifications, both very central concepts in archaeology, conservation and the heritage discipline in general. Interventions and activities directed at the underwater heritage should be carried out

professionally as the continued well-being of the heritage is at stake. The Tutorial makes the point that, “those involved must possess the necessary knowledge, skills, training and understanding to ensure that their actions do not endanger this precious record. They must be appropriately qualified and competent to undertake the work planned” (UNESCO 2011). Further, it suggests that, “The key requirement of *Rule 22* is that interventions on underwater heritage should be directed, controlled and overseen by a qualified and competent underwater archaeologist” (UNESCO 2011).

There are, of course, a variety of levels of “training” in underwater archaeology starting with training like the Heritage Awareness Diving Seminars (HADS), which are partly aimed at raising awareness of the importance of underwater cultural heritage in the Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus (SCUBA) diving industry (Pacific Marine Resources Institute 2011; Florida Public Archaeology Network 2011). Another important training scheme is Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS) training, which is an internationally recognized, modular training program open to anyone who is interested in learning more about maritime archaeology (Nautical Archaeology Society Training 2011). The NAS training program was introduced into Australia in the 1990s and adapted to meet Australian conditions and situations (Moran and Staniforth 1998). The Australian Institute of Maritime Archaeology (AIMA)/NAS training is now taught regularly in most Australian states (Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology 2011).

The UNESCO Tutorial also suggests that the minimum qualification for an archaeologist is, “A degree in archaeology or similar qualification recognised by the country in which the archaeologist is working” (UNESCO 2011). Throughout the world tertiary qualifications at some level from undergraduate degrees through to Doctoral level degrees from a fully accredited university are usually seen as the basic qualifications required for professional underwater or maritime archaeologists and underwater cultural heritage managers. More than twenty universities around the world now have specialised awards in maritime or underwater archaeology and many more provide Research Higher Degree (RHD) supervision for Masters and doctoral candidates who are conducting maritime archaeology-related research.

This paper discusses the AusAID funded Flinders University Intensive Program in Underwater Cultural Heritage Management (FUIP-UCHM) that was developed by the Maritime Archaeology Program (MAP) at Flinders University. FUIP-UCHM is seen as one model for the implementation of Article 21 (Training in Underwater Archaeology) of the 2001 Convention in terms of the teaching and training of maritime archaeologists in the Asia-Pacific region. FUIP-UCHM was designed for people already working in the field and to fit into the gap between AIMA/NAS training, which was included within the FUIP-UCHM program, and a tertiary level award. It was not exclusively practical or fieldwork-based training, although it did include these, and it was not solely theoretical classes, although it was firmly based on archaeological method and theory. It was taught by a combination of university lecturers and maritime archaeology practitioners who work for government agencies or other organisations. It was also designed to

complement the “Foundation course” training conducted through the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Capacity-Building Programme on Underwater Cultural Heritage in Chanthaburi, Thailand (UNESCO Bangkok 2011).

MAP and the Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) Fellowship Program

The Department of Archaeology at Flinders University has taught maritime archaeology at undergraduate level since 1996 and at postgraduate level since 2002 as well as providing supervision for Master of Arts (by research and thesis) and doctoral students (Staniforth 2008a; Staniforth 2008b; Staniforth 2009a; Staniforth 2009b; Staniforth 2010). The Graduate Program in Maritime Archaeology was established in 2002 and was designed to meet the needs of students who already had a four year degree in archaeology or anthropology and wish to specialize in maritime archaeology, as well as those who came from a different academic background such as history. The Graduate Program has drawn students from more than ten different countries - Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Netherlands, The Philippines and Japan. MAP has been acknowledged as the largest, most successful and is currently the only active program of its kind in Australia. MAP currently has two academic staff and a part-time technical officer as well as doctoral students (on scholarships) who work part-time in the program. A survey of graduates in 2009 showed that more than 80% of MAP graduates are now working in archaeology or underwater archaeology including their work for underwater cultural heritage management agencies, museums, consultancy companies and universities, both in Australia and overseas (Staniforth 2009c).

The Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) Fellowship Program is primarily funded by AusAID, which is the Australian Federal Government’s Foreign Aid Agency (Australian Government – AusAID 2011). ALA Fellowships aim to develop leadership, address priority regional development issues, and build partnerships and linkages between Australian organizations, including universities, and partner organizations in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region as well as in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East. The currently eligible countries from the Asia-Pacific region are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, East Timor, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Laos, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam and Wallis and Futuna.

ALA Fellowships form part of a regional program that aims to develop leadership and build partnerships and linkages with the Asia-Pacific region by offering professional development opportunities in Australia. The fellowships are intended for those who are already leaders or have the potential to assume leadership roles that can influence social and economic policy reform and development outcomes, both in their own countries and more broadly in the Asia-Pacific region. ALA Fellowships do not necessarily lead to academic

qualifications, although in this case two of the ALA fellows (Gay Lacsina and Rasika Muthucumarana) did successfully complete three topics (18 units) of study at Flinders University and were awarded the Graduate Certificate in Maritime Archaeology (GCMA). Rather than academic qualifications, ALA Fellowships are generally designed to provide short-term opportunities for study, research, leadership and professional development and attachment programs in Australia.

Discussion

Through the FUIP-UCHM, 10 mid-career professionals who were already working in maritime archaeology or underwater cultural heritage (UCH) management from the Asia-Pacific region went to Australia for a six-week intensive training program from 19th January 2009 to 2nd March 2009 (Figure 1). Originally 11 Fellows were nominated but one withdrew before the program started.



Figure 1. ALA Fellows in the classroom at Flinders University (photo by Jun Kimura courtesy of the Maritime Archaeology Program, Flinders University)

Prospective fellows were identified through the UNESCO Asia-Pacific office in Bangkok and the Asian Academy for Heritage Management (AAHM), as well as through existing institutional linkages between Australian organisations and their counterpart organisations in the region. The counterpart organisations have been involved in the investigation, documentation and management of UCH and are usually the national authorities legally charged with safeguarding the

UCH in their respective countries. Training was to be conducted in English and so candidates needed a basic understanding of written and spoken English. Candidates varied from mid-career professionals with leadership potential to existing leaders in the field. Fellows were then nominated by their organisation to participate in the program. The five nations represented were Cambodia (2 fellows - Nady Phann and Sophorn Kim), Indonesia (2 fellows - Zainab Tahir and Imam Fauzi), Sri Lanka (3 fellows – Palitha Weerangasingha, Rasika Muthucumarana and Chandraratne Wijamunige), Thailand (2 fellows – Erbpem Vatcharangkul and Worrawit Hassapak) and the Philippines (1 fellow – Gay Lacsina).

Mid-career professional training, such as this, fits squarely into the philosophy of flexibility that underpins the teaching of maritime archaeology at Flinders University, as well as going some way to fulfilling social justice and equity aspirations. The program was intended to enhance professional capacity and leadership, which is seen as key to successfully safeguarding and protecting UCH in the Asia-Pacific region. The stated goals of FUIP-UCHM were to:

- develop professional capacity and leadership in the protection of underwater cultural heritage through the delivery of high quality training
- foster relationships between Australian organisations and counterpart agencies within the Asia-Pacific region.

ALA Fellowship funding allowed MAP to employ three part-time, temporary staff (James Hunter, Emily Jateff and Amer Khan) who were involved in teaching the fellows while they were in Australia. The ALA Fellows spent four weeks at Flinders University in South Australia where they undertook a one-week intensive topic in vessel construction and analysis, a one-week intensive topic in UCH management and then a two-week intensive field school at Mount Dutton Bay, South Australia. The highly intensive program also allowed the ALA Fellows to receive AIMA/NAS Part 1 Training and Divers Alert Network (DAN) Asia-Pacific First Aid and Oxygen (O2) provider certification. Following the field school, ALA Fellows undertook a two-week placement (internship) with a museum, UCH agency or related organisation, which gave them the opportunity to work with various heritage management agencies throughout Australia. Partner agencies included Heritage Victoria, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) South Australia, Australian National Maritime Museum, New South Wales Heritage Office, Western Australian Maritime Museum, and the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts in Canberra.

ALA Fellows were trained in best practice for the investigation and protection of UCH through theoretical and practical teaching of underwater archaeological site survey and mapping, non-invasive techniques of underwater site identification, inventory and investigation and research methodologies for analysis of archaeological heritage. In the course of the lectures and practical field activities, the ALA Fellows were introduced to the legislative and policy requirements for the management and protection of underwater and coastal archaeological sites, which will help them to formulate effective policy in the light of local national and international legislative frameworks. The one-week *Underwater Cultural Heritage* short course, for example, comprised a series of

lectures, seminars and workshops in three areas – Legislation and Guidelines; Management and Interpretation. It provided the ALA Fellows with knowledge about the major theoretical and practical approaches to the protection, preservation and management of UCH. At the field school at Mount Dutton Bay, for example, all of the ALA Fellows had the opportunity to learn to record short videos and from this we were able to cut a five-minute documentary about teaching Maritime Archaeology at Flinders University (Carter 2010).

The stated aim of developing leadership demands some exposition on the nature of leadership. Leadership, unlike management, refers to building the capacity of people to work together in groups without, if necessary, formal authority. A significant part of leadership is the ability to adapt and succeed in unpredictable situations to unpredictable problems. Leadership is necessarily a complex interaction between the leader and the social, political and task environment (Day 2001). To develop leadership among the Fellows, FUIP-UCHM was planned to encourage the fellows to engage with different environments, learn and apply new skills, solve unfamiliar problems and interact with a range of people outside their previous experience.

The ALA Fellows were involved in a wide range of fieldwork and other activities while in Australia, for example, three ALA Fellows (Zainab Tahir, Nady Phann and Sophorn Kim) participated in a survey of whaling shipwrecks and associated shore sites at Sceale and Streaky Bay on Eyre Peninsula in South Australia (Jateff 2009; Jateff and Staniforth 2009). This work was done in association with David Nutley, the Senior Maritime Heritage Officer at the Heritage Branch of the South Australian Department of Environment and Heritage (Figure 2).

ALA Fellow Gay Lacsina, from the National Museum of the Philippines, joined Heritage Victoria for her two-week placement where she attended an Archaeology Advisory Committee meeting and conducted fieldwork on the wrecks of the SS *Casino* (lost 1932) and *Grange*, a wooden barque that sank in 1858 (Lacsina 2009). Gay was involved in every aspect of day-to-day work at Heritage Victoria, which provided her with valuable experience of the operations of an organisation other than her own. Imam Fauzi from Indonesia and Palitha Weerasingha from Sri Lanka did their placement with the South Australian Department of Environment and Heritage, which helped to raise the profile of maritime heritage within the Department (Khan 2010).



Figure 2. ALA Fellows Zainab Tahir, Nady Phann and Sophorn Kim with David Nutley during the Sceale Bay survey (photo by Mark Staniforth courtesy of the Maritime Archaeology Program, Flinders University).

Conclusion

This paper has considered one possible model for the implementation of Article 21 (*Training in Underwater Archaeology*) of the 2001 Convention which involves teaching and training of maritime archaeologists in the Asia-Pacific region. The model is the AusAID funded ALA – Fellowships FUIP-UCHM. It is hoped that the FUIP-UCHM model can be adopted and adapted by other countries and organizations in the Asia-Pacific region as a basis for effective collaboration and co-operation in the training and teaching of underwater archaeologists and UCH managers.

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