

# **Aesthetics, Applications, Artistry and Anarchy: Essays in Prehistoric and Contemporary Art**

A Festschrift in honour of John Kay Clegg  
11 January 1935 – 11 March 2015

edited by

Jillian Huntley and George Nash

ARCHAEOPRESS ARCHAEOLOGY



ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING LTD

Summertown Pavilion

18-24 Middle Way

Summertown

Oxford OX2 7LG

[www.archaeopress.com](http://www.archaeopress.com)

ISBN 978-1-78491-998-6

ISBN 978-1-78491-999-3 (e-Pdf)

© The individual authors and Archaeopress 2019

Cover: 'I've seen no other picture so pregnant and so happy', Woodstock, Clegg Calendars 1979.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owners.

Printed in England by Holywell Press, Oxford

This book is available direct from Archaeopress or from our website [www.archaeopress.com](http://www.archaeopress.com)

# Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	iii
Claire Smith	
<b>Prologue</b> .....	v
Jillian Huntley	
<b>Introducing and remembering John Kay Clegg</b> .....	1
Jo McDonald	
<b>AESTHETICS</b>	
<b>Pre-Columbian Rock Art and Sensitive Cognition</b> .....	9
Reinaldo Morales Jr. and Howard Risatti	
<b>Rock art in the landscape: John Clegg’s path</b> .....	25
Thomas Heyd	
<b>APPLICATIONS</b>	
<b>Rock engravings in western New South Wales: A comparative analysis of the Panaramitee Tradition site of Sturts Meadows</b> .....	37
Natalie R. Franklin	
<b>The Rock Art of Aboriginal Australia from Pleistocene to the Present</b> .....	59
Josephine Flood	
<b>The contemporary cultural significance of Gallery Rock, a petroglyph complex recently found in Wollemi National Park, New South Wales, Australia</b> .....	71
Paul S.C. Taçon, Wayne Brennan, Graham King, Dave Pross and Matthew Kelleher	
<b>ARTISTRY</b>	
<b>Degrees of change: <i>amendment</i> and <i>alteration</i> in Australian Aboriginal rock art</b> .....	87
Robert G. Gunn	
<b>Optical illusions and perceptual determinants in rock art</b> .....	99
Ben Watson	
<b>Symbolism, Aesthetics, and Narrative in Rock Art</b> .....	109
Jamie Hampson	
<b>ANARCHY</b>	
<b>On thinking outside the square as a strategy for seeing into the innermost circle or how a reading of graffiti may help to penetrate the cave wall; with thanks to John Clegg.</b> .....	121
Margaret Bullen	
<b>Breaking all the house rules: the politics and grammar of disrespecting contemporary graffiti</b> .....	129
George Nash	

**APPENDICIES**

**Celebrating the life of John Clegg: Touching rock-art can be a touchy subject.....**143  
Complied by Jane Kolber'

**John Clegg, aux antipodes des représentations paléolithiques : le Style Panaramitee  
(John Clegg, at the antipodes of Palaeolithic representations: the Panaramitee Style) .....**159  
Denis Vialou

**University Administrators and Mathesis .....**163  
Christopher Chippindale

**Parting Remarks .....**165  
Jillian Huntley and George Nash

**John Clegg's published works .....**167

## Foreword

Festschriften are only produced for the very best scholars. And they are produced by the best scholars. So, the papers in this book contain some of the finest thinking in rock art research, undertaken by people who have been inspired by one of the greatest thinkers in rock art research.

From early in his career, John Kay Clegg's work veered from the ordinary interests and descriptive obsessions of rock art research to focus on a different type of question: why do we believe so-and-so? For decades, his everyday task was to make those around him question the unquestionable. He questioned whether the aesthetics that the viewer took to rock art had any congruence with the aesthetics of the original artist. He questioned whether the motif of a fish was really a depiction of a fish - and he developed the famous Cleggian combination of exclamation mark and motif to remind the reader that 'the fish' was really a !fish. Long before the current revolution in digital recording Clegg experimented with new ways to record rock art, through photogrammetry, and to recognise different rock art techniques. He sought the information that was coded into graffiti, at a time when graffiti was considered graffiti, not part of a visual communication system.

John Clegg shaped rock art research in Australia not only through his own work, but also through that of his students. One of his first students was Leslie Maynard (then McMahan). Her research into the Panaramittee style of Australian rock art produced the first stylistic sequence for Australian rock art. Forty years later, no purview of Australian rock art is complete without mention of her work. Another of his former students, Jo McDonald, is now the Rio Tinto Chair of Rock Art Studies and Director of the Centre for Rock Art Research and Management at the University of Western Australia. The impact of his scholarship was much wider than this, of course. His research inspired the work of Jillian Huntley and George Nash, the co-editors of this Festschrift volume, as well as the other contributors to this volume, and myself as well. John Clegg was an outstanding scholar who nurtured the intellect of other outstanding scholars.

John Clegg was the first academic to teach rock art at an Australian university. Today, there are two outstanding rock art research centres at Australian universities: the Centre for Rock Art Research and Management at the University of Western Australia and the Place, Evolution and Rock Art Heritage Unit at Griffith University. During the 1980s and 1990s John Clegg was a key member of a small cohort of researchers who drove

rock art research in Australia. The other members of this elite group were Andrée Rosenfeld, Mike Morwood and Iain Davidson. Together, this group was responsible for a paradigm shift in rock art research in Australia. Their efforts transformed an antiquarian focus on collecting and cataloguing of rock art sites and images into a theoretically-informed, scientifically-oriented analysis of rock art as archaeological data.

Throughout his tenure at Sydney University John Clegg inspired and trained a new generation of rock art scholars on how to look at—and how to think about—Aboriginal rock art. A central tenet of his work was that different ways of looking will result in different ways of seeing. As a practicing artist, skilled in both drawing and sculpture, as well as an archaeologist, John Clegg brought a particular set of skills, viewpoint and 'way of seeing' to the material that he researched. His interests in fine art, aesthetics and the cognitive processes that contribute to the creation of art meant that his analysis of rock art differed significantly to that of his predecessors: R.H. Mathews, the ethnologist; WD Campbell, the surveyor; and Fred McCarthy, the museum curator. His combination of artistic skill and scientific scepticism allowed him to obtain insights that were missed by others. These insights have informed the research of the scholars whose work is published in this book.

Taken together, the papers in this volume reflect John Clegg's eclectic interests and the breadth of his impact on rock art research. These commemorations of Clegg's work are divided according to the four spheres that were the principal foci of his research: aesthetics, applications, artistry and anarchy. The papers in this volume are wide-ranging. They present a range of important and provocative interpretations. These papers are the tip of the Cleggian iceberg, however. John Clegg's work has permeated the theory, methods and practice of rock art internationally. Today, I do not think any archaeologist studying rock art would claim to understand the meaning on the art.

I read recently that having their name turned into an adjective is the mark of a scholar who has truly had a significant impact on their discipline. In this book, I note two words that are based on the core sound 'Clegg'. We have Cleggitarian (which I personally think of as Cleggian, as shown by the text above), and also CleggOGRAPH, the working title of the book.

It is clear that meeting John Clegg was a memorable event for many rock art researchers. A number of the authors in this volume fondly recount their

first meeting with him: Jillian Huntley, at the AURA conference in Hamilton, Victoria in 2003; George Nash at the IFRAO conference in Portugal in 1998; Thomas Hyde at the IFRAO conference in Flagstaff, Arizona in 1994; Jamie Hampson at a British rock art conference in Newcastle in 2004; Marvin Rowe at an AURA conference in Australia. I, too, met John at a conference, the 1988 AURA conference in Darwin, Australia. I was intrigued before I met him, having read his work and heard Mike Morwood discuss the differences in their approaches to rock art research. I suspected that John would be against ethnographic research, to which I was about to dedicate my scholarly life. However, I found that he was only against poor ethnographic research, the kind of research that takes the ideas of one place and time and applies them uncritically to another place and time. He was a rigorous intellectual and he expected others to adopt similarly demanding standards.

John Clegg's intellectual and personal generosity is renowned. Over many decades, he provided countless

rock art researchers with personal introductions to the rock art of the Sydney region, or of the nearby Blue Mountains. Like many of the authors in this book, I have stayed with John and Kate at their home in Balmain. The Clegg/Sullivan household was (and is) wonderful—intellectually sharp, artistic, generous, epicurean.

This book shows that John Clegg was loved. He was loved by his family, no doubt, but he was also loved by his students and his colleagues. Not all scholars are loved by their colleagues, and few have the honour of having a festschrift published in their honor. Festschriften are only produced for the very best scholars. And John Clegg was one of the very best scholars. His work feeds into current debates concerning archaeology of the senses, phenomenology and even symmetrical archaeology, as well as studies of the contemporary past. The next generation of archaeologists will be wrestling with the implications of John Clegg's work for years to come.

Professor Claire Smith  
Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia  
5th June, 2018

# Prologue

Jillian Huntley

Place Evolution Rock Art Heritage Unit, Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, Griffith University,  
Southport, Queensland Australia, j.huntley@griffith.edu.au

The contributors to this tribute to John Clegg responded in diverse ways to what I had thought a straightforward brief, befitting the man we celebrate. The resulting volume reflects Clegg's ongoing influence on rock art research and rock art researchers. Contemporary scholarly practice moves at a breakneck pace. With fewer *Festschriften* appearing I think it pertinent to ask how they fit in modern research. For me, it is simple—*Festschriften* honour scholars whose work remains relevant in the same way rock art remains relevant. Both hark back to a historic time and place, memorialising the way we once saw the world, while simultaneously, seamlessly inhabiting the here and now to inform the way we currently see the world.

John Clegg made a pioneering contribution to the rigorous scholarly study of rock art as a topic of research beginning with his internationally celebrated, university medal awarded, Masters Thesis at Sydney University. He was the first in the Australian Academy to teach this as a dedicated subject during his years in the archaeology department at Sydney University (1965-2000) where he also supervised the first postgraduate students with a rock art specialty in Australia. But he is celebrated here for much more than his novelty. He is celebrated for his long standing impact on rock art as an international discipline and his continuing influence on its practitioners. The sustained relevance of John's inquiries into rock art is testament to the value and magnitude of his influence and he is a deserving subject for a *Festschrift*. The longevity of ideas and perspectives John brought to this pursuit are demonstrated in collection of papers and less formal tributes presented herein. As they show, the normal 'rules'/conventions of formal scholarship do not always apply in a *Festschrift*—nor should they. These tributes are necessarily as individual as the people they honour, and John Clegg was certainly an individual.

This monograph begins with a tender introduction to John Clegg's life, his character and his scholarly work by Jo McDonald, John's former student who has gone on to become the inaugural director of the University of Western Australia's Centre for Rock Art Research and Management. The body of the monograph is then subdivided into three sections based on the topics covered by the more conventional scholarly articles contributed. Commencing with AESTHETICS, Reinaldo

Morales Jr. and Howard Risatti interrogate the concept of art and the place of pre-Columbian rock art within the artworlds that we as human's construct. Their thorough theoretical contextualisation provides an up to date orientation to those unfamiliar with the study of aesthetics (Clegg's 'funny inner feeling'). They go on to interrogate what art is in a non-western society and whether it has always been art (throughout prehistory). Thomas Hyde follows this with a personal account of his long standing relationship with John and their collaborative venture into understanding rock art through aesthetics applied not only to individual sites, but rock art landscapes. Collectively these papers remind us of the value of aesthetics approaches in the study of rock art, precisely because we cannot separate rock art from the experience of viewing it in the place where it was created.

We have grouped the next three papers as APPLICATIONS because they demonstrate how the ideas and methods that John Clegg conceived, and those of his students that he championed, are used to analyse and interpret rock art. In the first paper Natalie Franklin takes us once again to Sturts Meadows to revisit 'Panaramitee style' engravings. Drawing on meticulously recordings by John and his students Franklin applies multivariate statistics (Correspondence and Cluster analyses) to the assemblage. She interprets the results as reflecting the interconnectedness of regional rock art styles, stating this is empirical evidence of the Song Lines that cross Aboriginal Australia. Josephine Flood then turns our attention to a historical overview of the rock art of Aboriginal Australia. She takes us on a tour of various regional rock art 'styles' regions across Australia; first to Tasmania, before whisking us to the 'top-end'—crossing the Victoria River District to the Kimberley before and Arnhem Land. Flood makes observations from her lengthy career along the way, concluding with an example of what she terms 'cultural conservatism' to describe the long held traditions evidenced in the graphic conventions of central Australian art. Lastly, a compilation in honour of John Clegg would be incomplete without a visit to the Sydney Basin rock art assemblage that he loved so dearly. Australian Laureate Fellow Paul S.C. Taçon and colleagues report contemporary cultural significance of Gallery Rock, a petroglyph complex in Wollemi National Park of New South Wales to which they took John Clegg in 2007.

Taçon et al. focuses on the pre-colonial representation of key Ancestral Beings or Culture Heroes, specifically Baiame and Daramulan; a fitting contribution as the cosmological beliefs of the peoples of the Sydney Basin were of great interest to Clegg.

In the second to last formal section, ARTISTRY, we examine the mechanics of rock art production—the means by which rock art is made and viewed. Ben Gunn reassesses the notion of ‘retouch’, unpacking the intentions for and variation of repainting motifs. Gunn introduces the Western fine art concepts of *amendment* and *alteration*, evaluating their archaeological utility by using them to interrogate examples of under-painting and repainting in the rock art assemblage of Jawoyn country, west Arnhem Land. Ben Watson considers neuro-perceptual determinants of optical illusions used in rock art (depth, movement, pareidolia), building on Clegg’s views on such ‘tricks’. Jamie Hampson explores a discrete rock art scene and its commemorative narrative, questioning the literal interpretation of a depiction of nineteenth century frontier conflict in South African rock art, showing instead how the layered symbolic meanings of San cosmology maybe imbued.

In homage to John Clegg’s personality as much as his scholarly research, we round off the formal sections of the monograph with a little ANARCHY—studies of contemporary graffiti. Drawing on Clegg’s seminal study at Callan Park in Sydney that he presented in Chippindale and Taçon’s equally influential volume *The Archaeology of Rock-Art*, Margaret Bullen and George Nash grapple with Clegg’s ideas from historical and then contemporary perspectives. Bullen’s nostalgic chapter first introduces us to John Clegg’s character and then to the historical context in which his scholarship sat. Co-editor George Nash shows us civility among anarchists, examining the conventions or ‘House Rules’ of modern-day graffiti to explore the tensions that have led to deliberate defacement of pieces. Nash’s chapter examines the extensiveness of superimposition and the ‘in your face’ statements evident in aggressive over-painting.

We conclude with a section that we have entitled APPENDIX for alliterations sake, though this is not supplementary material per se. We have appended the less formal, but just as fitting, tributes to John including a collection of current opinions on the need to make

physical contact with rock art during the course of its study. Here Jane Kolber has canvassed an impressive representation of eminent rock art researchers, with contributions by Hipolito Collado Giraldo, Jean Clottes, Marvin W. Rowe, Robert Bednarik, Luiz Oosterbeek, J. Claire Dean, William D. Hyder, Dirk Huyge, Angelo Eugenio Fossati, Johannes Loubser, Matthias Strecker, Dario Seglie, Majeed Kahn, Lawrence Loendorf, Leigh Marymor, Aron D. Mazel, George Nash, Rex Weeks and Christopher Chippindale. From here, Denis Vialou reflects on two lectures given by John Clegg on the ‘Panaramitee style’ at the Musée de l’Homme (Paris) in 1983 and 2008 and how these informed his own work on rock art. We present this article in Vialou’s native French because, as ever, something was lost in the translation (and our meagre means could not stretch to a professional language service). In a delightful synergy to Jo MacDonald’s introduction, Christopher Chippindale retells the anecdote about the title of John Clegg’s important and nearly inadmissible, university medal awarded, MA Thesis. Clegg’s revival of the term ‘mathesis’ (the measuring of things not usually to be measured) reminds us of John’s passion for words and life-long search for meaning. To end the tributes, myself and co-editor George Nash present a short summary of this book, acknowledging the many who have helped in completing this volume and we add our own personal memories of John Clegg. Finally, we include a bibliography of John’s published scholarly works and a select list of sculptures (with thanks to John’s partner Kate and son Harry).

I did not know John Clegg well, but I did know that he was a man of formidable intellect with a passion for art in all its forms. He was eccentric, mischievous and curious, qualities that shaped his academic enquiry of rock art. I was wildly naive when embarking on this project, the CleggOGraph as I’ve come to call it. I did not anticipate the time it would take or the hurdles I would encounter. At several stages along the way I questioned if it would ever get finished (but with the support and encouragement of co-editor George Nash, thankfully it has). I started editing this volume with lofty ideals and shiny expectations. While my ideals are now more realistic and my expectations are bruised, I am richer for the experience which has taught me a great deal about the history of rock art research, its practitioners and myself. Thank you John.





'Women dancing around rock', Mootwingee,  
Clegg Calendars 1978.

# Introducing and remembering John Kay Clegg

Jo McDonald

Centre for Rock Art Research + Management, University of Western Australia, jo.mcdonald@uwa.edu.au

John Kay Clegg was born in Nottingham, England on the 11th of January 1935. He died peacefully, eighty years later at home in Balmain, on the 11th March 2015. I was honored to be asked by Kate Sullivan and sons Jack and Harry to talk about John Clegg at his memorial held at Sydney University on the 9th May 2015. This paper builds on that talk. Held in the hallowed MacLaurin Hall, this lovely occasion was attended by hundreds (Figure 1). As well as reminiscences by John's family, friends and colleagues, Kate organized a showing of his art works and sculptures - large and small (Figure 2). The eclecticism of these summed up the man.



Figure 1. The MacLaurin Hall Memorial in progress with the exhibition of John's work in the foreground (photo by David Burke).

He was many things: and I learnt more on that day in March (Figure 3). He had been in the Navy, where he learnt to speak Russian; he could tie a sikh turban; he was a grammar-fanatic (it wasn't just my essays which ended up with green scrawled commentaries, insights and punctuation!); he emigrated to Australia as a £10 Pom; and, we were lucky he chose to focus on rock art, because he could have equally been a geographer or a linguist or a pre-eminent artist.

## So who was John K Clegg?

My reminiscences here are about John Clegg the teacher and rock art researcher. I was one of John's undergraduate students at Sydney University in the early 1980s, and had the good fortune to not only be inspired by his teaching but also to participate in his ARC-funded fieldwork at Sturts Meadows, during which time I collected material for my Honour's research project (McDonald 1993). This introduction to John focuses on his archaeological achievements: John the multi-facetted individual

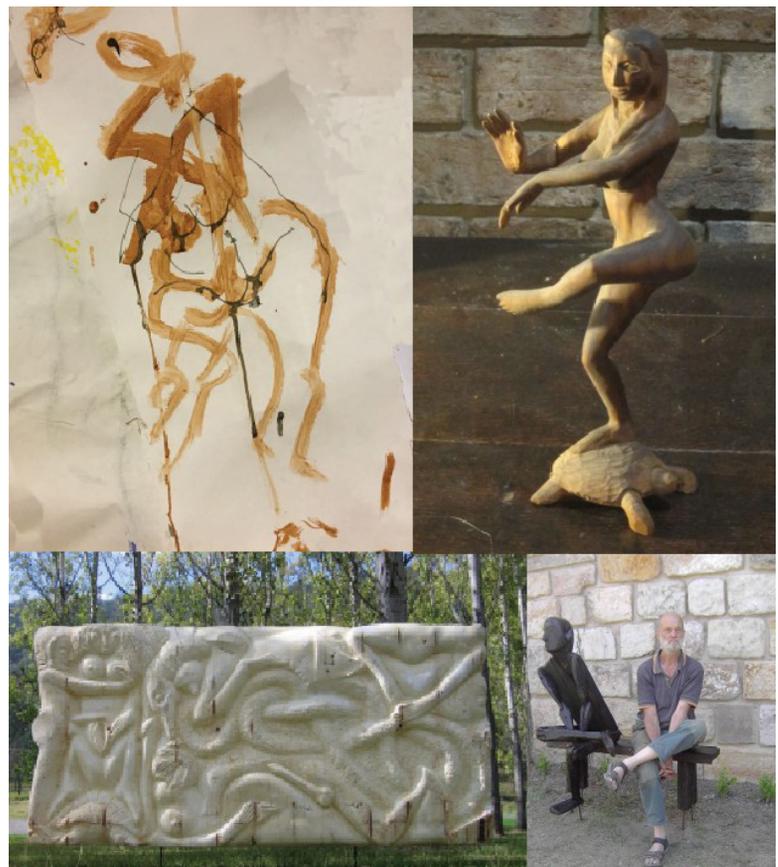


Figure 2. A collage of Clegg art and sculpture.



Figure 3. Lesley Maynard speaking at John's Memorial (photo by David Burke).

whose genius came from a deep intellect, wicked sense of humour and pervasive eccentricity. Some found this combination of traits inspirational: others were put off and indeed sometimes traumatized by the apparently erratic course that a conversation/lecture/meeting/conference might suddenly take when John was taken by a thought. A colleague recently told me he had been at a European conference 10 years ago, when John, as an intellectual protest against a particularly turgid presentation, stood on his head at the back of the lecture hall, much to the entertainment of all, except the speaker (Ben Smith, pers. comm. 2018).

John was part of that first enthusiastic wave of English-trained academics who arrived in Australia in the 1960s: one of that generation of 'Cambridge in the Bush' (Murray and White 1981). This UK-trained cohort came from those small green isles steeped in tradition, full of new ideas in an emergent discipline – and were met by a wide brown land of raw archaeological opportunity and challenge. This was the era of 'cowboy archaeology' (Jones 1979) but also the beginning of the professionalisation of the discipline (Moser 1996). Not long after Clegg arrived in Brisbane to tutor at UQ – John Mulvaney (working in Kennif Cave in central Queensland) pushed back the earliest date for occupation in Australia to 12,600 years (Mulvaney 1969). While I was still an undergraduate, this date became 30,000 years ago – and later 40,000 years ago – at Lake Mungo (Bowler et al. 2003). Those famous skeletal remains – Mungo Man and Mungo Lady – were returned in 2018 to their Traditional Owners' keeping place at what is now the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area. And, of course, since I have been a practicing archaeologist, a mere 36 years, our knowledge about the earliest colonisation date for this continent has doubled again: back to 65,000 cal. BP (Clarkson et al. 2017). Understanding the peopling of this continent – and

the different ways that rock art has been produced through this deep time frame are issues which have made quantum leaps since John first arrived on these shores (e.g. Balme et al. 2009). Rock art in Sulawesi has been dated to 40,000 years ago (Aubert et al. 2017) and we know that the Denisovans in Altai practiced symbolic behaviour at similarly early times (Liesowska 2015). We have Australian rock art buried in archaeological deposits between 30-40,000 years ago (David et al. 2013; O'Connor and Fankhouser 1997), and are beginning to fill in regional sequences around the continent by dating a range of materials: charcoal, beeswax, mud wasp nests, and geological crusts (e.g. McDonald et al.

2014). It's been an exciting half century in Australia for archaeology and for rock art studies. And for this, we have a lot to thank John Clegg.

### John Clegg's contributions to rock art research

John's interests in fine-art, in aesthetics and in the psychology and cognitive processes which contribute to an artist creating a work of art – meant that John looked at rock art very differently to the many fine recorders of rock art that came before him: R.H. Mathews the ethnologist, WD Campbell the surveyor, Team Spencer and Gillen (all in the 1890s) and Fred McCarthy the museum curator. His training in England with people like Charles McBurney and Eric Higgs meant he looked at art more archaeologically (Clegg 1986) than those others who had first engaged with rock art bodies like the magnificent Sydney engraved and pigment tradition – and the engraved repertoire of the semi-arid zone (known then as the Panaramitee; Maynard 1977) – out north of Broken Hill.

John Clegg spearheaded the ontological shift that saw motifs and rock art assemblages enter more conventional archaeological discourse – and for having released a breed of Australian-born and trained rock art researchers who are now at the forefront of this still evolving – and very exciting – field of research. John Clegg was the first academic to teach rock art in Australia and he and one of his student-in-arms at Sydney University, Lesley Maynard (Maynard 1977, Maynard 1979) are responsible for the paradigm shift in Australia rock which resulted in rock art research being the flourishing sub-discipline that it is today. That shift was from an antiquarian focus on trying to catalogue and collect and understand Aboriginal art as relics of times past, to one which theorized rock art within the broader archaeological discourse, viewed rock art as archaeological data suited to the same sorts

of rigorous social-scientific approaches of qualitative and quantitative analyses.

Lesley Maynard (née McMah) was the first person to take a purely archaeological approach to rock art analysis in her Honour's thesis at Sydney University (McMaha 1965). Using punch cards and knitting needles and early monstrous computers she sought spatial and stylistic patterning in the structural attributes of engraved motifs of the Sydney Hawkesbury region to understand the cultural world of the Sydney Aborigines. Maynard's pioneering work stood contra Fred McCarthy, who's curatorial expertise and extensive cataloging of the Sydney rock art, and reliance on ethnohistory led to interpretations based on ritual and broader cultural analogies (e.g. McCarthy 1961, following Mathews 1897). Maynard went on to undertake a continent-wide synthesis of rock art production (Maynard 1977; Maynard 1979) producing a regional and analytical framework which set the course for decades of rock art research to follow.

John's interest turned to Sydney after he moved there in the mid-sixties to tutor at Sydney University and finish his Master's research on Bare Hill (Clegg 1978) in Far North Queensland. He was particularly interested in the Sydney pigment art and in exploring this in a complementary fashion to McMaha's (Clegg 1965) approach to the engraved art. His early recordings and disentangling of charcoal drawings of Aboriginal prehistoric artists of the Sydney Basin (e.g. at Canoelands and Woronora: see Figure 4) were wondrous to new students who ventured forth with him on fieldtrips around Sydney. His ability to both see and understand the complex charcoal art of the region was no doubt born of his sculptural practice and knowledge and skill in drawing. He confirmed McMaha's (Clegg

1965) Georges River style boundary by identifying that eel depictions were oriented differently in the north and south of the Sydney Basin, something which he interpreted as cultural differences in the depiction of a specific myth (Clegg 1971).

John through his tenure at Sydney University was singularly responsible for training a new generation of Australian rock art scholars, how to look at, and even more importantly, how to think about Aboriginal rock art.

There are few of John's rock art students who don't remember with fondness his classes: That frisson of excitement: what would John do today?! (Although I do remember the classicists and lithic jocks not having the same empathy). Would he spend the entire lecture crouched eagle-like on the front bench, or in some meditative yogic pose? Would he enter through the window? Would he have his recycled car tire sandals on (of course he would, regardless of the weather and terrain)!!!? And more importantly than the mode of delivery or his attire – what areas of our brains would he stimulate with new ideas and outlandish suggestions which, once unpacked, often became an acute - if left field - observation which sent us into new directions of thought and intellectual challenge. Having come from a fairly conservative educational environment in 'the Shire' – Cronulla, indeed – I had never seen anything like John Clegg before. Indeed – he and Peter White (long-haired and just back from Berkeley), and Richard and Sonya Wright (and Barrington and Tommy) – and Roland Fletcher (preferring apples to oranges, because they could be eaten while you worked) to say nothing of the Department's Anthropologists and Linguists (one famous for eating onions in tutorials; another for 'interviewing' students on his office shag-pile carpet!)



Figure 4. An early Clegg rendition of Sydney pigment art from Canoelands (from Clegg 1986: Figure 4.4).

presented us, the new generation of Australian born and trained archaeologists, with a challenging and potent set of polar-opposite paradigms and personalities.

John's fascination with classification and focus on methodological approaches and quantification led to the development of a new lexicon. Knobs and Blobs was John's geometrical solution to describing the form of motifs: specifically 'a geometry which would allow the description and definition of motif forms without the need of nouns' (Clegg 1986: 60). Knobs (long and round) are attached and arranged around a blob (Clegg 1981). So, a four legged dog with tail up and two ears would be B 2R 5L; an ungendered anthropomorph with arms up and legs down would be B R 4 L. While proving repeatable and therefore fully scientific, the lack of ultimate insight in these labels – as John described: this geometry 'seems to maximize incomprehensibility' (Clegg 1986), meant that most of us experimented with – but moved quickly past – this objective approach. John's next solution to the problematic naming of figurative motifs (because it implies an understanding of the intentionality of the artist, which cannot be assumed) by descriptions of what they look like (Maynard 1978: 396), was to deploy an exclamation mark pronounced like a !Kung click. John eschewed inverted commas as the best way to do this since 'these are usually used as emphasis – a reading which would demolish the whole aim of using inverted commas' (Clegg 1986). So our assemblages became populated by !people, !fish and !whales (see for example Franklin 1984; Smith 1983) as a convention for non-judgmental typological labelling.

Another of John's significant contributions to rock art analysis was his exploration of schematization (Clegg 1977). His four-dimensional model involved Personality of the artisan, Medium, Function and Culture (Clegg 1986: 63) and John argued that by controlling each of these different dimensions (e.g. controlling for culture, or medium) allowed you to explore variability in the other dimensions. A similar approach was taken by Maynard (1977) who defined 'style' as 'the separation of discrete characteristics of the rock art into traits which can operate independently in describing an individual figure. She identified five levels in the descriptive process: technique, form, motif, size and character (Maynard 1977: 391).

John played with the schematic forms of the various art assemblages he worked on, for instance exploring how new contact subjects might be introduced into a graphic vocabulary. The 'Bitsa schema' was his way of identifying schematic morphing: identifying the linking of concepts, precepts and schemata. Bull Cave and its 'bitsa schema' shows Aboriginal perceptions of the first polled cattle, which escaped in 1789, after being introduced into Australia on the First Fleet. The flock of 61 beasts was found six years later, at a place now called Cowpastures.

Bull Cave rockshelter near Minto is interpreted as an illustration of the newly escaped beasts – with their poorly understood attributes: quadrupeds with cloven feet and large bovine heads (Clegg 1981: 358-9). The absence of horns is taken as proof that these were depictions of the escapees; not their progeny (which naturally grew horns). This site's complex assemblage of black and red drawings and white hand stencils includes the large quadrupeds executed in traditional techniques; outlined and infilled drawing. One complete bull is red; the other black. Both have white eyes. Schematically, while obviously quadrupedal, their feet are not bovid and their heads are bird-like. Clegg argued for a developmental schema whereby the earlier (red) drawing of the two is more bird-like than bull-like, while the later black version is more schematically 'correct' (Figure 5). The bull's feet were obviously problematic for the Aboriginal artist, probably because these were unlike any native fauna. From a distance these would have been concealed by grass (a similar argument was mounted by Percy Trezise in 1988 in relation to depictions of Diprotodons in the Laura rock art).

John was also engaged in contextualization of Sydney rock art and its management (Stanbury + Clegg 1990). The Daley's Point rockshelter (also known as Milligan's Cave, as it was in the 'backyard' of comedian Spike Milligan who lived in Woy Woy [... you know!]) was excavated by John Clegg prior to regulators constructing a metal grid to protect the art from vandals. The art consists of charcoal drawings and engraved !fish?!echidna? and !macropod low on the sloping back wall. The site was occupied mostly in the last millennium but with a basal date of 5,340 ± 105 BP (Clegg 1979b:2-3). Clegg observed change over time in the occupation material with artefacts low down in the sequence, and shellfish (including fish-hooks on top). A vast quantity (69kg) of mostly *Anadara trapezia* was recovered from this one square, and the pigment and engraved art (including the large panel of fabulous whales on the platform about the cave) were interpreted here as being associated with the midden occupation phase (and see McDonald 2008).

### Memorabilia

My favourite memories of John involved fieldwork, and driving, and of course rock art. I remember my first trip into the Sydney bush with him – a second year, 'Introduction to Prehistoric and Primitive Art' field trip to Canoelands, where we were to learn how to trace pigment art – in that famous, caged, reputedly ceremonial rock art site. It was raining. Several of us were squashed into his little VW with fogged-up windows. John bought Melting Moments from a shop somewhere near Glenorie. This was an introduction to *Hakea spinulosa* (i.e. very spikey Sydney sandstone vegetation) and the realization that seeing rock art, and

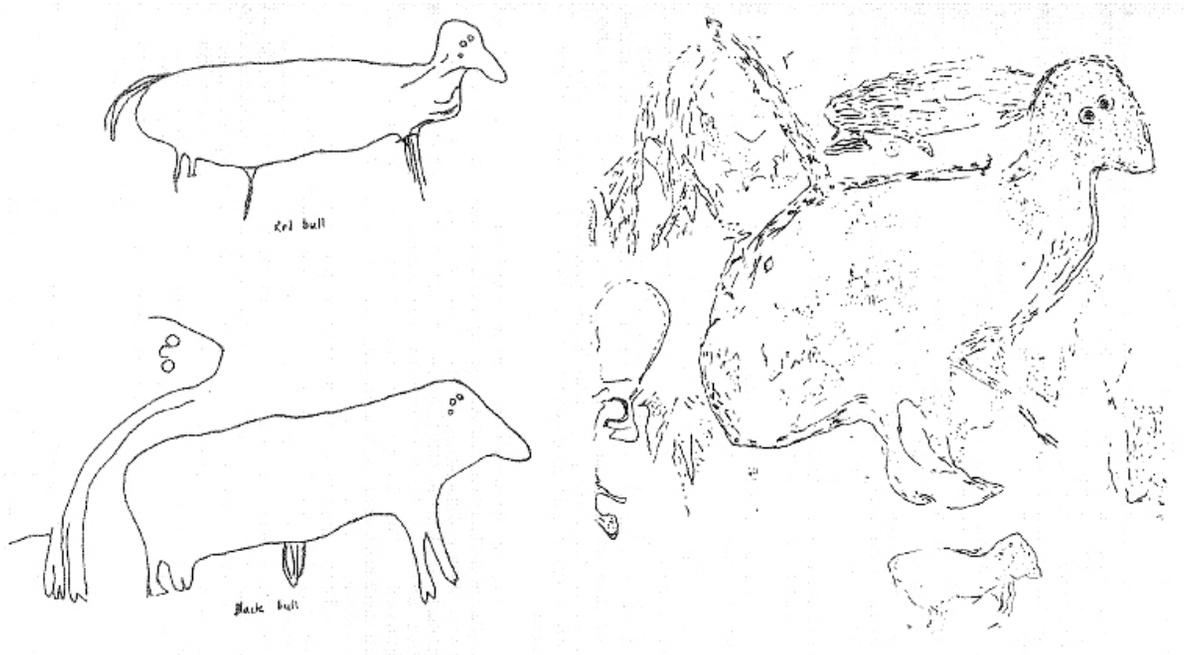


Figure 5. Bull Cave 'bitsa schema' bulls (from Clegg 1981: page 359).

tracing it on polythene, was bloody hard to do. This was followed in Year three by a trip to Staples Lookout: and those famous rabbit engravings.

There were two seasons at Sturts Meadows in my Honour's year. The first of these we were accommodated at Fowlers Gap, the UNSW Arid Zone Research Station. There was a wall of wine casks which were brought out in a Troop carrier. Based on his French experience John had allowed a litre of wine per person per day - and we 14 students were there for 3 weeks. I'm not sure what the Australian Research Council who funded the work thought about that!

This metre-high wall of wine created a firebreak within the Mess Hall at Fowler's Gap - and distinguished us instantly from the UNSW Engineering students who were using this same facility during their field school to build a water tank. They had only brought prodigious quantities of beer, most of which they drank on the bus on the long drive out from Sydney. Every morning, the rock art team in the Troopie, would drive down the dirt road through the semi-arid zone. As we descended down a low rise and turned into the Sturts Meadows lightly saltbush dusted paddocks someone would say 'Ah! the Serengeti'. Most of us hadn't been to Africa at that stage: or spent time in the Australian arid zone. It was exotic, desolate, and we did feel like we were on an adventure. Ben Gunn was on that trip: on one of his first forays into applying his formal art training to Aboriginal rock art; and so was Barbara Triggs - the 'Tracks and Scats Lady' (Triggs 1985) - who John brought out to help with the kangaroo tracks. I remember lots of rock art, the 9 quaintly-named

subsites, spread across several kilometers of low rolling hills. There were cold nights, lots of mulled wine, John in a red Santa Claus-style sleeping cap (which he wore to the 'launch' of the Engineer's water tank on the top of a mesa). And John's partner Kate and new-born baby son Jack visited: they walked around the site with a back-pack that had a colorful little umbrella to protect the wee one from the sun. The second season we stayed in the Sturts Meadows Shearers Quarters. There was a great old kitchen with a wood-fired stove and historic shearers' beds that smelt of lanolin. I don't remember there being as much wine on that trip, but though I do remember us being warned off using too much water for our showers in the drought.

John let me drive his and Kate's new blue Subaru station wagon back from Mootwingee to Sydney on that trip. I was on my Learner's Plates and he said I needed the practice. When we arrived in Bathurst to have a feed at the Chinese Restaurant there were 10 kangaroo's feet hanging off the roo bar (aptly named, as John pointed out, a Roo Bar is the colloquial Australian term for the large metal bumper bars placed at the front of a vehicle to lesson the impact of a collision with an animal). John has severed these roo feet from road kill we encountered along the drive with his very sharp pocket knife - all in the name of research, of course. My Honour's thesis investigated whether macropod speciation could account for stylistic variability in the engraved track assemblage at Sturts Meadows (McDonald 1993).

Another fieldwork memory is when Kate and John, and Jack and Harry came to visit my PhD excavations at Mount Yengo. We were all camped in a valley

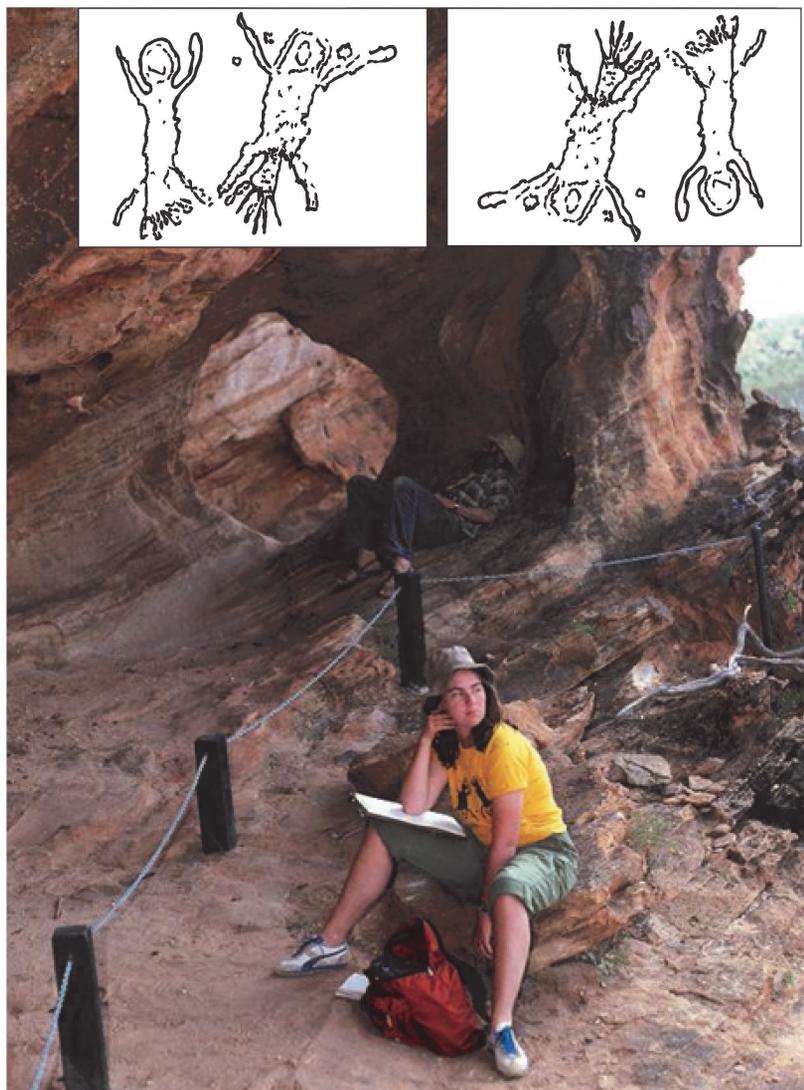


Figure 6. John Clegg and Jo McDonald recording at Mootwingee in 1982: the famous humorless feminist motif on the T-shirt worn by the author (original photo by Ben Gunn, inset with two views, from Clegg 1981).

downstream of the site, and on the first day they arrived, John and Jack came to see the site while Kate and (toddler) Harry put up the tent. There was a large wombat burrow in the rockshelter that I had been worrying about in terms of where I wanted to extend the trench, and as it turned a corner I couldn't see the end of it... I suggested that five year-old Jack was small enough to fit in the burrow and that we'd be able to work out how close to the trench wall it went by measuring his height and the distance to his feet. John enthusiastically assisted in this experiment. When we got back to camp, Kate was horrified that we'd done such a thing: despite our protestations that we'd tied a rope around his ankle in case the burrow collapsed... Needless to say this was several years before I had my first child, Oliver.

John also gave me my first archaeological job: as his research assistant on the Sturts Meadows Project for

12 months, starting in my Honour's year. This involved the first phases of his analysis of the Sturts Meadows data: the cataloging of the field photographs and photographing many tracings which had been created of the large engraving panels from the site; then counting the recorded motifs (Clegg 1987).

When I dressed for the John's Memorial at MacLaurin Hall I regretted that I no longer owned the Humorless Feminists T-shirt that John made in the early 80s. This yellow Bond's classic had a Mootwingee motif on it which Fred McCarthy has originally recorded as a pair of space men, McCarthy interpreting their dot heads as encapsulated in big round helmets. John's interpretation involved rotating the viewer, or rather the motif, through 180's to reveal a pair of female human figures with exaggerated genitalia (Figure 6).

That yellow T-shirt was classic John – exemplifying how different ways of looking will result in different ways of seeing. And his cheerful offering up of his first-born to an experimental methodology to solve a field problem was also classic John. And that is how I will always remember him, as a man whose eccentricity, intellect and humour were intrinsically intertwined, a dedicated teacher who brought out the best in anyone

who appreciated that eclectic intellect. A generous and funny man: I miss you John Pon.

**References**

Aubert, M., A. Brumm, M. Ramli, T. Sutikna, E. W. Saptomo, B. Hakim, M.J. Morwood, G.D. Van Den Bergh, L. Kinsley, A. Dosseto 2014. Pleistocene cave art from Sulawesi, Indonesia. *Nature* 514 (7521): 223.

Balme, J., I. Davidson, J. McDonald, N. Stern and P. Veth 2009. Symbolic behaviour and the peopling of the southern arc route to Australia. *Quaternary International* 202: 59–68.

Bowler, J.M., H. Johnston, J.M. Olley, J.R. Prescott, R.G. Roberts, W. Shawcross, and N.A. Spooner 2003. New ages for human occupation and climatic change at Lake Mungo, Australia. *Nature* 421: 837-840.

Clarkson C., Z. Jacobs, B. Marwick, R. Fullagar, L. Wallis, M. Smith, R.G. Roberts, E. Hayes, K. Lowe, C. X. Carah,

- S. A. Florin, J. McNeil, D. Cox, L.J. Arnold, Q. Hua, J. Huntley, H.E.A. Brand, T. Manne, A. Fairbairn, J. Shulmeister, L. Lyle, M. Salinas, M. Page, K. Connell, G. Park, K. Norman, T. Murphy and C. Pardoe 2017. Human occupation of northern Australia by 65,000 years ago. *Nature* 547: 306-310.
- Clegg, J. 1971. A 'metaphysical approach' to the study of Aboriginal rock paintings. *Mankind* 18(1): 37-42.
- Clegg, J. 1977. Resolving problems which arise from style in art, in P.J. Ucko (ed.) *Form in Indigenous Art*: 260-276. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
- Clegg, J. 1978. *Mathesis Words, Mathesis Pictures*. Volumes 1 and 2. MA (Hons) Thesis, University of Sydney. Later published as Clegg, J. 1981 *Notes Towards Mathesis Art*, 1981 Clegg Calenders, Balmain NSW.
- Clegg, J. 1979a. Science, Theory and Australian Prehistoric Art. *Mankind* 12(1): 42-50.
- Clegg, J. 1979b. Milligan's: The State at 1:xii:79. Unpublished Ms. Copy held on file NSW NPWS.
- Clegg, J. 1983. From the study of Aboriginal Art to the Archaeology of Prehistoric Pictures. *Australian Archaeology* 16: 87-91.
- Clegg, J. 1986. The archaeological approach to Prehistoric Picture in Australia, in G.N. Bailey and P. Callow (eds) *Stone Age Prehistory: studies in memory of Charles McBurney*: 55-66. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clegg, J. 1987. Style and Tradition at Sturts Meadows. *World Archaeology*, 19(2), 236 - 255.
- Clegg, J. 2000. Callan Point engravings and landscape, in George Nash (ed.) *World Perspectives in Landscape and Rock Art*. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports.
- Clegg, J. 2001. Rock art studies: theory, in Knut Helskog (ed.) *Theoretical perspectives in Rock Art Research* (The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture): 40-67. Oslo: Novus Forlag.
- Clegg, J. 2010. Towards a philosophy of rock art study: What, Why, and How? *AURA Newsletter*. Volume 27, Number 1.
- Clegg, J. 2010. Life Drawing and the Chauvet lions, in J. Clottes (eds) *L'art pléistocène dans le monde* in Bulletin de la Société Préhistorique Ariège-Pyrénées. (N° special de Préhistoire, Art et Sociétés) 76-77. Actes du Congrès IFRAO: Tarascon-sur-Ariège.
- Clegg J. and S. Jamwal 2008. Aesthetics, function and fashion in rock art: Reactions to 'Aesthetics and Rock Art', in T. Heyd and J. Clegg (eds) *Aesthetics and Rock Art*. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Dragovich, D. 1986. Minimum Age of some desert varnish near Broken Hill, NSW. *Search*, 17: 149-150.
- Heyd, T. and J. Clegg (eds) 2005. *Aesthetics and Rock Art*. London: Ashgate.
- Franklin, N. 1984. Of !Macropods and !Men: an analysis of the Simple Figurative styles. Unpublished BA (Hons) Thesis, University of Sydney.
- Jones, R. 1979. The Fifth continent: problems concerning the human colonisation of Australia. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 8: 445-66.
- Liesowska, A. 2015. Stone Bracelet is oldest ever found in the world. The Siberian Times. <www.siberiantimes.com>.
- Maynard, L. 1977. Classification and Terminology in Australian rock art, in P.J. Ucko (ed.) *Form in Indigenous Art*: 385 - 402. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
- Maynard, L. 1979. The archaeology of Australian Aboriginal art, in S.M. Mead (ed.) *Exploring the Visual Art of Oceania*: 83-110. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii.
- McCarthy, F.D. 1961. A remarkable ritual gallery of cave paintings in eastern NSW. *Records Australian Museum* 25(7): 115-20.
- McDonald, J.J. 1993. The depiction of species in macropod track engravings at an Aboriginal art site in western New South Wales. *Records of the Australian Museum, Supplement* 17: 105-116.
- McDonald, J.J. 2008. *Dreamtime Superhighway: An analysis of Sydney Basin rock art and prehistoric information exchange*. (Terra Australis 27). Canberra: ANU EPress.
- McMah, L. 1965. A quantitative analysis of the Aboriginal rock carvings in the District of Sydney and the Hawkesbury River. Unpublished BA (Hons) Thesis, University of Sydney.
- Mathews, R.H. 1897. The Burbung of the Darkinung Tribe. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria* 10: 1-12.
- Moser, S. 1996. Science, stratigraphy and the deep sequence: excavation vs regional survey and the question of gendered practice in archaeology. *Antiquity* 70 (270): 813-823.
- Murray, T. and J.P. White 1981. Cambridge in the Bush? Archaeology in Australia and New Guinea. *World Archaeology* 13(2): 255-263.
- Mulvaney, J. 1969. *The prehistory of Australia*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- O'Connor, S. and Fankhauser, B. 2001. Art at 40,000bp? One step closer: an ochre covered rock from Carpenter's Gap Shelter 1, Kimberley region, Western Australia, in A. Anderson, I.
- Smith, L. 1983. What's in the Size of a Macropod? A Study of variance in prehistoric pictures from the Mangrove Creek Area. Unpublished BA (Hons) Thesis, University of Sydney.
- Stanbury, P. and J. Clegg 1990. *A field guide to Aboriginal Rock engravings*. Sydney University Press, Sydney.
- Treize P. 1988. *The Peopling of Australia*. Gareth: Stevens Publishing LLLP.
- Triggs, B. 2004. *Tracks, Scats and Other Traces: a field guide to Australian Mammals*. Canberra: Oxford University Press.