

Association for Environmental Archaeology

AEA Newsletter 147

June 2020

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Dear members,

When I was writing my last chair's piece at the end of February I was hopeful that the spread of COVID-19 would be kept under control and that the death toll would be not that great. This might be because essentially, I'm a cockeyed optimist. How wrong I was. As March progressed, more and more countries went into lock-down with the death toll mounting. We had to cancel the AEA spring Conference and planned webinars, while at the same time colleagues were adapting rapidly to working from home, being furloughed or losing their livelihoods. This is going to be a long haul but we will get through it. I wonder whether, in a few hundred years' time, this pandemic will be seen a pivotal moment, with archaeologists studying the transition and aftermath, in the same way as they do the Black Death today. Let's hope that the world post-Covid-19 is changed for the better if changed for good.

The way that the AEA managing committee functions has certainly been evolving in response to change, with more business being conducted via email and the adoption of Zoom for teleconferencing. This was something I always wanted to do more of as it makes it easier for managing committee members attend meetings wherever they are based and helps us fit meetings around everyone's other commitments, as well as being better for the planet. This newsletter includes the first call for nominations for election to the managing committee so if you would like to join us and help shape the future of the AEA then please do apply.



We will also be consulting all our members via a survey over the summer. We want to know what you most value about being a member of the AEA, where you would most like us to put our efforts and resources, and how we can best sustain environmental archaeology in a VUCA world.

Before I sign off, I just wanted to draw your attention to innovative plans the organisers of the conference in Groningen have come up with for a series of webinars every other week between mid-September and the end of November in lieu of this year's autumn conference. As with the spring meeting in Oxford, the conference in Groningen will still go ahead but in 2021 rather than 2020. So until we meet together again, stay safe and be kind.

Gill Campbell,

June 2020

Science Communication and Writing Workshop

Organised by PalaeoSIG – the Palaeoecology Special Interest Group within the British Ecological Society – 13th to 15th May 2020

Despite the coronavirus lockdown, the PalaeoSIG workshop concerning science communication and writing went ahead, not in its original location at the University of Stirling, but virtually. The benefit of moving online enabled more participants to take part, including myself, and I would like to thank the organisers (Althea Davies, Jane Bunting, Eileen Tisdall and Georgina Glaser) for their efforts in re-organising the event.

The workshop took place over 3 days with a variety of different teaching methods employed: the use of Zoom for talks, discussions and Question & Answer sessions, paired working tasks and informal virtual coffee sessions for networking. The use of several different methods meant that participants could be flexible with their days to suit other commitments.

Day one started with an introduction to the workshop from organiser Althea Davies. She set out the aims of the workshop, which were to introduce researchers to writing lay summaries that are now required for some journal article submissions and can also be used to communicate our research to a different audience. It was also the intention for about 50 summaries to be produced by the pair working. A list of 50 articles was produced in advance by asking palaeoecologists to identify the most

influential papers in their field and the summaries will be published weekly on the PalaeoSIG Blog (see link below) providing a learning resource to help communicate palaeoecological science to non-specialist audiences such as colleagues in ecology or conservation.

Our first talk was given by Steven Vass, a Science Editor from *The Conversation*. He started by setting out the reasons to write for a lay audience. This could be for our own benefit such as to increase our profile, impact and influence in our discipline, to aid our grant writing, and to explore new research ideas. Giving back is another reason and one that we should all consider as many of us are predominantly funded by the public. He then explained the types of articles that could be written, the most popular being articles with a list and stories with a good hook. Most important to remember is that there is a right time to run a science article such as when it has a link to a movie, important date, or event. Examples given were of palaeontological articles written at the time of the release of the movie *Jurassic World*. Steven ended his talk by giving us some top tips to remember when thinking about pitching a new story idea – Is it a fresh idea? Will your friends be interested in it? Is it the right time? Is it for the right audience?

The screenshot shows a YouTube video player displaying a presentation slide. The slide content includes:

- Plenary Part 1** (indicated by a green circle with 'p')
- Example 7: ...And good 'hooks'**
- THE CONVERSATION** (Academic digital journalism for...)
- Navigation menu: COVID-19 Arts - Culture Business - Economy Cities Education Environment - Energy Health - Medicine Politics - Society **Science - Technology**
- Jurassic World: can we really resurrect a dinosaur?**
- Date: June 6, 2018 12:00pm BST
- Authors:**
 - Darren Griffin**, Professor of Genetics, University of York
 - Rebecca O'Connor**, Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of York
- Disclosure statement:** Darren Griffin receives funding from the British Ecological Society and Biological Sciences Research Council.
- Footer: © 2018 The Conversation. All rights reserved. Funding from the BSES.

The video player interface shows a progress bar at 25:13 / 1:05:23, a play button, volume control, and YouTube branding.



After a coffee break, Steven continued to talk to us about the style of writing for a lay audience. He suggested that scientific article writing is rather impersonal and passive. Writing for the lay audience needs to be the opposite of this – more personal language, no qualifiers, cut out scientific jargon, make it simpler and less exhaustive. Really you need to get to the point sooner and make sure that a non-specialist can understand it!

Steven gave us a lot to digest over our lunches and we came back in the afternoon to a neat summary of the morning's key points by Jane Bunting. She focused us on determining the audience we were writing for and looking for the hook to make our writing exciting and memorable. Jane then went on to introduce the paired working task that we were to complete over the next few days. The organisers had already put us into pairs and assigned two articles for each pair to read. We were told to use any method of working collaboratively that we wanted (zoom, google docs, email, phone, etc.) and that one of the outcomes of the workshop would be to gather information about the effectiveness of these approaches.

We then went away to write in our own time. My writing partner, Nick Loughlin, and I decided to take one of the articles each, write our own summaries in a Google Docs document and share that with each other. By the end of the afternoon, we had completed this. We were lucky that our articles were quite short!

We all came back together after an hour of writing to have another Q&A session on Zoom. This

revealed similar issues such as: What would be the focus of our summaries? Methods explanation or contributions to palaeoecology? What level do we pitch our summaries at – are we clear what the audience is?

Day two started with an informal coffee break in which participants were split into smaller groups on zoom to be able to ask questions and do some networking. We also got a chance to work on our summaries with our writing partners. Google Docs was working well for my pair work. We used the comments feature to suggest changes to each other's work that we then used to improve and edit our summaries.

The teaching session of the second day was a Q&A session and discussion of how our paired working was progressing. The organisers stressed the key point from day one that we must know our audience – in this case ecologists or conservationists that do not know much about palaeoecology but need to be told how useful it could be to them! We also considered all the ways we were working collaboratively and what was being useful – many using Google Docs, brain dumps to collate all ideas prior to starting writing sentences, concentrating on the hook and then listing 3 key points of the article.

We started day three by tentatively handing in the first drafts of our summaries for peer review by the other participants. Our first taught session was by Jane, who took us through what was expected in peer reviews.

We were to offer constructive criticism concerning the style of the summaries as it had been the change in writing style that we were really concentrating on. What was also extremely helpful in this session was seeing a published summary, which we all then picked apart together under the guidance of the organisers. This meant that we could discuss different aspects of the summary that we felt might need to be changed and hear ideas from everyone taking part. We then had another very pleasant virtual coffee break – something that has been very beneficial for all our sanities at this difficult time!

We had some time to read other people's summaries and offer comments on a different pair's work. This was a great way to see what everyone else had been producing and practices peer review skills. There was a wide variety of summaries, some being very concise and some much longer contributions.

The last teaching session was a Q&A session with Steven Vass in which the organisers asked questions that had been raised during discussions of the summary writing over the last few days. He discussed the importance of a good title that hooks the reader in, making your most important points at the beginning and the use of hyperlinks to clarify facts in the story.

We finished off the workshop with discussions of the next steps – finalising our summaries for publication on the blog and suggesting ideas for further workshops.

The workshop was a great success, incredibly helpful for improving all the participants' writing skills and producing good quality lay summaries that will disseminate palaeoecological research to a wider audience. The other success of the workshop was the ability to conduct all aspects virtually. Embracing this technology in the future has many benefits to our academic community that once the coronavirus lockdown is over must be retained to allow a more inclusive approach. It will lead to greater participation due to the lowering of costs, reducing travelling time, quicker organisation and an eco-friendlier outcome.

Our summaries will be published soon, so check out the blog!

<https://palaeosigbes.wordpress.com/>

Emma Karoune



Small Research Grants Results 2020

We are happy to announce the winners of this year's AEA Research Grants:

Hannah Britton
James Innes
Jessie Woodbridge
Sue Dyke
Veronica Lee

You can find the title and summaries of their grant proposals below:

Hannah Britton

No bark, all bite: A study of domestic dog morphology and diet in Britain

Although much work has been undertaken on the origins of the domestic dog (*Canis familiaris*), comparatively little has focused on their post-domestic variation, despite dogs now exhibiting a huge range of morphological and phenotypic characteristics, and classified in over 600 recognised dog breeds. One of the key components of our evolving relationships with dogs is anthropogenic feeding, with our food choices often wrapped up in cultural ideas about care.

Whereas dogs and their wild ancestors (the grey wolf) are carnivores, their close association with humans over 20,000 years has enabled them to consume a wide range of foodstuffs. Food choices have profound effects on cranial and mandible morphology, as well as dental and overall health. This project will investigate the relationship between diet and cranial and dental morphology through a combination of stable isotope and metric analysis. These results will establish a chronological baseline of morphological change in relation to shifting diet, and comment on advancing human-dog relationships and the fluctuating treatment of dogs in Britain.

Using Britain as a case study, we will address the following questions:

- What are the broad morphological and dietary changes observed in domestic dogs through each archaeological phase?
- Is there a relationship between cranial and dental morphology and diet?
- How have the life history of dogs changed through time?

James Innes

Age, palaeoenvironment and recording of Mesolithic flint sites at Esklets, North York Moors

The aim of this project is to reconstruct the cultural and environmental history of an area at Esklets, on the watershed plateau of the North York Moors in North Yorkshire, which is undergoing severe erosion of the blanket peat which covers the moors, exposing several 'narrow-blade' Late Mesolithic flint sites. This concentration of sites is under threat, and sites are being destroyed by erosion, by land management, by heavy use of adjacent footpaths and by unrecorded flint collecting by the public.

The project is trying to research the sites through excavation and scientific analysis before they are destroyed. Several are already badly affected. The project has no direct funding and relies upon personal expenditure and applications to grant-awarding bodies such as the North York Moors National Park Authority. Earlier phases of the project have included excavation of Late Mesolithic hearths and flint scatters. The current phase of the project concerns an eroding blanket peat profile at Esklets ECW6 which contains microliths and scrapers that are stratified at one level within the peat, rather than lying upon the mineral soil that underlies it as is almost always the case. This stratification within organic sediments is exceedingly rare, and has only been observed in one other place on the North York Moors. The flint-bearing peat profile has already been removed by erosion, although excavation of the remaining peat blanket might reveal further flint artefacts 'in situ' at the same level in the peat. This flint-bearing peat site is a priority of the project, and short monoliths of peat containing flints were retrieved from the peat face before its erosion and stored pending analysis. We wish to conduct palynological and

radiocarbon analyses on and around the flint horizon in the monoliths, to establish the age and environmental context of the Late Mesolithic occupation.

Jessie Woodbridge

Improving socio-ecological resilience to wildfire in the UK via community engagement and integration of deep-time ecological data into landscape management

Wildfire frequency has increased throughout the UK uplands in recent years, which are important landscapes for carbon storage and natural capital. Pathways towards improved socio-ecological resilience will be key to managing future wildfire. This research will build understanding of risk awareness and the impacts of wildfire on communities and livelihoods through engagement with stakeholders in the Peak District National Park (PDNP). Through participatory community engagement and analysis of palaeoenvironmental deep-time relationships between vegetation, fire and climate using peatland sediment archives, natural science data will be communicated with stakeholder groups in order to inform landscape management in relation to wildfire.

Interviews with key stakeholders at the PDNP will provide an understanding of current management practices, perceptions, values and community-based environmental decision-making. This will allow information to be gathered about traditional fire management knowledge, the cultural history of prescribed burns, and the impacts of recent wildfire on local livelihoods and will inform the natural science data collection process through helping to develop a sampling strategy.

Citizen awareness of wildfire hazards is often limited to recent events and does not include long-term perspectives. Through a participatory workshop, research outputs illustrating past burning, climate and vegetation patterns will be discussed and shared with participants who will be asked to contribute information based on their local knowledge. The objective of the workshop will be to co-produce maps combining traditional knowledge with long-term environmental data allowing natural and cultural legacies to inform future landscape management.

Sue Dyke

Investigating how Broch communities interact with their landscape in the Northern Isles

This project supports wider archaeological investigations by site director Martin Carruthers concerning 'The Cairns', an extraordinary multi-period site focussed on a monumental Atlantic Roundhouse/Broch and associated structures dating from the Iron Age and extending through Pictish and Norse periods. The excavations form part of an archaeological research project investigating the later prehistory of the Windwick landscape on the island of South Ronaldsay, Orkney.

This pollen analysis will provide evidence of plants and trees present in the Windwick later prehistoric landscape, through the identification of pollen laid down in a sedimentary core taken from the nearby Loch of Lythe.

Microscopic charcoal present will inform of burning events (possible land management practices/occupation periods), while NPPs (non-pollen palynomorphs) may indicate the presence of animals in the landscape, such as grazing livestock.

Algae/cyanobacteria recorded may add valuable information on past water quality in the Loch of Lythe such as episodes of eutrophication possibly linked to anthropogenic activity e.g. phases of intensive farming.

A specific focus of this AEA small grant would be detailed sampling around the decommissioning of Atlantic roundhouse, signalled by structural changes such as blocking of the entranceway and associated souterrain construction. Palaeoenvironmental evidence can inform whether these structural changes are associated with societal change and whether the community interaction with the landscape changes (e.g. from arable to pastoral) at this important transitional time.

Results could also shed light on perceived environmental pressures exerted by Broch communities, a view currently held by Atlantic Iron Age researchers. Evidence of arable or pastoral practices providing food for the community, and woodland management providing sustainable building material may be found, along with signs that this resource pressure lifts/changes as the Broch is decommissioned.

Veronica Lee*Pike trade in the late medieval Baltic*

Pike (*Esox lucius*) was a key food fish in the medieval Baltic region, with both historical and archaeological evidence (e.g. Jonsson 1986, Hoffmann 2009, Kivikero 2019) pointing to a substantial trade in preserved pike products. Yet it has been largely neglected by bioarchaeological studies, in favour of cod and herring (Orton et al. 2011, 2019; papers in Barrett & Orton 2016). This project will address this gap, using a novel application of oxygen isotope analysis on pike teeth, alongside carbon and nitrogen isotope analyses on bone.

As pike can be caught in both freshwater and brackish coastal waters within the Baltic Sea region, $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ are used as ecological proxies to determine catch environment. The remarkable temperature gradient of the Baltic Sea — c.5°C between average sea surface temperatures of the Bay of Gdańsk in the south and Gulf of Bothnia in the north (Stramska & Białogrodzka 2015) — confers potential to refine estimates of catch location using $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ in enamel.

This takes advantage of pike's teeth which, in contrast to most fish, are both large and frequently recovered in situ within jaws.

The project focuses on samples from 16th–17th century Kastelholm castle in the Åland Islands — where fish were caught locally as well as imported from further afield (Kivikero 2019) — with comparative samples from Poland, Latvia, and the northern Gulf of Bothnia used to capture the extent of variation in isotope values due to temperature and salinity. This approach is novel for the medieval period, for northern Europe, and for pike, potentially adding a valuable new tool for research on historic fish trade.

AEA Small Research Grants: How to apply

The next deadline for applications will be 31st January 2021

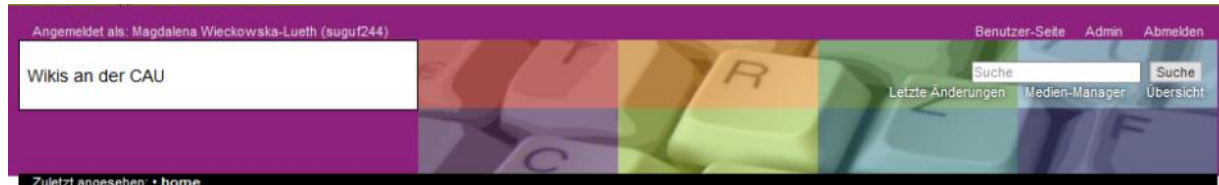
Applicants are required to complete the application form detailing the total sum requested and breakdown of costs, how the grant will contribute to the overall research project and what the benefits will be. All applications must be accompanied by a referee's statement of support and submitted either in electronic format via the website or by email to researchgrants@envarch.net or as hard copy to AEA Research Grants Officer: Dr Niklas Hausmann, Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung (NIHK), Viktoriastr. 26/28, 26382 Wilhelmshaven, Germany

Applications will be assessed by members of the committee and applicants informed of the results of their application by the end of March.

Grants will normally be up to £500 but applications for larger amounts may be considered. Grants cannot cover the cost of equipment or conference attendance or costs that should normally be covered by developers or larger funding bodies (e.g. AHRC, NERC) funding other areas of the same research project. Costs that may be covered include travel and accommodation for visits to research facilities, scientific analyses or time buy-out for those working in the commercial sector and wishing to carry out research beyond that funded by developers. Grants may also be used for research start-up or pilot projects.

Non-Pollen Palynomorphs Database

A Compilation of Additional Indicators of Local (Palaeo-) Environmental Conditions from Pollen Slides



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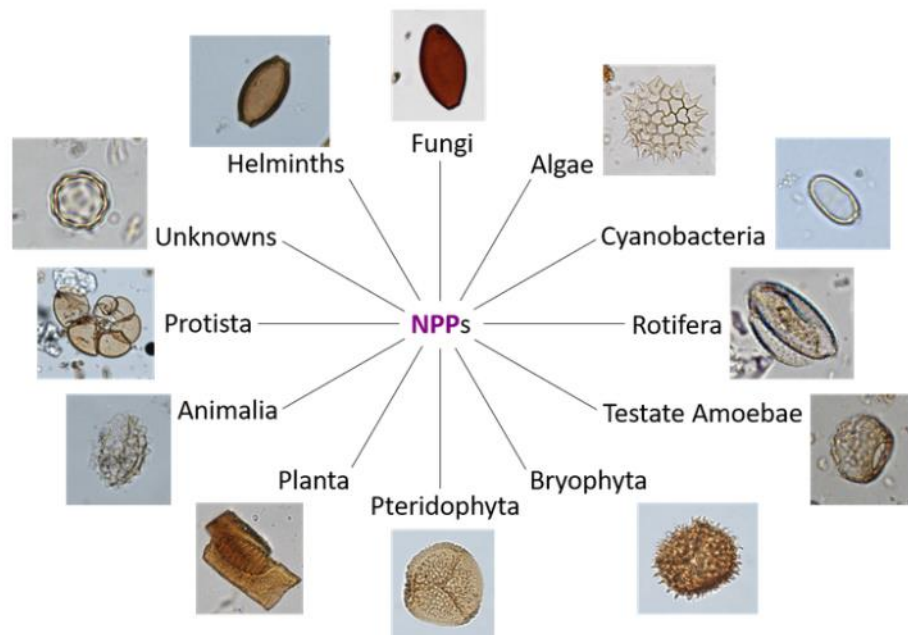
The database is hosted by Kiel University and is established by Magda Wieckowska-Lüth, Wiebke Kirleis and Kay Schmütz, Institute for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Archaeology.

© Wieckowska-Lüth/Kirleis/Schmütz 2020

Welcome to the

Non-Pollen Palynomorphs Database

– A Compilation of Additional Indicators of Local (Palaeo-)Environmental Conditions from Pollen Slides



Different pollen-bearing-sediment archives contain an abundance of “extra” microfossils. These so-called non-pollen palynomorphs (NPPs) comprise a wide variety of organisms, including fungal spores and hyphae, algal cells and cysts, cyanobacteria, testate amoebae, eggshells of parasites, and other remains of invertebrates and plants from a diversity of ecological niches.

Many of the NPPs are characterised by their emergence only under certain circumstances, such as the presence of decaying plant matter, wood and dung, under specific moisture levels, nutrient and salinity conditions, during parasitic infestation, as well as after fire or erosion events. This and the fact that most of the NPPs are, in contrast to pollen, of autochthonous origin, makes them valuable indicators of local environmental conditions.

Starting in the late 1960s with the systematic work of Thomas van Hammen and his student Bas van Geel – the later vital promoter of this special field of palynology – at the Hugo de Vries-Laboratory at Amsterdam University, over one thousand NPP-types have been photographed, described and taxonomically identified. Their indicator value has been illustrated by several palaeoecological, archaeological, limnological, geological and climatological studies.

However, the scattered information and photographs on NPPs in a wide range of journals from different scientific disciplines make the search for a suitable indicator quite challenging and risks neglecting the analysis of NPPs in palynological studies. This causes a loss in valuable supplementary information for the (palaeo)ecological, archaeobotanical, and archaeological research.

This database bundles the existing data on these additional indicators in pollen slides, using “the list of Quaternary NPP-types” provided by Miola (2012), and supplements these with data from later publications. With its 1461 entries, it facilitates a simpler and faster access to information on all kind of NPP types described so far. It thus offers the opportunity for palynologists, (palaeo)ecologists, archaeologists, students, and interested public to be informed about the subfossil and modern occurrence of NPPs and on their (palaeo)environmental indication. To sustain the online database in the long run and in the public domain, it was incorporated into the wiki-platform “**Non-Pollen Palynomorphs**” hosted at Kiel University.

The Non-Pollen Palynomorph database is accessible at
https://www.wikis.uni-kiel.de/non_pollen_palynomorphs

The database offers multiple search options. Besides a direct search for NPP types and a taxa list, the database also provides a photo gallery based on newly generated images. An additional classification into NPP categories and, in the case of highly diverse groups (fungi), also into subcategories, helps further narrow down the search.

To keep the data constantly up to date, we invite NPP researchers worldwide to inform us about new NPP-related publications and newly described types. We would be extremely grateful if you could, alongside the pdf, also share the related photographs for integration in the wiki-database that we, of course, would reference accordingly.

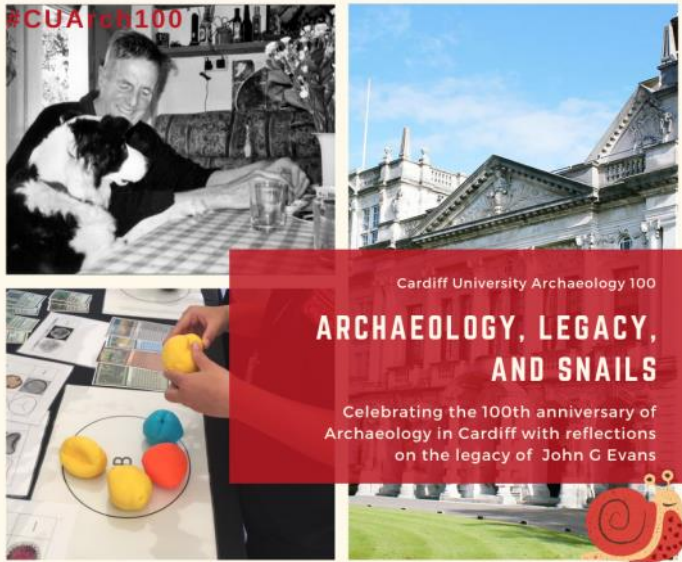
Magda Wieckowska-Lüth, Wiebke Kirleis, Tanja Reiser, Kay Schmütz

Institute for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Archaeology, Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel, Germany

Contact: mwickowska@ufg.uni-kiel.de

References:

Miola, A., 2012. Tools for Non-Pollen Palynomorphs (NPPs) analysis: A list of Quaternary NPP types and reference literature in English language (1972–2011). *Review of Palaeobotany and Palynology*, 186, pp.142-161.



The Department of Archaeology and Conservation at Cardiff University is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. To celebrate, they are hosting a week of events online, to honour their alumni and their legacy. Scholars from Cardiff University have impacted archaeological practice and perceptions in many ways, starting with the department's founding with the appointment of Mortimer Wheeler. However, today's emphasis on archaeological science within the department can be more specifically attributed to the appointment of John Evans in 1970.

As many members of the AEA will know John 'Snails' Evans (1941-2005), was an environmental archaeologist specialising in land molluscs, who literally wrote the book on the subject (*Land Snails in Archaeology*, 1972), as well as contributing to over 130 other publications. His appointment at Cardiff University as lecturer of Environmental Archaeology was the first of its kind outside of London. As a colleague, he was "unpredictable, exhausting, always stimulating, and mind-broadening" (Allen 2009), and perennially interested in furthering the field.

He was an active fieldworker and his interest in early prehistory led to his participation in many of the key excavations with leading archaeologists. He was one of the few archaeologists to be allowed to excavate Stonehenge.

Evans taught through experimentation, exemplified in a memorable zooarchaeology

laboratory session lead by Evans and his dog (Darwin), demonstrating the effects of carnivores on animal bone. Though dogs rarely feature in direct teaching today, this experimental approach continues within the Cardiff laboratories.

Today, 100 years after Mortimer Wheeler was appointed, and 50 years after Snails Evans was appointed, we are excited to continue moving the discipline forward on the foundations they and many others first laid.

Cardiff staff and alumni have a proud tradition of involvement with the AEA, from the late great John Evans himself, who's name now heads the annual dissertation prize, to the numerous staff, students and alumni who have held (and continue to hold) positions on the managing committee. Cardiff continues to encourage its archaeological scientists to join and engage with the AEA.

We encourage any AEA members with a link to Cardiff to join us online between the 6th-12th June to celebrate our staff, students, and fellows, and their impact on the world of archaeology, and to reflect upon the past, present, and future of the field.

Find us online:

<https://archaeologyandconservationcardiff.wordpress.com/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.comCardiffUniHistoryArchaeologyReligion/>

Twitter: @CUBALab / @CUHistArchRel

Instagram: @cardiffarchaeology

Katie Faillace, on behalf of the Archaeology 100 team, Cardiff University

References:

Allen, M.J. 2009. 'Professor John Gwynne Evans 1941-2005, aka 'Snails Evans' an appreciation,' in Allen, Sharples, and O'Connor (Eds) *Land and People: papers in memory of John G Evans*. p3-10

Sharples, N. 2005. *Obituary: John Evans: Archaeologist on the trail of ancient snails. The Guardian 29 June 2005.*



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1920-2020

Celebrating
100 YEARS
of Archaeology
and Conservation
1920-2020

AEA Photo Competition 2020

The AEA photo competition has been running for a number of years, with a different theme being chosen each year. This year it is inescapable that we have all been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, and the attempts of governments to control it via national lockdown measures. In these circumstances we are reminded no one can live apart from the wider world, particularly in an era of rapid global interconnections. It might also put our research into perspective as project plans are put on hold, and new ways of communicating are engaged when conferences are cancelled.

This year the theme that has been chosen is **Environmental Archaeologists Observing Lockdown**. Does having the perspective of an environmental archaeologist allow us to see aspects of the lockdown differently? How have you as an environmental archaeologist coped during your national lockdown? How have you adapted your research to deal with social distancing and travel restrictions? This can be interpreted in the broadest sense and seeks to portray and record the experiences of 2020 through the eyes of the environmental archaeologist.

We are running this year's competition in collaboration with **The Viral Archive**. This is a collaborative project between archaeologists at the University of Warwick (Rosie Everett), University College Cork (Ben Geary and Orla Peach-Power), and University College London (Matt Pope). The project is sending out a global invitation, to capture the visual record of the signs, marks and graffiti that are keeping us safe, together, and uplifted during this pandemic. It was recently featured on the BBC news website: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-coventry-warwickshire-52848024>, and is prominently led by a number of AEA members. This project is as an act of bearing witness to, and capturing, the changes that can occur in our local landscapes due to a global crisis, and the personal and broader social responses that can emerge as a form of resilience. The project can be followed by the twitter handle [@Viral Archive](#), and using the hashtag [#ViralArchive](#).

All of the images submitted to the AEA photo competition under the theme **Environmental Archaeologists Observing Lockdown** will be collated together and archived as part of the AEA's submission to **The Viral Archive** project. This will act as a permanent record of the experiences of environmental archaeologists during this period.

Entries can be emailed to the AEA Secretary envarch@envarch.net or via twitter by adding the handles and hashtag [@Envarch](#) [@Viral Archive](#) [#ViralArchive](#)



Chelidonium majus (greater celandine) growing on a Portsmouth pavement. The urban weed flora returns as spraying with weed killers ceases during lock-down. **Gill Campbell**

UNDERSTANDING ZOOARCHAEOLOGY I

A short course for archaeology and heritage professionals, students and enthusiasts

18th-20th January 2021



UNDERSTANDING ZOOARCHAEOLOGY II

A short course for those who have a basic knowledge of zooarchaeology.
For professionals, students and enthusiasts

21st-23rd January 2021



For more information, please email: zooarch-shortcourse@sheffield.ac.uk



The University Of Sheffield.

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY



<https://cutt.ly/zooarch>



@ZooarchLab Sheffield



Sheffield Zooarchaeology Short Course

SCAN ME



University of Sheffield Zooarchaeology Short Courses

*****PLEASE NOTE NEW DATES*****

Understanding Zooarchaeology I: 18th-20th January 2021
Understanding Zooarchaeology II: 21st-23rd January 2021

Price for one short course: £ 200 / £ 140 (student/unwaged)

Price for both short courses: £ 350 / £ 240 (student/unwaged)

*****Due to COVID-19 the dates for the next Understanding Zooarchaeology I short course have currently been pushed back to run in January 2021*****

This three-day course aims to provide an understanding of the basic theory and methods which zooarchaeologists use to understand evidence from animal remains.

The introductory course will be followed by Understanding Zooarchaeology II, a three-day course suitable for anyone who has already attended our Understanding Zooarchaeology I course, or who has a basic knowledge of zooarchaeological methods. This course will cover the identification of a wider range of species than our introductory short course, including wild British mammals and birds, and the separation of sheep and goats. It will also provide participants with experience in recording and analysing a real archaeological assemblage.

Both courses will use short lectures, hands-on practical activities, and case studies focused on current zooarchaeological research.

For more information please visit our website:

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/archaeology/research/zooarchaeology-lab/short-course>

You can also follow us on:

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Sheffield-Zooarchaeology-Short-Course-100619023380021/?ref=hl>)

and

Twitter (<https://twitter.com/ZooarchLabSheff>)

For any questions, please feel free to email us at: zooarch-shortcourse@sheffield.ac.uk.

AEA Autumn Conference Update

Due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have decided to postpone the 2020 AEA Autumn meeting in Groningen to Autumn 2021

However, for this Autumn, we have decided to proceed in another way. Starting in the week of September 14th until the end of November, every two weeks, a webinar will be organised targeting different aspects of environmental archaeology.

A call for papers will be announced shortly and there will be several invited speakers as well.

Stay tuned! via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), the AEA email list and the newsletter!



Obituary

Dr. Steven Weber

Palaeoethnobotanist

1954-2020

It is with profound sadness that I record the passing away earlier this year of Steve Weber (1954-2020), an archaeobotanist, a friend, a sometimes sparring partner (on issues archaeological), a sometimes co-author, whose ideas and work greatly enriched my own. For most archaeobotanists, he is probably best known for his work on Harappan plant remains, from his book *Plants and Harappan Subsistence* (1991), to his co-edited volume on *Indus Ethnobiology: New Perspectives from the Field* (2003). Although his PhD (Univ. Pennsylvania, 1989) was on the Harappan site of Rojdi in Gujarat, India, he had previously worked in the American Southwest, especially in the Hopi region. After degrees at Northern Arizona State University and attending the first Ethnobiology meeting held in 1978 in Prescott Arizona, he helped to found the Society of Ethnobiology, with Steven Emslie, and he edited its *Journal of Ethnobiology* that launched in 1981 (recounted in Weber 1986). The first issue of that journal partly celebrated the ethnobiological work of the late Al Whiting, which Steve Weber helped to bring to publication as *Havasupai Habitat* (Whiting, Weber and Seaman 1985), which looked in detail on resource use and settlement system of a Native American group in part of the Grand Canyon region. Steve departed Arizona to take up his PhD work at Pennsylvania and to establish the first really large-scale machine flotation program of archaeobotany in the Indus valley region at the site of Rojdi with Prof. Gregory Possehl (1941-2011). He later took over the archaeobotany at the excavations at Harappa (Pakistan) throughout the 1990s.



Steve Weber in discussions at a conference on the archaeology of rice, Kyoto, 2009

He was professor in the Anthropology Department at Washington State University, where he taught from 1994 onwards. On his webpage there, he describes himself as an "archaeologist and archaeobotanist working throughout the world" and working on the themes of "how and why people adopt new subsistence strategies, and how change in subsistence systems relates to change in material culture and settlement systems." He was always quick to point out that he was a field archaeologist first, but he was also a knowledgeable and enthusiastic botanist. He certainly did get around -- we had meetings and encounters in France, in London and Cambridge, in the Delhi airport, in Lucknow, in Zhejiang, in Kyoto and Tokyo, in San Francisco and Vancouver, Canada, and no doubt others I have forgotten. He was also intently engaging in conversations, full of ideas for further analysis, and extremely generous with his ideas, encouraging to students. Sometimes they were quite accidental. We met once in the Delhi airport, both transiting and tired from long flights from abroad, but over coffee we had a conversation about potentially fundamental differences between wheat and barley on the one hand and millets on the other, and whether or not there was something inherent in the productivity of the big-grained cereals that meant they were more likely to support urbanism. Ideas he later developed in his paper "Does size matter?" (Weber et al. 2010a). In this article he suggests that large-seeded crops, like wheat or barley, rice or maize, have larger and deeper root systems, making them much more productive when soils are well-watered in contrast to the more conservative small-grained crops like millets, which only come into their own where poor water condition force productivity to be low. He suggested that it was the big-grained cereals and their productivity that were fundamental to supporting the rise of the first urban societies. While one can find exceptions, like northern Chinese urbanism based on millets, there does tend to be higher productivity in the larger grains cereals, allowing for the support of denser populations.

One time we arrived in Lucknow together, and Steve's luggage has been lost, so we spent the

afternoon shopping for clothes for him. (He bought quite sensible clothes, while I opted for a rather louder shirts -- see below). Although we were both there for a conference on Lahuradewa and the origins of agriculture, and especially rice agriculture, our conversation strayed, as it often did, to the small millets that constitute so much agricultural diversity, not just in India, but around the world. Steve's take was that the great potential of small-scale sustainable millet agriculture was largely overlooked by modern scholarship, in part because of bias towards interest in those large-grained cereals, that were both more easy to find archaeologically and more likely to support urban elites. This resulted in our joint attempt to call attention to millets in worldwide agricultural and archaeobotanical studies (Weber and Fuller 2008), and his subsequent papers that drew attention to the importance of millets from the Indus Valley to Neolithic Thailand (Weber et al. 2010b; Weber and Kashyap 2016).

Tragically over the past couple of years he suffered from a degenerative illness. Despite this he was still intent on numerous research issues and ongoing projects when I saw him at a party and conference session in his honour at the *Society of American Archaeologists* conference in Vancouver, marked in part by the retrospective on Steve Weber the visionary (D'Alpion Gyuedes and Fuller 2018). Steve generously passed on his many archaeobotanical samples to Jade, and these continue to be analysed at UC San Diego, and so the legacy of his research can be expected to continue to yield results for years to come.

One of my earlier interactions with Steve was when I had first started teaching in London and I had offered something of a critique to an article on "seeds of urbanism" that he published in *Antiquity* (Weber 1999). And while our published debate might have read somewhat acrimoniously, he was nothing but supportive and even enthusiastic about discussions with a younger scholar about the finer points of interpreting patterning in archaeobotanical data. He insisted that we should distribute together both his original article, my critique and his reply at the South Asia Archaeological conference in Paris in the summer of 2001. He was so focused on moving the field in the positive direction that he took criticism as a positive, a platform for improving the field, which lead onto useful reviews of the field and archaeobotanical formation processes (Pennington and Weber 2004; Fuller and Weber 2005). He was humble in his knowledge and a gentleman scholar.

His example of putting the pursuit of archaeological knowledge first, before his ego, is an example I will continue to strive for.

Dorian Q Fuller



Archaeobotanists visiting excavations at Lahuradewa, India, 2006, left to right: K. S. Saraswat, Steve Weber, Dorian Fuller, Mukund Kajale

Works cited:

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Obituary

Dr. Barbara Eichhorn

Archaeobotanist

1967-2020



Dr. Barbara Eichhorn, research fellow at Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, left us far too soon on February 7th, 2020. She had been our colleague at the African Archaeobotany Laboratory since 2003, working in various projects on vegetation history and archaeobotany in Africa. She graduated as botanist from Goethe University in 1995 and received her PhD from the University of Cologne in 2002, with a dissertation on the vegetation history of the Kaokoland, Namibia, based on charcoal analyses.

Barbara Eichhorn was a versatile and committed botanist and archaeobotanist, with a deep interest in the manifold relations between plants and people – including questions such as how people made use of plants, how and why they adopted new crops, the significance of plants and plant foods for different cultural groups, and, finally yet importantly, how people shaped vegetation through land-use. Having started out as a specialist for weedy vegetation in rural Burkina Faso, she then focused on climate as a factor in vegetation change, before becoming an expert for the impact of early metallurgy on the woody vegetation in sub-Saharan Africa. Her latest research concerned plant resource exploitation and food production by Iron Age farmers of the Inner Congo Basin (ICB). Her analyses confirmed the early cultivation of the savanna crop pearl millet in the rain forest environment as well as the late adoption of banana. For these results, she drew from all the competences that she had acquired diligently over the years, by tapping different archives such as

archaeological wood charcoal, phytoliths and carpological remains. Her way of conscientiously and comprehensively assessing all factors laid the foundation for a comprehensive overview of the foodways of the ICB, to be published soon.

Barbara loved being in the field and over the course of her career, fieldwork took her from Burkina Faso and Namibia to Mali and Togo, Ethiopia and to the Democratic Republic of Congo – from the desert and the dry savanna of Namibia to humid savannas and various woodlands in West Africa and into the rain forest. The material she had worked on, however, took her even further, to Malawi, Senegal, Chad, Sudan and Turkey, at least.

Barbara was highly appreciated in all multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural research groups that she had been team member of over the years. Her quiet and modest manner, coupled with a fine sense of humor, made her a wonderful companion in the field and in the lab. Her profound knowledge of the matter and her perfect timing for asking the right questions always advanced decisively the research efforts of the teams she participated in. She inspired and promoted young researchers as well as more senior colleagues and friends with her supportive attitude, always setting an example by insisting on the highest professional standards.

We miss her greatly - the inspiring and esteemed colleague and the dedicated and caring friend. Our deepest sympathies go to Barbara's family and friends.

Alexa Hoehn



Obituary

Bob (Robert Andrew) Wilson

Zooarchaeologist

1943-2020

Bob Wilson was born in Hamilton, on the North Island of New Zealand, in 1943. Even as a schoolboy, he was interested in biology and zoology. One of his first forays into the study of bones involved him dissecting the body of a pukeko (a large New Zealand bird) which had been shot by a neighbour. As a young man, Bob also played cricket and was a good long-distance runner. More generally, he was a great lover of the outdoors.

Bob did a BSc degree in Zoology at Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand, and then taught for a year in a high school in Canterbury, New Zealand. In about 1971, Bob left New Zealand, travelling by boat to Japan and then on the Trans-Siberian Railway to Europe. He eventually arrived in England, and began working on excavations here. In 1973, he moved to Abingdon to work for the Abingdon Excavation Committee. The town was to be his permanent home from then on.

He initially worked as an excavator, but soon began to specialise in the study of archaeological animal bones. The Abingdon Excavation Committee was absorbed into Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU, now Oxford Archaeology) in about 1974. Bob worked there alongside two other noted environmental archaeologists, Martin Jones and Mark Robinson, helping to develop OAU's innovative programme of integrated regional research carried out under the 'rescue archaeology' flag. Some of this work was ground-breaking, such as the reports on Ashville Trading Estate, Abingdon (Iron Age settlement) and Barton Court Farm (Iron Age enclosure, Roman villa and Saxon settlement). His book *Ageing and Sexing Animal Bones from Archaeological Sites* is on nearly all zooarchaeologists' desks. While his work on disposal and the importance of considering the context type, and areas of activity or in activity, as laid out in *Spatial Patterning among Animal Bones in Settlement Archaeology*, is a must read for many archaeologists.

Unfortunately, ill-health struck Bob in the mid-1980s, and he subsequently retired on medical grounds. He remained living in Abingdon, and continued some archaeozoological work; his *Spatial*

Patterning book was published in 1996.

As well as his work in archaeozoology, Bob was active in local archaeology. He directed and published a number of excavations for Abingdon's archaeological society, and volunteered on others, and examined and reported on animal bones from some of these sites.

Bob had many other interests outside archaeology. He read widely, especially about philosophy and religion, and had an interest in Buddhism. He greatly enjoyed listening to sport on the radio (especially football and cricket) and he went walking almost every day. He also enjoyed the company of a small number of valued close friends.

Roger Thomas, Gill Knowles and Gill Campbell

Works cited:

Wilson, B., Grigson, C. and Payne, S. 1982. *Ageing and Sexing Animal Bones from Archaeological Sites*. (Vol. 109), British Archaeological Reports

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News from the Committee

It has been quite a busy time for the AEA Managing Committee. The developing COVID-19 situation over the last few months has meant making difficult decisions to cancel conference and meetings, as well as adjusting the way the Managing Committee does business. Although over the last year or so we have been moving to conducting more business via email and teleconference rather than having set meetings four times a year, the current circumstances have accelerated this trend with the committee meeting using Zoom for the first time a few weeks ago. We intend to do more of this in the future as it allows committee members to join meetings wherever they are based, saves on travel and meeting expenses and reduces our carbon footprint.



New Publishing Agreement for *Environmental Archaeology*

Our new agreement with Taylor and Francis, our publishers, was signed on 23rd April. The agreement runs from 2020 to 2025 and from 2021 there will be 6 issues of the journal a year, printed in 2 bound volumes. The agreement includes an increase in expenses for the editorial team and £2000 to support open access publication of papers resulting from our Small Research Grants. We plan to support open access publication of such papers further using the increase in royalty the AEA will receive from sales receipts of the journal from 2021. The Association will also only pay for the number of hard copies required by members and will no longer need to buy a minimum number of copies. This puts the Association on a much firmer financial footing and will allow us to explore different ways of benefiting our members and promoting environmental archaeology worldwide.

The AEA Website

As many members will have noticed the AEA website has gone down on a number of occasions recently. We have taken measures to improve matters in the short term but have decided to bring forward our plans to develop a new website with an alternative provider who can better meet our needs. This will involve an increase in spend from around 0.4% to around 2 to 3% of our annual budget.

We had always intended to make improvements to the website a major focus of this year's committee work but it has become a matter of some urgency. We are therefore moving forward rapidly with this work. One of the consequences of this decision is that we will not be making changes to the current website but rather concentrating our efforts on building the new website. The new website will include an e-commerce plug-in and options for a members' only area. If members have ideas on what they would like to see as part of our new website then please do contact the committee via the usual email: envarch@envarch.net

2020 AEA Managing Committee Elections: First call for nominations

Elections for new committee members will be held during the Annual General Meeting (AGM) which for the first time in the Association's history will be held online. The date and time of the meeting will be published in the next newsletter and communicated to members via email.

This year we are seeking nominations for Treasurer (a four year term), three Ordinary Members (four year terms) and one Student Representative (a two year term). If you would like to stand as Treasurer, an Ordinary Member or Student Representative please apply by emailing Don O'Meara or Gill Campbell: envarch@envarch.net.

You will need to provide a personal statement and the names and email addresses of the two AEA members who have agreed to nominate and second you. We welcome nominees from any country, but please note that meetings are conducted in English.

While we can receive nominations up to the beginning of the AGM, we request that nominations are submitted by 20th July 2020 so that candidates' personal statements can be included in the August newsletter.

More about the Roles

Treasurer

The Treasurer works closely with the Membership Secretary, Chair and Secretary to ensure the smooth running of the Association. The Treasurer sets the budget for the year ahead and prepares the annual accounts, reporting the financial position of the AEA to the AGM. They are responsible for making payments, checking statements, and keeping detailed records of payments received (membership subscriptions, book sales, etc.) and of outgoing transactions (journal and newsletter costs, grants, etc.). Subscriptions are increasingly electronic, reducing the Treasurer's work-load.

Ordinary Member

The committee includes 12 elected Ordinary Members who contribute to the management and promotion of the AEA. Ordinary Members sit on review panels for prize and grant decisions and

may take on a specific role such as Conference Officer Grants Officer, Prize Administrator, etc., during their term of office. They help shape the direction and priorities of the association, from working on policy to building relationships with other organisations.

Student Representative

The committee includes two Student Representatives, with one new Student Representative elected each year. The post is open to both undergraduates and postgraduate students and is an excellent opportunity to get involved with the environmental archaeology community.

The Student Representatives promote the association and its aims within the student community, including establishing student-led meetings/seminars. The newly elected Student Representative shadows the more senior Student Representative. In their second year the Student Representative forms part of the Newsletter editorial team. Student Representatives also contribute to the administration of grants and prizes

Please contact the committee through envarch@envarch.net or the secretary at Don.O'Meara@historicengland.org.uk for further information or with any queries.

Current Managing Committee members

Elected Position	Name	Term	Current responsibility
Chair	Gill Campbell	2017-21	-
Secretary	Don O'Meara	2018-22	-
Treasurer	Mark McKerracher	2016-20	-
Journal Editor	Tim Mighall	Co-opted	-
Ordinary Members	Jo McKenzie	Co-opted	Membership Secretary
	Lynne Gardiner	2016-20	Conferences
	Jen Harland	2016-20	Prizes
	Niklas Hausmann	2016-20	Grants
	Rhiannon Philp	2017-21	NL Editor
	David Smith	2017-21	
	Michael Wallace	2017-21	Web Officer
	Canan Çakırlar	2018-22	Seminars
	Michael Bamforth	2018-22	
	Daisy Spenser	2018-22	NL Editor
	Eva Fairnell	2019-23	Web Officer
	Alexandra Livarda	2019-23	
Student Representatives	Nora Battermann	2018-20	
	Róisín Nic Cnáimhín	2019-21	



Musings from Social Media



AEA Retweeted
Ruth Pelling @struth28 · Mar 7
 Terrific Archaeobotany Working Group (AWG) meeting at @MOLArchaeology with the wonderful @Lariense showing us how to recognise when those 'amorphous charred fragments' in our samples are actually food remains, and when they are not #Archaeology @HistoricEngland @HE_Archaeology

AEA Retweeted
Oliver Wilson @OliJWilson · Mar 17
 Some lovely new @3Dpollenproject models printed just in time for tomorrow's cancelled teaching lab 🤖. They include a great polyad cross-section, an inspired suggestion by Catherine at the @UniOfHull FabLab!

AEA @Envarch · Feb 18
 Very impressive work by @PaoloViscardi of @NMireland This shows how even specimens that seem hopeless can be restored with the right methods!

Paolo Viscardi @PaoloViscardi · Feb 18
 These pictures are of the same frog specimen. I took one of them today. Guess which one?
[Show this thread](#)

AEA Retweeted
Don O'Meara @don_o_meara · Feb 16
 A saccum+lumber vertebra from a Fresian cow. She probably produced lots of delicious milk in her lifetime, but was also probably prone to mastitis, lameness, and udder infection. Zooarchaeology teaches us #eugenics benefits the person making the selection, not the organism being bred

Association for Environmental Archaeology
 27 January · 🌐

There is a pretty neat isotopes in archaeology symposium and workshop at University of Groningen, Centre for Isotope Research, and ARCHON, research school in Archaeology Beginning April. organized by our wonderful PhD and Research Master's students Safoora Komijani and Pinar Erdil.
<https://www.archonline.nl/.../isotopia-the-potentials-and-li.../>

ARCHONLINE.NL
ISOTOPIA: the potentials and limitations of isotope analyses in Archaeology - Archonline

AEA @Envarch · Feb 15
 Great first days at the Integrated Microscopy workshop at @UniRdg_Arch. Well done to all the organisers, speakers, and demonstration organisers. The @Envarch sponsored drinks reception and poster session is now underway. #AEA



<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

Nominations for AEA Managing Committee Deadline

20th July 2020

John Evans Prize Nominations

31st July 2020

AEA Autumn Conference Online Webinars

14th September—End of November 2020

Sheffield Zooarchaeology Short Courses

I: 18th-20th January 2021

II: 21st-23rd January 2021

Small Research Grants Deadline

31st January 2021

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

Next deadline: 20th July 2020

Rhiannon Philp and Daisy Spencer