The May edition of the Newsletter contains information about the next two conferences, in York and Aberdeen. Please note the May 31st deadline for returning registration forms for the 30th Anniversary Conference in York this autumn.

Please also note that the Committee is seeking the opinions of members regarding updating the Membership Special Interests list (by 12th June). In addition, nominations are requested for the AEA Managing Committee (see ‘News from the Committee’ below). We would also like to draw attention to the John Evans Dissertation Prize item (p.3).

We are very grateful to Nora Bermingham for reporting on the Spring Conference.

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

NOMINATIONS TO THE AEA MANAGING COMMITTEE
The AEA Managing Committee seeks nominations for the following positions:
- **Secretary** (four-year position)
- **Three Ordinary committee members** (each a four-year position);
- **Student representative** (two-year position)
Elections will be held at the AEA AGM, which is to be held during the conference at York in September 2009.

The role of Secretary
The role of the Secretary is to facilitate communication between members of the AEA Managing Committee and, with the AEA Chair, between the Committee and AEA members. The main practical duties involve the
drawing up of agendas, keeping accurate minutes, and writing and encouraging notices for the Newsletter and Website. The Secretary works in close co-operation with the AEA Chair, but is also available to assist other Committee members of the Association.

The role of Student Representative
It was decided at the 2008 AGM to create an elected Student Representative post on the AEA Committee. The term of office for the Student Representative will be two years, and the post is open to both undergraduates and postgraduates. One new student will be elected to the Committee each year. During their first year of office, the newly elected Student Representative will ‘shadow’ the student completing their second year of office (or in the case of the first appointment, an existing Committee member will be appointed to mentor the student). During their second year of office, the student representative will take a more active role in the Committee, as well as guiding the newly elected student representative.

The Student Representative will be expected to promote the AEA within the undergraduate and postgraduate communities, and also encourage the establishment of student-led meetings/seminars.

General Committee information
The AEA Managing Committee usually meets four times a year (usually in April, July, October and January). The main items of business discussed are the organisation of conferences, and the publication of conference monographs and the Journal, as well as issues relating to the Newsletter, website maintenance and membership. All nominees must be AEA members in good standing.

To make your nomination: Any AEA member can make a nomination, but this must be seconded. A brief personal statement from the nominee (which implicitly indicates the nominee’s willingness to stand) should accompany nominations. This can be received by e-mail or regular mail. This statement will be published in the August Newsletter or, if received afterwards, posted at the AGM. Nominations can be received up to the time of the AGM, although the committee would like to encourage members to submit nominations before the August Newsletter deadline (20th July 2009).

Nominations and personal statements can be e-mailed or posted to the AEA Secretary, Meriel McClatchie. E-mail: meriel.mcclatchie@gmail.com
Postal address: See http://www.envarch.net/aea/committee.html

Current Committee details can be found at: http://www.envarch.net/aea/committee.html
The AEA constitution is also on the AEA website: http://www.envarch.net/aea/constitution.html

PUBLISHING AEA MEMBERS’ INTERESTS
The AEA Committee has recently been approached regarding the re-establishment of a published list containing information on members’ specialist interests and contact details. When members join the AEA, they are encouraged to supply information on their specialist interests. In the past (and with the permission of individual members) this information has been made available to the wider AEA membership.

It has been a number of years since such a list has been published. The AEA Committee proposes that we re-establish this list and make it available to either the membership only or make the list more widely available (e.g. open-access on the AEA website). Members will be encouraged to provide a short entry on their current interests and their contact details. We expect that the list will be revisited biennially to reflect changes in members’ interests and membership. It is anticipated that this information will enable better communication between members working in similar fields. It should be noted that the list will only contain information from members who are interested in participating.

The AEA Committee welcomes the opinions of the membership on this proposal. Please email your comments to Meriel McClatchie (meriel.mcclatchie@gmail.com) before Friday, 12th June 2009.

THE JOURNAL
The Journal’s editor, Ingrid Mainland, would like to encourage AEA members to submit research papers, review articles or short contributions on any aspect of environmental archaeology. Full details regarding submission to the Journal can be found at the following website: http://www.maney.co.uk/journals/env, or contact Ingrid Mainland for further information.

Journal Editor:
Dr Ingrid Mainland,
Co-ordinating Editor of Environmental Archaeology,
Department of Archaeological Sciences,
Online access for all subscribers

Online access to *Environmental Archaeology* (Volume 11 onwards) is now available to all AEA members. If you would like to register for access the Journal online, please email Rob Craigie, the AEA Webmaster (r.craigie@shef.ac.uk), with your chosen username and a password. When your registration has been accepted, access to the Journal will be available through a link on the AEA website (www.envarch.net). Please note that access will only be made available to fully paid-up members.

Also note that Institutional subscription to *Environmental Archaeology* is only £116 ($228 in USA) and includes online access to the full text. If your institution is not currently subscribing to the Journal, please encourage them to do so. Information on institutional subscriptions to the Journal is available at: http://www.maney.co.uk/journals/env

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**John Evans Dissertation Prize**

John Evans (1941-2005) was an inspirational environmental archaeologist, responsible for advancing the discipline and fostering many of today’s top researchers in the field. His many books continue to make a contribution to practical and theoretical aspects of environmental archaeology.

To honour the memory of John and his achievements within environmental archaeology, the AEA is launching an annual dissertation competition. Prizes of £75 will be awarded to the best undergraduate and Masters dissertation, which may be on any aspect of environmental archaeology worldwide. Abstracts from the winning dissertations will be published in the AEA newsletter and the winners will also be encouraged to submit an abridged version of their dissertation for publication in the Association’s journal, *Environmental Archaeology*, subject to the usual review process.

We invite each Department of Archaeology (or other relevant department) to submit the dissertation of their best candidate by the **31 July 2009**. Submissions from individual students are not accepted. The dissertation must be written in English.

All submitted dissertations will be read by two committee members, with a short list of four being read by a third member of the committee. The result will be announced at the AEA annual conference 3-5 September 2009.

Bound copies should be sent to Naomi Sykes, who should also be contacted for further information:
Naomi Sykes  naomi.sykes@nottingham.ac.uk
Department of Archaeology
University of Nottingham
NG7 2RD

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**CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS**

**AEA 30th ANNIVERSARY MEETING**

**York, 3-5 September 2009**

*Environmental Archaeology in a Changing World*

Members are reminded that the autumn meeting this year will celebrate our 30th Anniversary. We will meet at the University of York, UK (for further details and registration, please visit http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/AEA30/registration.html). Please note that registration forms for those requiring accommodation at York (and, ideally, everyone else!) should be sent to Dr Allan Hall by **31st May**.

After the end of the meeting, there will be opportunity to visit the York Archaeological trust’s long-term excavations at Hungate in York, where a free site tour will be given on the morning of Sunday 6th September for those who would like to stay an extra night. Please make sure you book that accommodation if needed.

Speakers who have already offered papers are as follows, but we still have plenty of room in the programme for more. Titles and abstracts for consideration can be offered on the registration form.
Association of Environmental Archaeology Spring Conference,

30th March-1st April, 2010,

University of Aberdeen.

Theme: The Environmental Archaeology of the North

The theme of this conference reflects the interests of the Departments of Archaeology and Geography & Environment at the University of Aberdeen, in that it focuses explicitly on the lifeways, worldviews and environments of northern cultures, encompassing a region that takes in the northern Britain, North Atlantic, Northern Eurasia, high latitude North America and the North Pacific.

Popular perception holds that if the 'cradle of civilization' was in warm southern climes, the north was little more than a frozen, peripheral wasteland. Such a caricature is hard to support when we consider the diverse and rich evidence of human cultures in the northern world. While often living in environments which could be less than favourable and even hostile, northern peoples were anything but more primitive versions of those further south. Through complex histories of colonization, local innovation and cultural contact, the northern world developed an astonishing range of prehistoric and historic societies and cultures; from ancient Siberian populations to the Picts of Scotland and from the hunter-fisher-gatherers of the North Pacific to the Vikings of Scandinavia.

This conference will explore human interactions with northern environments and will foster discussion about how individuals and communities understood, adapted to, and transformed the landscapes in which they moved and acted. What the impacts did these communities have on their environments? How does environmental
archaeology inform our understanding of northern societies? How do social and cultural constructs shape our understanding of these environments? The programme will devote two days to presentations and will offer an optional field excursion to visit some of the impressive archaeological sites of Aberdeenshire on the third day.

First call for papers: The organising committee would like to invite oral and poster presentations based on these broad themes, involving any aspect of environmental archaeology.

Oral presentations will have a maximum length of 20 minutes. The conference organisers will select from among the submitted proposals and will schedule the presentations in thematic groups. In addition poster presentations are also welcome; the poster format will be notified at the time of the acceptance of proposals. Abstracts should be sent as text documents (preferably in Word format) by **November 1st, 2009** to: t.mighall@abdn.ac.uk. Please include a title, author or authors’ complete name(s) and affiliations, a full postal and email addresses. Abstracts should be maximum 200 words and contain a clear description of the topic of the presentation. The language of the conference will be English. Further details will be posted on the websites of the AEA and the Departments of Archaeology and Geography & Environment:

www.envarch.net/events
www.abdarch.ac.uk/archaeology
www.abdn.ac.uk/geography

Conference organisers: Tim Mighall (Geography & Environment), Kevin Edwards (Archaeology & Geography & Environment), Karen Milek (Archaeology) and Keith Dobney (Archaeology).

Informal enquiries to Tim Mighall (t.mighall@abdn.ac.uk)

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**11th International Paleolimnology Symposium**

**23-26 June 2009**

**Guadalajara, Mexico:**

"Late Quaternary paleoclimate and paleoenvironmental records in lakes from the Southern Hemisphere".

Abstracts will be accepted until May 20th

For further details on the conference, see [http://www.geofisica.unam.mx/paleolimnologia](http://www.geofisica.unam.mx/paleolimnologia).

Sébastien Bertrand (sbertrand@awi.de)
Krystyna Saunders (saunderk@utas.edu.au)
Elie Verleyen (Elie.Verleyen@ugent.be)
Steven Roberts (sjro@bas.ac.uk)

Session description: Compared to the Northern Hemisphere, paleoclimate and paleoenvironmental sedimentary records from the Southern Hemisphere are still relatively scarce. In this session, we invite a broad range of oral and poster contributions related to the reconstruction of past climate and environmental changes based on the analysis of lake sedimentary archives from the Southern Hemisphere, including Antarctica. We particularly encourage papers that focus on high-resolution paleoclimate records covering the last deglaciation, as well as more recent time-windows (e.g., LIA, MWP). We also invite contributions that deal with late Quaternary natural and anthropogenic environmental changes, such as seismic and volcanic activity, pollution and changes in vegetation and limnology. Finally, we welcome contributions that are based on a wide variety of sedimentological, geochemical and biological proxies and we particularly encourage papers focusing on the application of novel proxies to study lakes in the Southern Hemisphere.

Dr Krystyna Saunders
Institute of Antarctic & Southern Ocean Studies
University of Tasmania
Private Bag 77
Hobart Tasmania 7001
Australia
The AEA one-day meeting opens the annual conference season for many archae-environmentalists and palaeoecologists. This meeting, hosted by University of Birmingham, took place on the eve of British Summer Time and introduced a variety of new and developing projects many of which will see further research over the coming year.

Delegates were welcomed with coffee, tea and enlivening orange juice – vital as the majority had travelled that morning from locations within the UK and Ireland. With acquaintances renewed, the conference was opened by the chief organiser David Smith. Eleven papers were on offer arranged around morning and afternoon coffee breaks as well as an on-site lunch. Papers were 15 minutes with 5 minutes for questions and discussion. Thankfully, time was very well managed with all speakers and chairs adhering to this arrangement. The result was a relaxed and smoothly-run event for both audience and contributors. Question time following each paper was put to good use with every speaker enjoying feedback from the floor.

The day’s theme focused on modern analogue studies. The idea of the present being the key to the past and how best we can use the extensive toolkit of palaeoecological/bio-archaeological, chemical, ethnographic and experimental techniques available was very well developed by the speakers. Though not strictly concerned with modern analogues, the opening paper by Tim Mighall & colleagues provided a fine example of what it is we are trying to achieve in reconstructing past landscapes. Pollen, non-pollen palynomorphs, charcoal, diatoms and mineral magnetism have been combined to provide a lengthy sequence of Holocene vegetation change from Aqualate Mere, Staffordshire. Evidence for human impact in the landscape was identified during the late Bronze Age and Roman periods with more recent parkland and tree-planting activity also recorded. The quality of the sequence dated using C14, SCPs and lead and caesium dating, suggest the study may become a “Type Site” for the Midlands, against which pre-existing fragmentary records may be compared.

The first insect-related paper of the day was delivered by Steve Davis. A change in title from the original programme incorporated the unlikely combination of Vikings and Vans, i.e. a Ford transit. Interested in disentangling natural and anthropogenic background faunas, Steve has examined insect remains from the transit van at the centre of the University of Bristol’s “Van Project” and samples retrieved from reconstructed Viking houses from the Irish National Heritage Park, Ferrycarraig, Ireland. The insect assemblage from the ford transit was dominated by woodworm with synantrophes common suggestive of an indoor archaeological assemblage; possibly a timber-framed building. The insects retrieved from actual wooden buildings at Ferrycarraig returned some equally interesting results. The reconstructions revealed fewer decomposition or refuse species and higher levels of woodworm then in samples from equivalent archaeological buildings. These may be related to differences in housekeeping, or indeed breeding cycles of woodworm, as suggested later from the floor. Steve pointed out important differences between the transit van and Ferrycarraig assemblages as analogues and as archaeological samples, and raised the need for the compilation of signature insect assemblages for a range of analogue activities such as tanning.

Investigation of analogue activity was central to the next paper by Dragana Filipovic. Traditional farming practices in the Kastamonu region on the Turkish Balkan coast were studied in order to elucidate the prehistoric farming practices of early agricultural sites, in particular Catalhoyuk. With echoes of middle range theory and Binford in the background, Dragana explored crop-growing techniques of einkorn and emmer; recorded harvesting methods and observed a range approaches to crop processing and storage. The data gathered from Kastamonu suggested important differences between this region and Catalhoyuk, mostly in relation to storage capacity, surplus and where crops are stored. These differences may be related to social factors, an issue Dragana is to return to in future work.

Keeping with an agricultural theme, Michael Wallace presented latest findings on identifying irrigation through stable carbon isotopes in botanical remains. The study investigated the relationship between plants, water and the reactions of stable carbon isotopes to different hydrological conditions from study sites in England, Spain, Greece, Jordan and Syria. Earlier studies have shown depletion in the level of carbon-13 in wheat and barley grown under wet conditions. In this study, high input irrigation was generally well reflected with un-irrigated or low level irrigation not distinguished. The question of whether the technique could be applied to archaeobotanical remains was addressed by mimicking some of the processes grain would go through, i.e. charring and submitting the charred grains to carbon isotope analysis. The differences between the charred and non-charred grains were negligible suggesting charring did not affect the carbon isotopes adversely. The potential for identifying irrigation, at least high-input irrigation, in the archaeobotanical record was thus demonstrated.
How many trees does it take to be a woodland? At least, that is, from the perspective of a snail. Issues around gaps in our knowledge of modern molluscan ecology and the impact of such lacunae on interpreting past landscapes from land snail assemblages was addressed in a power-point free address to the delegates by Paul Davies. The mismatch between modern ecological studies on snails and the needs of the palaeoecologist focused on reconstructing past landscapes was highlighted. The scale at which ecological surveys take place; the absence of data from habitats such as dry grassland and ditches and the need for enlightened sampling strategies were emphasised. This paper sparked a discussion on whether we were moving into a period of reflection where environmental archaeologists need to study the existing landscape and to re-assert the environment in past landscape studies.

Searching for ‘openness’ in early Holocene woodland by examining insect faunas led David Smith and colleagues to investigate pond sites from a range of woodland and grazing regimes from sites in Dunham Massey, Cheshire, Epping Forest, Greater London and Hatfield, South Yorkshire. Samples collected from each pond were examined in terms of the ratio of open ground and pasture, woodland and dung beetles represented. Important differences were observed between each site in the proportions of species associated with woodland recovered. In addition, differences between these modern assemblages and archaeological faunas interpreted as representing a given environment-type were revealed thus re-iterating the need for further analogue research.

Insects featured in the methodology used to create a multi-proxy analogue for identifying hay in the archaeological record presented by Pam Grinter. Pam investigated the plant and insect components of hay retrieved from four traditionally managed hay meadows in Herefordshire. The meadows, wonderfully named, Wood, Lawn, Cockshoot and Stocking represented a mix of ancient meadow and areas in meadow since the 1960s. Significant differences were revealed between the plant and insect components of a hay bale and the insect and plant populations of a living meadow. The hay bale represents a much reduced species record at odds with the mix of remains that can occur in the archaeological record. The study suggests that what is normally identified as hay, based on insect fauna, may represent grazed meadow rather than cut hay and that a better modern analogue may be derived from focusing on the growing content of a meadow rather than hay bale contents.

The final insect related paper of the day was presented by Harry Kenward who focused on experimental approaches to deciphering taphonomic processes, a theme commonly addressed by Kenward & Hall (e.g. Aarhus Conference 2007). What happened when an oriental cockroach, a moth, and some grain and bread beetles were placed within bran-filled nets in composts bins over a two and a half year period? Decay clearly but not necessarily at the rate or the manner that might have been predicted. Similarly, field beans, grains seeds, flaxseed, and fragments of leek and pine wood showed variable preservation with some remains having decayed at a significantly slower rate than anticipated. The patterns of decay, particularly those of the insects, resulted in a reappraisal of medieval Viking floor deposits in York. That insect and plant remains are preserved has in the past been interpreted as the result of a deposit being suddenly sealed. This study suggested that perhaps a compost-like floor, in which insects etc could be preserved, existed below a drier, lived-in surface.

The final session was prefaced with awarding the prize for best poster display. Andy Howard as acting chair presented the prize to Michelle Farrell of the University of Hull for PhD work on Orkney.

Pollen production, dispersal and deposition were central to two papers in the final session. Michael Grant and colleagues collected pollen data from three sites in East Anglia dedicated to modern coppice woodland. The study investigated what impact coppicing has on the pollen record specifically with regard to pollen production, mobilisation and deposition. Pollen samples from hazel, alder and lime woodlands were collected in Tauber traps, and from small ponds with chronological control provide by SCPs, Pb210 and caesium dating. Michael found that coppicing may be suppressing the pollen representation of the coppiced species and proposed that reductions in tree pollen in Holocene records may relate to coppice rather than woodland clearance. Evidently, a case where the modern analogue has provided thought provoking results.

Ben Gearey’s re-titled paper on the Suffolk River Valleys’ Project reported on the use of a range of palaeoenvironmental data-sets in association with archaeological investigations from an area of Suffolk where there has been little previous work on river valleys or environmental reconstruction. A combination of pollen, insect and diatom work as well as Lidar, stratigraphic survey and deposit modelling using GIS have been applied to a number of sites, in particular the site of a triple post alignment at Beccles. The latter represents a large-scale structure within a wetland bordering a river. Dendrochronological dates suggest it was constructed around 75BC with Iron Age and Roman pottery retrieved during excavations. The site’s purpose, full extent and relationship with other archaeological sites that may be present are as yet undetermined. Further work may provide an answer and the next season of fieldwork involves an experimental approach to geophysical survey within a wetland context. As Ben suggested Watch This Space!

The final paper of the day by Jane Bunting returned to pollen dispersal and deposition. Using specialised computer software Jane has used simulation experiments to explore the pollen catchment capacity of small mires and the sensitivity of pollen records from such sites to agricultural activity in the landscape. Models differing in woodland cover and patch size, i.e. simulated site size from 50m radius to 1500m radius, were
generated with significant differences in pollen visibility between the small and larger patches. Jane demonstrated how the approach can be used at an early Neolithic site in north-east Scotland where pollen records suggest closed forest through to the Iron Age with little evidence for human impact. The success of this approach appears to be in allowing experimental patterns of the landscape to be explored.

This meeting provided an entertaining and informative day-out. Well developed papers focused on a strong theme maintained the delegates’ interest and no doubt helped ensure support for future meetings. Delegates and contributors derived from academic, commercial and student arenas and hopefully this collaborative environment will continue to grow.

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**LAND AND PEOPLE: PAPERS IN MEMORY OF JOHN G. EVANS**

Edited by Michael J. Allen, Niall Sharples & Terry O’Connor

**PRE-PUBLICATION and TABULA COMMEMORATIVA OFFER**

*Land and People* is a Prehistoric Society Research Paper, the newly launched peer-reviewed monograph series, published by the Prehistoric Society with Oxbow Books. This volume is dedicated to John Evans in celebration of his contribution to environmental archaeology, providing a glimpse of the many ways in which he has touched the lives of so many. The 20 papers cover many aspects of research he engaged in during his career; typically a number of papers relate to land snails, but a series of other aspects of prehistoric environmental archaeological and ideas of texture and social order are considered. Two papers provide key discourse in significantly developing and revising John’s work on the chalkland.

This volume brings together papers that address themes and landscapes on a variety of levels. They cover geographical, methodological and thematic areas that were of interest to, and had been studied by, John Evans. In some instances papers have been inspired by John’s approaches to landscape and landscape analysis and their application to new or wider areas than John himself studied in detail. Others take forward, re-examine or elaborate on some of his specific theories and interpretations, looking at new or improved datasets. As a collection, the papers in this volume provides a diverse and cohesive picture of how archaeological landscapes are viewed within current research frameworks and approaches, while also paying tribute to the innovative and inspirational work of one of the leading protagonists of environmental archaeology and the holistic approach to landscape interpretation.


*Land and People* will be launched at the AEA conference in York, 3rd-5th September. It will contain a *Tabula Com memorativa* that will be published in the front of the book of all those who wish to honour John, his work and contribution to environmental archaeology, conchology, and archaeological thinking.

To take advantage of the prepublication offer and to honour the achievements of John Evans by adding your name to the *Tabula Com memorativa* please fill in the order form at the end of this Newsletter.

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We are very grateful to James Greig for sending us this information. James sends his thanks to Stefanie Jacomet, Per Lagerås and W.A. Out for references. Please send information to jimi.gee@virgin.net

BOOKS


CHAPTERS


ARTICLES

M. Djamali, J. De Beaulieu, N.F. Miller, et al. (2009) Vegetation history of the SE section of the Zagros mountains during the last five millennia; a pollen record from the Maharlou Lake, Fars Province, Iran. *Vegetation History and Archaeobotany* 18(2): 123-136

M. Kuoppamaa, T. Goslar and S. Hicks (2009) Pollen accumulation rates as a tool for detecting land-use changes in a sparsely settled boreal forest. *Vegetation History and Archaeobotany* 18(3): 205-217


LAND AND PEOPLE:
PAPERS IN MEMORY OF JOHN G. EVANS
edited by Michael J Allen, Niall Sharples and Terry O’Connor

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