The Body Farm

**SEMINAR PRESENTED BY THE CENTRE FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCE (CAS)**

**DATE:** THURSDAY 18TH AUGUST

**TIME:** 1:30PM-2:30PM

**VENUE:** 41.G03A, UOW

**PRESENTER:** PROF. SHARI FORBES

Shari Forbes is a Professor and ARC Future Fellow in the Centre for Forensic Science at the University of Technology Sydney. She is also the Director of the Australian Facility for Taphonomic Experimental Research. Shari is an invited member of the Australian Academy of Forensic Sciences and a member of the Australian and New Zealand Forensic Science Society (ANZFSS). She is the Pacific Officer for the Initiative on Forensic Geology, a directive of the International Union of Geological Sciences. She is regularly consulted on forensic casework and assists police to search for and locate human remains using police dogs and geophysical equipment.

**SEMINAR OVERVIEW**

Forensic taphonomy involves the study of human remains from the time of death to the time of discovery. This field of investigation is studied by scientists to understand the physical, chemical, and biological processes of human decomposition. To date, human decomposition has only been studied in the USA at facilities known as 'body farms' which use donated human cadavers to study decomposition. However, in January 2016, the Australian Facility for Taphonomic Experimental Research was opened, representing the first 'body farm' in Australia and the only one in the world outside of the USA. This facility will enable researchers to improve their understanding of the human decomposition process in Australia and assist police and forensic investigators to search for, locate, recover, and identify victim remains. Such research is particularly important for involving missing persons, as well as victims of homicide, genocide, and mass disaster.