

Association for Environmental Archaeology

AEA Newsletter 128

May 2015

Inside this issue:

Chair's piece	p1
Early Banana and Rice Cultivation in Sri Lanka	p2
PAGES working Group LandCover6k	p5
AEA Spring Conference Report	p5
AEA Autumn Conference, York 2015	p7
News from the Committee	p8
John Evans Dissertation Prize	p9
AEA Conference Fund	p10
AEA Research Grants	p10
AEA Conference Fund application form	p11

Key dates on the Back Page

ISSN 1363-6553

Chair's piece

Richard Thomas, AEA Chair

It has been a busy and satisfying few months of awards since I wrote my chair's piece in the last newsletter. We received an excellent response to our first Research Fund award (<http://envarch.net/grants>) and we were able to make five awards – although the quality was so high that we wished we could have made many more! The titles of the successful projects feature in this newsletter (page 10) and we hope to see publications arising from these projects in a future issue of *Environmental Archaeology*. Although it seems a long way off, we will be running this award again next year (31st January 2016 deadline), so please do think about making a submission.

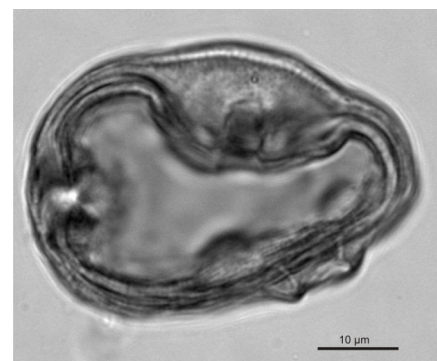
We have also recently made an institutional and individual membership award. Two of our honorary members generously donate their three-year membership subscription to an individual and an institution based in a country with a limited tradition of environmental archaeology and/or who face challenges accessing our journal. We are delighted to announce that our individual award recipient is Dr. T. R. Premathilake. Information about his current research, centred on the origins of banana and rice cultivation in Sri Lanka, is detailed within the newsletter (page 2). Our institutional award was made to the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.

Our next set of awards will take the form of the John Evans prize (<http://envarch.net/john-evans-prize>) for the best undergraduate and postgraduate dissertation in environmental archaeology in 2015. Full details are provided in this newsletter (page 9) and on the website: we would be very grateful if could encourage nominations from any academic departments you

have contact with. The deadline for submissions is 31st July.

In other news, we held a very successful spring meeting (at the University of Nottingham) – particular thanks are due to all the speakers and the local organising committee: Dr. Alex Livarda, Dr. Hector Orengo, Dr. Hannah O'Regan and Dr. Naomi Sykes. The Ignite-format presentations, in which speakers reprise their research using 20 automated slides in five minutes, were a personal highlight. Our next conference will take place in York and takes as its focus the eminent career of AEA stalwart Prof. Terry O'Connor following his recent retirement. We will have a series of grants available to support conference attendance and participation, so please do keep an eye on the newsletter, website and social media for details about the application process.

Finally, we will have a small number of vacancies on the AEA committee by the time of the AGM in York, so please do considering nominating colleagues. Committee meetings are collegial and productive (not to mention cake-fuelled), and provide a great opportunity to promote environmental archaeology within and beyond our discipline.



See Dr T.R. Premathilake's report on page 2 :

Fig. 3. The late Pleistocene samples at FaHien sediment yielded pollen from *Bombacaceae* (*Duro* sp.)

INVESTIGATING THE PRECURSORS AND APPEARANCE OF BANANA AND RICE CULTIVATION IN SRI LANKA: WITH THE BACKGROUND OF LONG-TERM CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

by T. R. Premathilake, Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, 407, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Investigations of past vegetation cover at prehistoric sites, and studies of the use of wild rice, wild banana and several other lowland rainforest plant resources, are challenging research issues in South Asian palaeoenvironment and palaeoanthropology. Such issues are relevant not only in terms of investigating the transition from hunter-gatherers to an agro-pastoral way of life, but also in terms of understanding changing ways in which prehistoric populations adapted to climate change over the late Pleistocene and the Holocene (covering the last 20,000 yrs BP). These issues have been sparsely investigated at prehistoric sites in Southern Asia, primarily owing to the poor understanding of taphonomic issues of fossil pollen, phytoliths and other proxies, but very few studies have been conducted in Sri Lanka. In this context, excavations at the sites of FaHien and Kuragala Rockshelters (caves), Prehistoric sites in Sri Lanka, led to excellent evidence of long-term occupation by prehistoric populations spanning from the Late Pleistocene (40,000 BP) to the late Holocene (3,000 BP). The earliest Microlithic tool tradition from Sri Lanka, recently dated to around 36,000 yrs BP is evidence of the earliest occupation of *Homo sapiens* in South Asia (Perera et al., 2011). With the background received from these ongoing research and publications on prehistoric environment, studies have indicated the presence of a range of pollen from plants and phytoliths (i.e. optically isotropic microscopic silica form in plant tissues) from various archaeological horizons at these sites, which would point to the potential of data on palaeovegetation, palaeoclimate and human activities. Systematic samples from the excavated area bear the potential for the recovery of phytoliths for



Fig. 1. A view into the adjoining valley FaHien Rockshelter, with disturbed lowland rainforest.

understanding special organization of human activities within the Rockshelter sites, as new experiments in the field of palaeoecology and environmental archaeology add to information on the function of these Rockshelters. This project seeks to complete this ongoing work on pollen and phytoliths at Rockshelter sites, and a couple of palaeoecological sites (environmental cores) through completion of further investigations and discussions, additional field studies to investigate issues related to phytolith and pollen taphonomy in archaeology and palaeoecology, and publications of research results.

With the background of climate and environmental changes, the varied usage of wild rice and wild banana is one of the most important and challenging issues relating to the adaptation of prehistoric cultures in South Asia. The historical reconstruction and understanding of domestication processes of these two important crops is essential for breeding programs seeking to diversify and improve banana

and rice cultivars for the future. Little information is available on specific vegetation patterns, including wild progenitors of those crops over the Late Pleistocene and Holocene at prehistoric sites in Sri Lanka (Deraniyagala, 1992; Premathilake, 2003; Premathilake, 2006; Perera, 2010; Perera et al., 2011). This time period is particularly significant, involving as it does, issues related to long-term anatomically modern human continuity, climate and environmental changes, questions of the dispersal of modern humans either with a Middle Palaeolithic or Microlithic technology. In south Asia (James and Petraglia, 2005; Misra, 1989) there are also questions as to how hunter-gatherers adapted to changing Late Pleistocene environments on a local/regional level

(Paddayya, 1979; 2007; Fuller et al., 2011a, b). Despite the rich prehistoric archaeological record in South Asia, the study of palaeovegetation and palaeoclimate during the Pleistocene has been relatively limited (Rodrigo et al., 2001; Albert and Bamford, 2012). This is primarily owing to problems in taphonomic aspects of the most appropriate biological proxies (e.g., phytoliths, pollen and spores) at anatomically modern human sites in Southern Asia and sparse studies in utilizing new methods of data recovery and interpretation of these proxies. Existing plant fossils have been primarily in the form of a few examples of fossilized seed remains and occasional charred plant materials from few Rockshelters in Sri Lanka, and Rockshelter sediments registering human activities appears to have been extremely sparse in the Middle Holo-



Fig. 2. A view of the rockshelter interior from the entrance

cene (Deraniyagala 1992; Perera 2010), possibly due to severe regional aridity increased (Premathilake, 2003; Premathilake and Risberg, 2003; Premathilake 2006). These have resulted in a dearth of information on the immediate palaeovegetation and palaeoclimate around important prehistoric archaeological sites and regions, and complete absence of data on the use of wild rice and wild banana, as starchy food, bedding, rituals, medicines, preparation of containers, etc. Domesticated forms of these two crops are nowadays widely used by many Asian cultures, but the antiquity of the crops is still obscure due to lack of systematic studies in our part of the World. In this context, the current research project is focused on understanding human response to climate/environmental change; especially the antiquity of early agriculture in the country. The project is directly conducted by Dr. Premathilake, at the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka with the research support from the School of Geography, Palaeoecology and Archaeology, Queens University (QUB), Belfast, UK and the Department

of Archaeological Survey, Sri Lanka. The project is helping to establish a comparative framework at regional level with the preliminary phytolith and pollen results from an excavation at the early hominine site of Attirampakkam (ATM) (Pappu et al., 2011) and few other Holocene palaeoecological sites in Southern Asia (Gunnell et al., 2007; Premathilake pers com.).

To rectify this problem, preliminary phytolith studies in two main prehistoric Rockshelters in Sri Lanka were adopt-

ed by the collaborating agencies, i.e. Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology (PGIAR) University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka and Geography, Palaeoecology and Archaeology, Queens University (QUB), Belfast, UK. This work resulted in the recovery of a high percentage of phytoliths from Late Pleistocene to Late Holocene archaeological stratigraphies at these Rockshel-

ters. Results of the pilot studies from the excavated Rockshelters indicated the presence of varied species, including significant results in both issues related to site taphonomy and past vegetation. However, issues relevant to phytolith taphonomy from the surface/subsurface, control samples and present day site vegetation need to be tested. The presence of burnt phytoliths from some horizons were indicators of some activities regarding natural and/or anthropogenic fires, wind movement and others. The presence of a diverse husk phytolith assemblage of *Oryza* spp (wild rice) types, and volcaniform phytoliths from wild bananas as truly natural elements of the vegetation (which seems to consist of an open ground herbaceous vegetation in which grass and other monocotyledonous and dicotyledonous herb species dominated since the Late Pleistocene) is noted as an important avenue for future research in an ethnoarchaeological context. Evidence from the pilot project suggest that wild bananas and *Oryza* spp (wild rice) phytoliths recovered from the archaeological sequence at the FaHien Rockshelter stratigraphies dated to late Pleisto-

cene, and phytoliths from domesticated bananas have been positively identified from the late-middle Holocene sequence for the first time in the country. However, these global issues relevant to changes in climate, environment and origins of agriculture are urgent tasks to be tested with number of sites located in Sri Lanka and other parts of South Asia. The project will be of immense benefit for all participating colleagues/institutions in developing the still nascent science of archaeobotany and palaeoecology using phytoliths in South Asia, with a specific view of examining samples from archaeological contexts and solving issues related to taphonomy. It will also seek to work on samples from excavated sites, thus providing a unique opportunity to examine past adaptations of humans to changing Late Pleistocene environments.

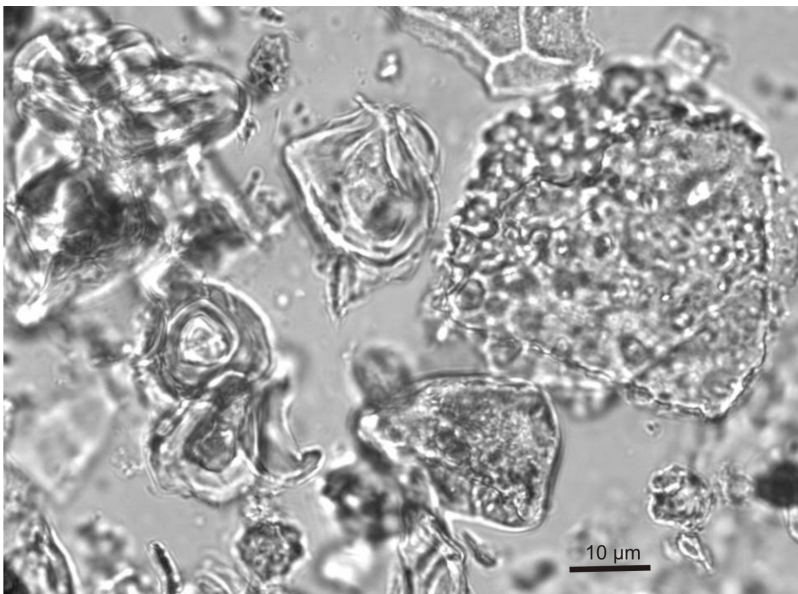


Fig. 4. The late Pleistocene samples at FaHien sediment yielded phytoliths from seed of wild banana.

References

- Albert, R. M., Bamford, M. K., 2012. Vegetation during UM-BI and deposition of Tuff IF at Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania (ca. 1.8 Ma) based on phytoliths and plant remains. *Journal of Human Evolution* 63, 342-350.
- Deraniyagala, S. U., 1992. *The Prehistory of Sri Lanka: An Ecological Perspective: Part I and II* Colombo: Department of Archaeological Survey.
- Fuller, D. Q., 2011b. Pathways to Asian Civilizations: Tracing the Origins and Spread of Rice and Rice Cultures. *Springer* 4, 78-92, DOI 10.1007/s12284-011-9078-7.
- Fuller, D. Q., Willcox, G. and Allaby, R. G., 2011a. Early agricultural pathways : moving outside the core area hypothesis in Southwest Asia. *Journal of Experimental Botany* 4, 1-17.
- Gunnell, Y., Anupama, K., Sultan, B., 2007. Response of the South Indian runoff harvesting civilization to northeast monsoon rainfall variability during the last 2000 years: instrumental records and indirect evidence. *The Holocene* 17, 207-215.
- James, H.V.A. and Petraglia, M.D., 2005. Modern Human Origins and the Evolution of Behavior in the Late Pleistocene Record of South Asia. *Current Anthropology*, 46: S3-s27.
- Misra, V.N., 1989. Stone Age India: An Ecological Perspective. *Man and Environment*, XIV(1).
- Paddayya, K., 1979. Palaeoethnography vis-a-vis the Stone Age Cultures of India : Some Methodological Considerations. *Bulletin of the Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute*, 38: 63-90.
- Paddayya, K., 2007. The Acheulean of Peninsular India with Special Reference to the Hunsgi and Baichbal Valleys of the Lower Deccan In: M. Petraglia and B. Allchin (Editors), *The Evolution and History of Human Populations in South Asia*. Springer, Netherlands, pp. 97-119.
- Pappu, Shanti, Gunnell, Y., Akhilesh, K., Braucher, R., Taieb, M., Demory, F., Thouveny, N., 2011. Early Pleistocene Presence of Acheulian Hominins in South India. *Science* 331, 1596-1600.
- Perera, N, Kourampas, N, Simpson, I.A., Deraniyagala, S.U., Bulbeck, A, D., Kamminga, J, Perera, J., Fuller, D. Q., Szabo, K. and Oliveira, N.V., 2011. People of the ancient rainforest: Late Pleistocene foragers at the Batadomba-lena rockshelter, Sri Lanka. *Journal of Human Evolution* 61.3: 254-269.
- Perera, N., 2010. *Prehistoric Sri Lanka: Late Pleistocene Rockshelters and an Open Air Site*. Oxford: Archaeopress, BAR International Series 2142.
- Premathilake, R. and Risberg, J., 2003: Late Quaternary climate history of the Horton Plains, central Sri Lanka. *Quaternary Science Reviews* 22, 1525-1541.

- Premathilake, R. 2003. Late Quaternary palaeoecological event stratigraphy of the Horton Plains, Central Sri Lanka: with contribution to the recent pollen flora. Published Doctoral Thesis, Department of Physical Geography and Quaternary Geology, No. 2, Stockholm University, Sweden.
- Premathilake, R. 2006. Holocene pollen records of climate and human impact on vegetation in the Horton Plains, central Sri Lanka. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in History and Archaeology*, 203-238.
- Rodrigo, M. D., Serrallonga, J., Juan, J., Alcalá, L., Luque, L., 2001. Woodworking activities by early humans: a plant residue analysis on Acheulian stone tools from Peninj (Tanzania). *Journal of Human Evolution* 40, 289-299.

PAGES working group LandCover6k

The PAGES working group LandCover6k was launched in November 2014, and will run until 2020. The major goal of this PAGES working group is to generate global land-cover and land-use reconstructions over Holocene timescales through a synthesis of existing palaeoecological and archaeological/historical datasets that describe anthropogenic land-cover change since the start of agriculture across the world. Phase 1 (2015-2017) of LandCover6k will focus on three time windows, 6k, 0.45k and 0.1k cal years BP (4000 BC, AD 1500 and AD 1850). The reconstructions will be used to evaluate and improve model-based anthropogenic land-cover change scenarios (ALCCs) such as HYDE3.1 (Klein Goldewijk et al., 2011) and KK10 (Kaplan et al., 2009). Improved ALCCs will be useful (or essential) for climate modelling studies, particularly because (1) whilst global and regional climate models can simulate potential natural vegetation, they cannot yet simulate anthropogenically-forced vegetation cover; and (2) there may be great differences between ALCCs, and as such independent evaluation is required (Gaillard et al., 2010).

LandCover6k is coordinated by Marie-José Gaillard (LNU), who is also responsible for managing land-cover efforts, with Kathleen Morrison (Chicago) coordinating land-use reconstructions. They are supported by a steering committee reflecting continental sub-groups. The organisation, key participants and planned activities are described at www.pages-igbp.org/workinggroups/landcover6k/intro.

The PAGES (Past Global Changes) activities and workshops are open, and we encourage participation from archaeologists, historians, geographers and palaeoecologists who have an interest in contributing to the scientific goals of LandCover6k. Interested scientists or groups should contact Marie-José Gaillard or regional coordinators in the first instance. There will be an open discussion meeting at the INQUA congress in 2015 (Nagoya, Japan). In October 2015 Kathleen Morrison will convene a workshop in Europe on global land-use systems, with final details to be announced on the PAGES working group website.

CONFERENCE REPORT: AEA Spring Conference, Nottingham, March 2015

The AEA Spring one day conference, 'Crossing boundaries: the creation of foodscapes' was held on Saturday 28 March 2015 at the Humanities Building, The University of Nottingham.

Hector Orengo (University of Sheffield) provided an introduction to the day: 'Foodscapes, transported landscapes and cultural landscapes. A view from Roman Hispania'. He stressed the relationship of both Environmental and Paleo-economic studies as part of a landscape archaeology looking at wider foodscapes (an aspect of the productive landscape). Introducing a range of case studies of landscape modification, his wide ranging talk

included intensive use of areas at the edge of fluctuating wetlands/lagoons; gradual reorientation towards roads; evidence of field system planning from a central point extending beyond those actually used, indicative of imported landscape, part of selling ideas of *Romanitas*. While in just one valley both globalised and local economic production were taking place at specific locations, Iberico ham production, pine pitch, as well as herds-men's tether lines. **Nancy Krahtopoulou** (Karditsa Ephorate) too provided an overview of a region 'Changing landscapes, constant tastes: land and time crossings in northern Greece' specifically Pieria,

Macedonia, drawing on the combined results of geoarchaeology (her own specialism), settlement patterns from the 7th to 1st Millennia BC in identifying the expansion and intensity of landscape use with expected diversification. It was suggested that long-term, stable food preferences were possible because of long-lasting (sustainable) foodscapes. Carrying on the geographical focus but shifting to easily collected and highly nutritious estuarine/lagoon resource of shellfish **Rena Veropoulidou** (Museum of Byzantine Culture, Thessaloniki) presented 'Eating cockles, inhabiting worlds of estuaries in Central Macedonia, Greece, during the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age'. Drawing on many thousands of marine shell identifications, of the 27 species considered edible preference seemed to remain for the common cockle (*Cerastoderma glaucum*). Within this continuity temporal patterns linked to social changes were identified from communal large scale consumption (cockles mostly cooked and roasted) to more household patterns, later evidence of raw consumption of pointing to more elaborate consumption practices. Rounding off the first session Nottingham's own **Hannah O'Regan** provided 'an early view' of work in progress 'Finding food and resources: exploring hominin land use using modern land cover'. Classified Landsat ETM images of tree, scrub grassland and so on were used in conjunction with theorised 'home ranges' to assess the potential of the landscapes in three test areas Turkanna Basin, Kruger National park and Kanjera, all fortunate 'random' locations. A very positive aspect was the highlighting of how the archaeologically investigated data was also being used to address modern issues, rhino and grazing lawns and the opening effects of elephant browsing over relatively short periods.

For the first time at AEA, the afternoon started with an Ignite session - 5 minute punchy presentations focussing on key points. Overall the format and projects presented were a great success and sparked interesting discussion, we look forward to more of these pacy and informative condensed presentations in the future. **Llorenç Picornell Gelibert** (University of the Balearic Islands) provided a series of colourful illustrations and observations 'Colonial foodscapes in Equatorial Africa: food performances among the Benga of the Corisco Island (Equatorial Guinea). Drawing on ethnographic study we were introduced to the idea that a rapid disappearance of local (mainland) material on the island by traded colonial imports, hides the fact that the same foodstuffs/recipes and therefore tastes are present, a continuity that we would not see because of poor organic preservation. **Rob Jarman** (University of Gloucestershire/Russell Consulting) questioned evidence for and against Roman introduction in 'Sweet Chestnut, *Castanea sativa*, in Britain:

when and whence was it introduced, and why? New genetic, palaeoenvironmental and historical evidence from the Forest of Dean region of England' also providing the information in poster format. Perhaps worryingly one of the take home messages from this talk was to 'forget paleoenvironmental information' though there was so much more than the 20 slides could contain. With plenty of the Chicken project flock in the audience **Jacqueline Pitt** (Bournemouth University) took a worldwide approach 'Crossing environmental boundaries, modelling the journey from Jungle Fowl to Domestic Chicken' using ecological niche modelling to suggest the difficulties and changes that needed to take place for the chicken to spread to regions like Europe. A quick review of the availability of the ingredients needed for the Roman recipe Apician in which chicken features suggested you were more likely to find the full list constituent ingredients in the southeast of Britain. Discussion from the chicken fans included diseases, the bad weather at Vindolanda and the small home range of the chicken making it highly transferable. Two further presenters could not make it on the day and we hope that they will consider submitting their talks to future AEA meetings.

Moving back to the longer presentation form **Ruth Pelling** (Historic England) transported us to Garamantian North Africa, and continent wide networks of 'Food, fashion and global economics: The place of plants in the Roman and Late Antique Saharan trade network'. Aspects covered included the technology of irrigation, the driving forces behind changes in crop types and food production/consumption, patterns seen in the material culture where it relates to food consumption and ethnographic observation in some cases linked to practical consequences of grain types i.e. wheat/barley may be ground with saddle or rotary querns, while small seeded crops such as millets/sorghum, need to be pounded. **Don O'Meara's** (Durham University) entertaining while thought provoking 'Pooscaples to Foodscapes: the archaeobotany of urban cultural change in medieval Northern England' looking specifically towards archaeobotanical remains from cess, Northern towns'. Highlighting the differences in preservation both between sites and when compared to the historical record Don praised the work of others in taking a GIS view of Archaeobotany. Drawing on ingredient frequency in cookery books there was also a nod to problems of written/historical sources often assuming a prior knowledge i.e. 'cook a heron in the same manner you cook a swan'. **Julie Anne Bouchard Perron** (University of Nottingham) presented a succinct and direct comparison of the historical and archaeobotanical record in 'Social networks of colonialism: Archaeobotanical perspectives from Quebec City (Canada)'. From early Euro-

pean occupation through to the 19th Century the public perception of a productive landscape was contrasted with the poor success but continued status of imported European crops. The imported goods reflecting wider empire links while changes in social attitudes lead to greater regional sourcing, use of native plant and eventual hybridisation. A different attitude was seen to animal products due to trouble overwintering domesticates, giving greater weight to conserving plant resources as food and local hunting. **Maeve L'Estrange** (Trinity College Dublin) brought the afternoon up to living memory presenting 'How British cookbooks influenced Irish home cooking in the 1950s'. With the 1950s considered a 'decade of glume', economic underperformance and little use of electricity meaning that many households still cooked on floor level open fires. Maeve drew on the texts, comparing standard works and oral history interviews, to explore developments and attitudes. Despite a more frugal and practical tone being adopted in texts like Laverty as opposed to British texts (and who wouldn't appreciate a little seasoning, watercress and lemon added to their brain fritter?) plenty of sophistication, innovation and interest in new cooking were demonstrated in responses to the Irish Times' call for 'interesting *hors d'oeuvres* using Irish ingredi-

ents, while the habits of sharing recipes with friends and family meant new recipes spread. In the last decade when the printed word was the most influential (Pre-TV), British writers (awareness of which was spread to Ireland through newspaper articles) acted as a channel to more exotic cuisines.

The concluding discussion returned to some aspects of innovation in research paradigms, 'is archaeobotany still in the 1980s?' the need beyond data for new approaches, and a positive affirmation that none of the days papers had fallen in to the trap of being 'just a list'. Ideas of 'the right way to set out a landscape' and a reminder of the potential information held in the living landscape. As always much tea, coffee, biscuits and a fine lunch were gratefully devoured, and our thanks go out to the team at Nottingham for their organisation and chairing. Retiring to the local Victoria pub the evening went on long beyond the point that I had to make my way home considering the diverse landscapes that produce the foods I eat but also the more complex networks, routes of exchange and perhaps meaning.

Danielle de Carle

News from the AEA Autumn Conference Committee

From Anthrosphere to Lithosphere (and back again): A Celebration of the Career and Research of Terry O'Connor

University of York, 6th-8th November 2015

We have been utterly overwhelmed with the response to our call for papers. Not only has the number of submissions been very high but the quality of many of the papers has made making decisions a very difficult process. Of course, that's a nice problem to have! We are currently finalising the programme and everyone who submitted a paper should have heard from us with our decision by the end of May.

Registration for the conference will be 'live' on our website (<http://www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/news-and-events/events/conferences/aea/>) in a matter of days, if it is not already by the time you read this newsletter. Fees are as follows:

AEA Student members: £50

AEA members: £100

Students (non-AEA members): £75

Others: £135

The official conference dinner will be a very traditional Yorkshire affair – pies and peas, hosted in a brewery! We're happy to announce that this will cost the bargain price of £10, and delegates can book it at the same time as the conference. Please be warned though that, unlike the conference itself, there will be a strict cap on numbers for the dinner and places will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Finally, there will also be a late registration fee of £20 for students and £30 for others (including members) for anyone registering after **25th September** and an absolute registration deadline of **23rd October**.

We look forward to welcoming you all to York on Friday 6th November to help us celebrate Terry's career.

Want to join the AEA Managing Committee?

Elections for new members will be held during the AGM at the Autumn conference in York (6th-8th November 2015, see <http://envarch.net/events/> and <https://www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/news-and-events/events/conferences/aea/#tab-4>).

This year we are seeking nominations for

three **Ordinary Member positions** (each a four year term)

one **Student Representative**

There is more information about these positions below. Nominations can be received at any time up to the AGM, but we would like to encourage members to **submit nominations by July 20th 2015**, so that we can share candidates' statements in the August Newsletter.

For any queries, please contact the Secretary (Fay Worley) at the address below.

General Committee information

Serving on the Committee allows AEA members to help determine the future direction and priorities of the Association, and promote environmental archaeology within and beyond archaeology. The main items of business at meetings include the organisation of conferences and events, *Environmental Archaeology* journal matters, responses to new policy documents and frameworks that impact upon environmental archaeology and its practitioners, as well as issues relating to the Newsletter, website, social media, membership, finances and new initiatives.

The Committee usually meet four times a year. **We welcome nominees from all countries**, but please note that meetings are conducted in English. There is funding available to assist with travel to meetings and we use video- and teleconferencing to allow members to participate where travel is prohibitively expensive or not possible.

Further information on the available roles

The role of Ordinary Member (three positions available, four year term)

The committee includes 12 elected Ordinary Members, whose role is to contribute to committee activities and the management of the Association, through active participation in committee meetings and additional tasks as required. Ordinary committee members may take on additional specific responsibilities, such as Conference Officer, Publicity Officer, Web Officer, etc, for some, or all of their term of office.

The role of Student Representative (one position available, two year term)

The committee includes two Student Representatives, with one new Student Representative elected each year, and their term of office lasting two years. The post is open to both undergraduates and postgraduate students.

During their first year of office, the newly elected Student Representative will 'shadow' the student completing their second year of office. 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.

Submitting a nomination

All nominees must be AEA members in good standing. Any AEA member can make a nomination, but this must be seconded by another AEA member. Nominations should be accompanied by a brief personal statement from the nominee (that im-

plicitly indicates their willingness to stand), which will be published in the Newsletter and/or circulated at the AGM.

Nominations and personal statements can be e-mailed or posted to the AEA Secretary, Fay Worley, who should also be contacted with any queries.

E-mail: Fay.Worley@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Postal address see <http://envarch.net/committee/>

Call for submissions - John Evans Dissertation Prize 2015 (Association for Environmental Archaeology)

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 Association for Environmental Archaeology (AEA) has an annual competition for the best undergraduate and Masters dissertations in any aspect of environmental archaeology.

2015 competition

A choice of prizes of £75 (please note that international students may be liable for the transfer costs) or 3-year membership subscriptions to the AEA 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 (this is a condition of entry that all entrants will be agreeing to on submission of their dissertation). The John Evans Dissertation Prize 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 **31st July 2015**. Submissions from individual students are not accepted. English is the preferred technical language of submission although the committee will also accept submissions in other languages, but these must be accompanied by an English summary (max. 2 pages) to conform to the submission rules. Departments wanting to submit in languages other than English should contact the prize administrator (Dr Alex Livarda) to determine whether the submission can be accommodated.

The results will be announced at the AEA autumn meeting in York, UK, 6-8 November 2015 (<https://www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/news-and-events/events/conferences/aea/>). Please note that only digital copies (pdf) of dissertations will be accepted, and these should be sent to Dr Alex Livarda, who should also be contacted for further information:

Alex Livarda

Department of Archaeology

University of Nottingham

University Park

Nottingham, NG7 2RD

UK

Alexandra.Livarda@nottingham.ac.uk

2015 AEA CONFERENCE FUND

We are delighted to announce the availability of the AEA Conference Fund to members of the AEA (of at least six months standing) to assist attendance at the York conference (6-8 November 2015). Priority will be given to those with limited alternative sources of funding (particularly postgraduate students and those in the private sector) and those presenting papers or posters. Applications from students must be accompanied by a letter of support from their supervisor. **An application form is provided at the end of this Newsletter.**

Successful applicants will be required to provide a statement of expenditure and activities undertaken within 3 months after the event has taken place in order to receive reimbursement. Moreover, successful applicants will be requested to provide a report on the conference for the AEA Newsletter or website.

The deadline for applications is **30 September 2015**. Any queries should be directed to the AEA Conference Officer: Robin Bendrey (r.bendrey@reading.ac.uk)

AEA Research Grants Applications and Awards

The first round of AEA research grant applications was extremely successful with a high number of applications and a very high standard of research projects on offer making some difficult choices for the grant committee. In all 26 grant applications were received for a total of over £14000 with applications coming from a mix of postgraduates, academics, independent researchers and the commercial sector. The majority of applications came from the UK but there were also applications from across Europe and the USA and we hope in time that we will get applications from even further afield. Grant applications were assessed on a number of criteria including their importance, originality and impact and separating out the top few was a tough process. In the end five awards were made for a total of £2385. The following AEA members were awarded grants:

Meriel McClatchie - Late prehistoric farming in southern Britain: a comparative study of archaeobotanical data from five Iron Age sites

Shawn O'Donnell - Quantitative comparison of an alternative pollen processing technique with traditional HF/acetolysis - based protocols

Lee Broderick - Tragelaphus Identification Project, Edinburgh (TIPE)

Scott Timpany - SEM investigation of microscopic animal hairs and their potential use as proxy-evidence for palaeograzing activity

Edouard Masson-MacLean - Subsistence and settlement patterns during the Little Ice Age on the Bering Sea coast: an interdisciplinary approach integrating ecology, foraging theory and zooarchaeology

I would like to thank the grants committee for their hard work in assessing the applications and sifting out the top projects and also all those who took time to put in applications as the committee were extremely impressed by the high overall standard. Following this first round of submissions we will be reviewing the application procedure and would welcome any comments from members, please send these to researchgrants@envarch.net. Anyone who had comments or enquiries during the application process will have already had their thoughts noted. We look forward to many further successful rounds of applications in the future.

Julia E.M. Cussans

Conference Fund Application Form**Autumn Conference 2015***Deadline: 30 Sept. 2015 – Please supply full breakdown of costs*

Association for
Environmental
Archaeology

Name:	Occupation:
Address:	E-mail:
Date you joined the AEA:	
I am presenting a Paper/ Poster (please delete as appropriate) entitled:	

Registration:	Cost:
Mode of transport (rail/air etc):	Cost:
Type of accommodation:	Cost:
Meals included:	Cost:
Other (Please specify):	Cost:
Total	Cost:

Have you attempted to obtain funding from other sources?	Yes / No
If not, why not?	
If yes, how much have you requested?	
How much have you obtained?	
If other applications are still pending, when do you expect to hear the outcome?	
How much do you request from the AEA:	

I certify that the information I have given is true.

Signature:

Postgraduate applicants should include a letter of support from their supervisor.

Please return completed forms via email or post to: Dr Robin Bendrey, AEA Conference Officer, Department of Archaeology, University of Reading, Whiteknights Box 226, Reading, RG6 6AB, UK. r.bendrey@reading.ac.uk.



[http://
www.envarch.net](http://www.envarch.net)

The AEA

The AEA promotes the advancement of the study of human interaction with the environment in the past through archaeology and related disciplines.

We hold annual conferences and other meetings, produce a quarterly newsletter for members, and publish our conference monographs, as well as our journal 'Environmental Archaeology: The journal of human palaeoecology'.

Key Dates

AEA Autumn Conference 2015:

University of York, 6th-8th November (late registration fee deadline 25th September)

AEA Conference Fund application deadline: 30th September 2015

AEA John Evans Dissertation Prize submission deadline :
31st July 2015

AEA Committee nominations : preferably by July 20th
2015

Notes from the Newsletter Editors

Please note that thesis submission forms can be found on the website which gives AEA members an opportunity to publish abstracts of their postgraduate thesis.

We are always keen to receive newsletter content, especially from our non UK members. To submit an article, please email word documents and images to;

newsletter@envarch.net

Wendy Carruthers, Vanessa Straker & Daniella Vos