

Landscape
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Re-Wilding: Continuing the Debate. Nancy Stedman

The topic of re-wilding continues to arouse plenty of impassioned debate. This was evident at the conference ‘Wild Thing? Managing Landscape Change And Future Ecologies; Cultural Severance And Continuity’ held in Sheffield in September. Organised by Sheffield Hallam University and South Yorkshire Biodiversity Research Group through UK Econet it brought together 17 speakers and 21 seminar sessions over 3 days, with over 100 participants engaging in lively discussions.

Re-wilding can mean many things. In her article in the Yorkshire Dales Review **Fleur Speakman** quotes the John Muir Trust thus: “the re-wilding concept is about restoring natural processes in nature conservation, repairing damaged ecosystems and reintroducing lost species, in order to create a richer environment for the benefit of nature and people.” So the approach ranges from non-intervention to managed reintroduction. The concept can also be seen to include the process of returning ecosystems to “a state of biological

health and dynamic balance, making them self-sustaining, without the need for ongoing human management.”

So what is it that we are considering - abandonment? letting natural processes take over? or managing natural processes? giving priority to biodiversity? introducing top predators? removing all boundaries? what about cultural aspects, historic evidence, the interests of local communities?...

Steve Carver (Wildland Research Institute, University of Leeds) was clear, stating that 'Things change, get over it' and that we shouldn't confuse biodiversity and culturally mediated landscapes with wildness and naturalness - but of course in this country they overlap... **Mauro Agnoletti** (Landscape and cultural heritage, University of Florence) stressed that the European landscape is predominantly a bio-cultural, multi-functional landscape, but that we lacked a dynamic view of biodiversity. This view was supported by **Nick McGregor** (Natural England), who reminded us of the Lawton principles - bigger, better, more and more connected - which are sound, but we need to go further than just re-arranging habitat patches; somehow we need to accommodate change and acknowledge that ecosystems are dynamic.

So is re-wilding about allowing natural processes to dominate? **Alistair Driver**, of the Environment Agency, provided evidence that allowing rivers to follow more natural courses can achieve many benefits eg. reducing the speed and energy of flood waters, increasing holding capacity, enhancing biodiversity. But the removal of all management - and the discussion was often around the uplands - could result in effect in a period of de-population, and may not achieve the desired effects. And there is a danger that the no-

tion of 'abandonment', or of letting things run free, may get caught up in 'neo-liberal' policy, suggesting that no funding is needed...

In many instances, after centuries of particular management, soils have changed and seed banks have deteriorated, thus the conditions are not conducive to the development of a rich biodiversity.

George Peterken provided interesting evidence from Lady Park Wood in Wye, which has been left unmanaged since 1945, with regular monitoring. Significant events can be identified - Dutch elm disease, drought of 1976 - and overall there has been a decline in ground flora, arising from deer grazing,



prolonged shade, more leaf litter, increased nitrogen, decline in diversity of seed bank... although fungi, slugs and snails were thriving. Re-wilding of small woodlands within agricultural land showed massive losses and few gains. His conclusion was that 'Re-wilding of woodlands is beneficial in some circumstances, but damaging or even disastrous in others'. He recommended devoting more energy to 'wilder', to establishing large scale links, especially along river valleys, on riparian land.

A more extreme example was presented by **Jim McAdam** (Queens University Belfast). His research

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was based in the Falklands, a place with a very strong sense of wildness, wilderness - it's remote, with a low population, biodiversity interest, with low key management and where natural processes are dominant. But the seed bank is poor and lacks any tree species. But some natural 're-wilding' of the ground flora and fauna is occurring in the minefields...

So do natural processes need some management to be effective? how much should be 'hands-off'? what about rhododendron control, ash dieback?... **Peter Bridgewater** (Centre for Museums and Heritage, Australian National University) talked about needing to find ourselves somewhere along the spectrum between 'gardening' and 'abandonment', and the need to take into account the role of people in the creation and perception of landscape.

An example of the effects of the removal of management on limestone pavements at Scar Close, on the side slopes of Ingleborough, was cited by **Steve Carver**. This had allowed scrub and ground flora, including mosses, to develop, and was presented as a success in comparison to the adjacent site, Southerscales, where grazing continues. However, it had resulted in the loss of the experience of this extraordinary geological formation, as well as obscuring evi-

dence of early settlements, and information about the processes of creation of this iconic feature.

That people respond passionately to open limestone pavement formations is clear from the responses to the public consultation about designating the Orton Fells as a National Park (now achieved).

Removal of all management of course ignores the social aspects, the long history that has created the landscapes that we see today. And indeed, some of our most valued habitats arise from man's intervention, the species rich hay meadows being just one example. **Tom Williamson** (University of East Anglia) noted how heaths had been created by the constant removal of nutrients, and hedges had been regularly coppiced for fuel; it is the intensity of management that matters.

Lois Manfield (University of Cumbria) pointed out the essential role that upland agriculture plays in providing hardy stock to cross-breed with lowland species. Even the removal of production support in 2000 resulted in a form of abandonment, of hefts, thus destabilising adjacent hefts. She concluded that 'wilding' and upland farming could not be mutually exclusive in this country, due to the broader agendas of food security, sustainable rural communities, ecosystem services and cultural heritage.

The possibility of introducing top predators is attractive, but almost immediately comes up against vested interests, such as grouse and pheasant shooting. **Chris Spray** (UNESCO Water Science & Policy Centre, University of Dundee) presented evidence from the trials with re-introducing beavers, which very effectively fell small trees across streams and thus slow river flows and increase wetland habitats, but this clashes with the interests of salmon fishing. The Forestry Commission and other woodland managers constantly

struggle to deal with deer damage, so could lynx be the answer?

There was plenty of debate about primeval forest, the notion that open forest, with grasslands and glades, was more likely the norm, rather than closed canopy. From his research into peat deposits and saproxylic beetles, **Keith Alexander** (consultant) concluded that the 'former wild Britain' was an open wood-pasture landscape. **Jill Butler** (The Woodland Trust) described a landscape rich in open grown trees, where grazing was maintained at levels sufficient to control scrub but allowing trees to establish, mature and decline within the protection of different scrub species.

Frans Vera raised the issue of language, telling us that 'you can't read the landscape with the wrong dictionary'. The meanings of words have changed; 'desert' simply meant uninhabited, while 'forestis' meant the land outside, or without. Branches were cut from trees for fodder, oak forests were pastures for pigs - thus trees were not distinguished from grass, herbs or other fodder. Cattle kept the 'forest' open and grassy, for bison to utilise. The regeneration of trees within a stand or canopy is not 'natural' as young trees need light. **Dr Tomasz Samojlik** (Polish Mammal Research Institute, Białowieża) gave a summary of the historic role of grazing, along with timber extraction and forest fires, over the last 400 years, in creating the landscapes of Białowieża Forest.

The language we use is significant, and the terms we use are often negative, such as reserve, set-aside. Resilience has recently become a popular term, but what do we actually mean by it? it sounds positive, reassuring, not critical or scary. **Adrian Newton** (Centre for Ecology, Environment and Sustainability, Bournemouth University) defined it as the ability of

ecosystems to persist / absorb disturbance / continue in the face of new disruptions. He cited the example of the New Forest, which has experienced many 'shocks' over past centuries, but has survived, with spatial heterogeneity, size and scale contributing.

The term 're-wilding' implies looking back to some golden age, restoring something that we have lost, but when was this, and what state are we wanting to achieve? The term 'wilding' would be more precise as well as positive, and suggesting that some sort of action is required. It also allows for the achievement of multi-functioning landscapes, 'that contribute towards flood management, food production, water quality, carbon sequestration, recreation, rural support as well as biodiversity' a necessity with the population pressure here.

I will give the final word to **Chris Spray**: there isn't a right answer, things are constantly changing. 'The desired end state is a social construct that varies across time and space'. The debates will go on - but thanks are due to the organisers, **Professor Ian Rotherham** and **Christine Handley**, for providing such a stimulating forum for exchange of information, ideas and opportunities for discussion.

Nancy Stedman

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LEARNING TO LIVE MORE SUSTAINABLY – CHANGING ATTITUDES TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT

By Gareth Roberts

One of the opportunities which former Soviet satellite states have had or will have over the rest of us in Europe is new start development and promotion of their pub-

lic transport services. It has been a good time to plan for this. For example, the possible entry of countries like Ukraine into the EU would allow for the modernisation of roads and rail services to be underpinned with European monies. Not all the first batch of accession states from Eastern Europe took full advantage of this opportunity whereas later entrants seemed to have learnt from the lessons of their predecessors and have been more successful in pinning back the rise in private car ownership.

Take for example Prague in the Czech Republic which seems to me to have singularly failed in this endeavour whereas others like Estonia have developed public transport systems that are remarkable in their sophistication and forward thinking. Public transport is free for the citizens of Tallinn the capital city and their long distance buses offer free Wi-Fi, too. The mind-set seems right here, too. Not surprising perhaps for a country that developed 'Skype', not surprising either in Baltic and Scandinavian countries that seem to me to set great store to take care of those who have little or no independent means of travelling around.

There remains a social stigma attached to public transport that

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even the most liberal and environmentally concerned amongst us seem to find it hard to overcome. Car ownership is widely associated with affluence. Cruising in the T-Bird became de rigeur for young Californians of the 1960s as was smoking cigarettes for their parents' generation, drinking Cola, eating fast-food, wearing designer clothes, wandering around in an internet haze has done subsequently. All these are things have been shown to be harmful to us and hugely influential on how our environment and landscape looks; things which affect how we interact with those around us. I am convinced that our attitudes to the use of private motor cars have to change. We all have a role to play in this. No ifs or buts, we need to grow up and wean ourselves off the private combustion engine. I see a time, not so far into the future, perhaps when driving a car might be regarded by most as anti-social as smoking. The United States of America — which bans 'hitch-hiking' in some States, would you believe — probably will need to lead the way.

Please share your experiences good and bad of public transport and how it might have changed your view on the world's landscapes and how private motor vehicles have blighted landscapes you once enjoyed!! **Or not.** Views of our landscapes from the road will continue to be the most frequent we make for generations to come, but I hope that more and more those views will in the near future be from buses and rail lines rather than private motor cars. I am hoping to persuade some friends to write short pieces describing their experiences of motor cars on their landscapes. But why not take this as your invitation.

GR

PS This is rushed as I am about to set off on a four hour journey by 'Marshrutka' — a 15 seater mini-bus public transport option in post

soviet Georgia — for Kazbegi on the Georgian / Dagestan border.



PPS I attach a photo of 'marshrutky' at Stepandsminda — Georgia and Europe's highest village 2,200 metres. The other photo shows mount Kazbegi in the clouds in the background. It is one of Georgia's 3 peaks over 5000 metres. The 14th century church (the sharp point on a mountain skyline) is set above the village is a place of pilgrimage for Georgians who claim to be the first Christian nation on earth. Armenians' claim similarly!

GR

THE 'PARC NATUR' IDEA CROSSES THE CHANNEL

Dafydd Elis-Thomas is a Plaid Cymru AM (Assembly Member) with a constituency which covers both an AONB and part of the Snowdonia National Park. Recognising that Wales will be able now to define its own natural landscapes he has set up a working party to examine how larger (though non Statutory) areas of landscape can be given a Parc Natur designation. He advocates that these should cover a quarter to a

third of the Welsh land area. All done by consensual discussion (do I detect an element of Welshness here?). Its aim would be to conserve the landscape, to promote physical well being and to promote sustainable forms of economic and community development.

Mmm? How does this work? And to what end? A word of advice from our French cousins please.

BY

EPHEMERAL LANDSCAPES AND THE FORESTRY PROCESS

This image comes from Dartmoor where there are extensive conifer plantations. A large proportion of these are now being felled and replanted. The images here are at Bellever Tor and I would note two matters of interest: that the small felled areas are ugly (my opinion) and nearly impassable -- the nearest comparison being shelled woodland in the Second World War. But for a year or two they are a prominent component of the local landscape. Adjacent to this image, forest areas have been felled on a much larger scale — many hectares and several hundreds of metres across. In amongst these scenes of devasta-

tion new conifers will be inserted and these within 5 years will present a green mantle of new forest crop. Though to many, the scene of devastation will be ugly, to others it will be full of interest. In its way it is a harvest scene! — men with scythes, monster combines! One might see it as a filmic background implying menace or loss or total degradation. It is in every sense an ephemeral landscape, more realistically a component of landscape than the winter display of ice sculptures at Harbin, China or the fairground style religious constructions at the Kam Tin Jiao festival of Hong Kong (Mick Atha in our current E-Bulletin 16.2).

Note Just a few areas are replanted to hardwoods and this is notable in the Wray Valley where a nearly mature larch plantation (see page 1, LRE62) on a highly visible hillside has now been replaced by broadleaves each tree the more notable for its protective tube. Hopefully they have not planted disease susceptible ash!

BY

ROOT PLATES AND THE GROUND SURFACE SHAPE

Some time back, (LRE 45) featured an article by Dick Greenaway: The North Wessex Downs

Woodland Archeology Audit about the unseen land and surface form below the canopy of many woodlands. This led on to a discussion of the use of LIDAR whose sensors pass through trees and offer a second echo profiling the ground below. Fascinating stuff. The only alternative to LIDAR if we wish to reveal tree hidden features is diligent criss-crossing. Not easy.

The ‘beneath- the- trees’ surface may result in historically exciting curious or attractive features of an ancient land surface unmolested by ploughing.

It is some years now that I lived and surveyed landform and soils in the Bahamas. A host of first recorded observations came out of this 3 year period of field work., and I recorded some of them in a recent paper. The attractive (to me) observation that links Dick Greenaways article with the Bahamas and this Dartmoor image is surface disruption and soil throw in a dense pine forest at a place called Norman’s Castle, Abaco. Google map it adding Bahamas..

Normans Castle was reputed by locals to have good soil and since 1968 has been developed for agriculture. When I surveyed it, it was 100% forest covered. The soil profile at any point was largely rock and the topography comprised wave linked ridges of 4 to 8 feet amplitude. But it was easily broken up and the main agent of disturbance was windthrow by long-lived tree cover — Bahamian pine, a noble conifer which covers a large part of the flat northern islands. Windthrow was the more easy due to the relatively open form of the soil rock profile. Well named platey rock by locals (or thin bedded fissile grainy limestone by me), it formed a ridged landsurface. The ridges — to go to their origins — are the outcome of beach ridge formation. The platey or thin bedded nature of the rock is all about wave related (oscillatory) bedding of the sands that later harden to become rock. Sorry for this technicality!

You may at this point wonder how





TOPOGRAPHY, SONORITY, SUSTAINABILITY (why not!) : HUDSON SPEAKS TO CODLING

By Ros Codling

As a ringer, it is always interesting to read what others think about bells. *Afoot in England*, by WH Hudson was first published in 1909, as “an account of the hundred little adventures met during wanderings ... without map or guidebook”, recounting his activities from about 1870. Hudson, the son of American settlers, was brought up on the pampas of Argentina but came to England in his late 20s. His wanderings and writings gradually earned him a living which laid a foundation for the “back to nature” movement of the 1920s and ‘30s.

In his first chapter he writes: In recalling those scenes which have given me the greatest happiness, the images of which are most vivid and lasting, I find that most of them are of scenes or objects which were discovered, as it were, by chance, which I had not heard of, or else had heard of and forgotten, or which I had not expected to see. ... He writes:

“In the course of a ramble on foot in a remote district I came to a small ancient town, set in a cup-like depression amidst high wood-grown hills. The woods were of oak in spring foliage, and against that vivid green I saw the many-gabled tiled roofs and tall chimneys of the old timbered houses, glowing red and warm brown in the brilliant sunshine - a scene of rare beauty, and yet it produced no shock of pleasure; never, in fact, had I looked on a lovely scene for the first time so unemotionally. It seemed to be no new scene, but an old familiar one; and that it had certain degrading associations which took away all delight.

this fits with the image of a root-plate in Dartmoor. I will explain. Norman’s Castle Abaco is subject to hurricane winds. From time to time and place to place these fell pine trees and the root plates of thinly bedded rock and soil. In time storm-felled trees gave rise in this forest covered but as yet unfarmed landscape to mounded topography as tree stumps and roots rotted away. In Norman’s Castle Abaco this is what happened in a landscape which no one saw and no one exploited for 10,000 years — virgin terrain.

The pine root plate I show here in Dartmoor will get ‘managed away’ by the National Park Authority. Health and Safety? A pity. If left unmanaged it would gradually shed its soil and stone, wood will vanish by rotting to leave a mound. It is worth looking out for such mounds in little-visited woodlands. They can be found beneath broadleaves as well as coniferous woods. And used carefully fresh root plates make good bivouac sites.

BY

WHAT IRONY

In the book by Hudson *Afoot in England* (see on) I come across this haunting passage from 1903.

“Close by, a ploughed field of about 40 acres was the camping ground of an army of Pewits; they were travellers from the North perhaps, and were quietly resting sprinkled over the whole area. More abundant were the small birds in mixed flocks or hordes — finches, buntings, and larks in thousands on thousands, with a sprinkling of pipits and pied and grey wagtails, all busily feeding on the stubble and fresh ploughed land. Thickly and evenly distributed, they appeared to the vision — ranging over the brown level expanses — minute animated and variously coloured clods — black and brown and grey and yellow and olive-green.

It was a rare pleasure to be in this company, to revel in their astonishing numbers, to feast my soul on them as it were — little birds in such multitudes that 10,000 Frenchmen and Italians might have gorged to repletion on their small circular bodies — **and to reflect that they were safe from persecution as long as they remain here in England. This is something for an Englishman to be proud of.**”

[Editor’s red and bold font]

Note: Pewit more normally ‘peewits’ also called plovers.

The reason of this was that a great railway company had long been 'booming' this romantic spot, and large photographs, plain and coloured, of the town and its quaint buildings had for years been staring at me in every station and every railway carriage which I had entered on that line. Photography degrades most things, especially open-air things; and in this case, not only had its poor presentments made the scene too familiar, but something of the degradation in the advertising pictures seemed to attach itself to the very scene. Yet even here, after some pleasureless

days spent in vain endeavours to shake off these vulgar associations, I was to experience one of the sweetest surprises and delights of my life.

The church of this village-like town is one of its chief attractions; it is a very old and stately building, and its perpendicular tower, nearly a hundred feet high, is one of the noblest in England. It has a magnificent peal of bells, and on a Sunday afternoon they were ringing, filling and flooding that hollow in the hills, seeming to make the houses and trees and the very earth to tremble with the glorious storm of sound. Walking past the church, I followed the streamlet that runs through the town and out by a cleft between the hills to a narrow marshy valley, on the other side of which are precipitous hills, clothed from base to summit in oak woods. As I walked through the cleft the musical roar of the bells followed, and was like a mighty current flowing through and over me; but as I came out the sound from behind ceased suddenly and was now in front, coming back from the hills before me. A sound, but not the same — not a

mere echo — and yet an echo it was, the most wonderful I had ever heard. For now that great tempest of musical noise, composed of a multitude of clanging notes with long vibrations, overlapping and mingling and clashing



together, seemed at the same time one and many - that tempest from the tower which had mysteriously ceased to be audible came back in strokes or notes distinct and separate and multiplied many times. The sound, the echo, was distributed over the whole face of the steep hill before me, and was changed in character, and it was as if everyone of those thousands of oak trees had a peal of bells in it, and that they were raining that far-up bright spiritual tree music down into the valley below. As I stood listening it seemed to me that I had never heard anything so beautiful ...

Here, then, I had found and had become the possessor of something priceless, since in that moment of surprise and delight the mysterious beautiful sound, with the whole scene, had registered an impression which would outlast all others received at that place, where I had viewed all things with but languid interest. Had it not come as a complete surprise, the emotion experienced and the resultant mental image would not have been so vivid; as it is, I can mentally stand in that valley when

I will, seeing that green-wooded hill in front of me and listen to that unearthly music.

Notes

Where was it Ros asks the readership to identify where this church and its landscape are located. Hudson is characteristically vague about places (though not always). The attached church tower is at Manaton, Dartmoor is less than 100ft tall but stands in hill country.

Afoot in England: An easily accessible copy may be one of many pocket editions in The Wayfarers Library JM Dent and Sons London and Toronto. My edition of this work written in 1903 is undated but inscribed 1927.

A NEW ETHICAL DESIGN PROCESS

Jacqueline Jobbins MA



A 'new ethical design process' is a response to the environmental challenges of climate change and finite resources which will be a feature of the 21st century, demanding the consideration of alternative perspectives in landscape architectural discourse. The approach is based on the work of the environmental philosopher, Warwick Fox. In his book 'A Theory of General Ethics' (2006), Fox aims to judge ethical value across as broad a range of scenarios as is possible, identifying responsive cohesion as the foundational value

of the theory. For the first time, his theory enables decisions and processes regarding the built environment to be valued ethically and separately within an overall cohesive order, as opposed to being considered in relation to either inter-human or environmental ethics. To assist in making decisions regarding cohesive order, the theory requires the identification of 'considered judgements' from which ethical value can be assessed. Here Randolph T. Hester's theory of 'ecological democracy' (2006) has been employed, (with the support of other authors including R.T.T. Forman (1995) on landscape ecology and K. Thwaites and I.M. Simkins (2007) on place analysis and place making) to create an analysis and opportunity matrix. The matrix is divided into three sections: the **first** is a statement of the subject and the specific issues which are being ethically valued, the **second** considers the issues first, by judging their internal and then their contextual responsive cohesion, and the **third**, identifies cohesive opportunities for each issue identified.

The case study against which the matrix has been tested is the Local Development Framework (adopted June 2008) for the Essex town of South Woodham Ferrers for the period 2001 to 2021. The matrix was used to consider the responsive cohesion of the proposals in relation to issues raised in the Development Framework, divided into nine main typologies in the town. The proposals for each typology were first tested for their internal cohesion, and then for their responsiveness to three nested realms (contextual responsive cohesion): the ecological, the social and the human construct which each, in sequence, generate and sustain the other. The main opportunity identified is to conduct a new public consultation process which involves the whole community and from there, based on a set of outcomes, a range of strategic options are proposed as a 'starter pack' for the community consultation and design process. Possible further research could be to employ the matrix to attach an ethical value to each typology prior to an ecosystems services anal-

ysis, developing a set of proxy indicators to highlight the ethical contributions of particular typologies or realms within typologies. The matrix has been developed as a flexible tool which can be scaled up to be used strategically, or down to be used to analyse a single project. It provides a new dimension to landscape design, whereby processes or designs can be valued ethically, and from which strategies can be advanced which respond first, to the sustaining ecological context, then to the social context and then to the built environment.

ASSESSING THE POTENTIAL OF HLC AND PAS DATA IN THE STUDY OF PREHISTORIC LANDSCAPES OVER THE CRANBORNE CHASE AND WEST WILTSHIRE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY



Martyn Thomas

The research for this dissertation assesses the representation of prehistory within the Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project and the PAS (Portable Antiquities Scheme) data for the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and how successfully these two data sets can be combined to investigate persistent places and continuity within prehistoric landscapes. The HLC data is first investigated individually,

looking at how well represented the prehistoric record of Cranborne Chase and the West Wiltshire Downs actually is. Trends in the current landscape character type of HLC polygons that contain prehistoric characteristics and their historic character types are analysed, leading to a critique of the methodology employed to create the characteristics. Data from the PAS is then combined with the HLC polygons to look for correlations between the landscape character and the distribution of artefacts for individual prehistoric periods, before an analysis of polygons with artefacts from multiple periods is conducted, in an attempt to address persistent places and continuity.

The findings reveal that there are several disguised and inherent flaws, relating to the collection and creation of both data sets, which form an obstacle to their use in investigations of prehistoric landscapes.

Bud

Thanks for asking. Since finishing my MA at York University, I have been working on a variety of sites across Yorkshire on a self-employed basis, and later as a site assistant for MAP Archaeological Practice, based in Malton, North Yorkshire.

Martyn

LRG RESEARCH STRATEGY

Chairman's Foreword

The anniversary of the Landscape Research Group (LRG) in 2017 marks 50 years since the charity was established to promote research and education in the field of landscape. The 21st-century world faces environmental challenges scarcely dreamed of when the organisation was founded. Modernisation has brought about huge improvements in terms of both health and well-being, but also huge challenges in terms of environmental degradation, and the threats imposed by anthropo-

genic climate change. At the same time our understanding of the significance of landscape has advanced; how people interact with it, and the consequent effect of physical, social and psychological well-being. It is clear that narrow technical or single discipline approaches to analysis are unlikely to produce sustainable solutions.

LRG offers its research strategy to promote a multidisciplinary landscape approach to analysing and finding solutions to environmental problems, and to identifying and promoting these interactions with landscape that lead to human flourishing. This approach includes social and human considerations together with those of a biophysical nature. The strategy sets out our current research priorities and indicates how we hope to cooperate with others to put them into practice

Signed **Paul Tabbush**

PENNINE PROSPECTS

I'm pleased to announce that we have another event confirmed for later this year. Please note the date in your diaries **9th November in the Shay Stadium, Halifax** — (no not the 57,000 seater Shea Stadium, home of the NY Mets and the venue for the Beatles first gig on the 1965 US Tour, and not Halifax, Nova Scotia either), but nevertheless very welcome and long awaited.

The title (work in progress) is **Distinctive non-designated landscapes: exploring models for their protection, enhancement and management**. Nancy Stedman is the lead officer for this project and will be posting full details in due course — so watch this and other LRG spaces — the website, E-Bull and LRE for more info. I have had a sneak preview of those expected to contribute to this one day Conference and it promises to be a very worthwhile event indeed. Thanks go to Nancy for helping to make these

arrangements.

LRG lends a hand

And thenalso from Helen Dear Gareth — I am absolutely delighted to note that LRG has offered a grant of £2,000 to Pennine Prospects for the conference on landscapes with distinctive character (date 8 November 2016 for site visits to the South Pennines to showcase the area and one day conference. Please accept this email as acceptance and confirmation of the grant — thank you.

We are currently working on the programme to ensure that we have some real concrete outcomes from the day in terms of distinctive landscapes, in terms of their protection and enhancement and also looking towards setting up a network of organisations that are charged with looking after these landscapes (especially non designated landscapes, which merit a value). As the programme develops, we will, of course share the content and would be delighted to place your logo on all promotional materials as acknowledgement for the grant. We are also content to meet the other conditions, as set out, including displaying of your banners and distribution of the LRG's Research Strategy.

Thank you again for your grant offer, it is very much appreciated.

Helen Noble
Chief Executive
Pennine Prospects

28 YEARS OF LREXTRA

As part of LRG 50th anniversary celebration which falls in 2017, I as editor of Landscape Research Extra for all that period, am attempting to compile a book of the most interesting or significant contributions to our publication since the year 1988 when it first came out.

A number of processes are in-

involved, for example reading in of materials that cannot easily be transcribed otherwise, and then, most important, the selection of articles and some decision as to which way they might best be grouped; for example should they be arranged by date or by topic or by author or in some other way. The final collection may be issued as a published work or an internal work or of course if all fails it may remain a challenge for someone else.

I see that since 1988 the editor has written 165 readable articles as well as many more contributions such as conference reports and landscape 'states of play'. Others who I might term 'frequent authors' may have 20 or more articles to their credit many of which remain of interest at this time. I do not forget those infrequent authors who have produced one or two good articles but then moved away from us or felt that we had moved from them.

In the course of compilation it has been my delight to send out to frequent authors, a collection of their work for their own libraries. Many readers and authors will have lost most copies of LRE over the years, and their own contributions — that's how it is. One particular author, Simon Rendel, died early leaving a widow and a son and it has been a great pleasure sending his widow Anita a full collection of his work which sadly for her and for us ends in his obituary. Many of those works she had never read and it has caused some excitement in the Oxfordshire village when 'The collected works of Simon Rendel' was produced amongst his friends.

On editing and presentation, I welcome useful or encouraging comments. This erudite readership may well include those who have compiled articles for other publications. I hope now to complete this work in time for a 2017 launch.

The loyal readership may also be pleased to hear that every issue of LRExtra will shortly appear on the Group's website. **Editor**

SUBLIME STEAM The experience of steam locomotives in our landscape, (and a history of steam locos in North Wales).

By Gareth Roberts

There are few people around today who have had the opportunity to experience the sight of a steam locomotive hurtling through the English landscape. On the 25th



February this year a surprisingly large number of people made the effort to do so and witness the Flying Scotsman, one of the world's most celebrated steam locomotives, restored to its former glory, now seen on its journey from London to York. Among those that did so was Robin Patrick who took this photograph.

Steam locomotives are loved by, and hold a great fascination for, many people. I count myself as one of them. I have never been a 'train spotter', but have some very fond memories of steam trains. One I recall most vividly is the slow and persistent clackety-clack of the long, heavily laden London bound milk train passing close to our house in Haverfordwest. This train served as my alarm clock and got me into a life-long habit of being an early riser!

Both my paternal grandfather and my uncle were 'railway' men and

the family were very proud that a great uncle had been the engine driver of the 'Royal Train' on several occasions. I shall never forget what people call 'the experience of a lifetime' when my uncle, an engine driver based at Bala, gave us in 1958. At that time I was nine and my brother was six and we were allowed to accompany him on the footplate of the tank engine in a journey from Bala to Blaenau Ffestiniog. We were on holiday with our parents in North Wales at

the time. We were keen to go, but our mother who fretted about our getting dirty, less so. Clad in 'pacamac's' to protect us from the smoke and oiliness of the journey we sweated in fierce heat as the fireman furiously

stoked the firebox to raise the steam needed to make the assault on a very steep and lengthy uphill climb into some of the remotest open countryside in Britain. Once there the train then puffed its way between halts, serving isolated farmhouses in this extensive open moorland landscape that Augustus John described as 'some miraculous promised land' See front page article in LRE 69.

The navvies who laid the track-bed in this hostile landscape did so at breakneck speed. They had to, because they were in competition with their arch rivals the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) to secure a rail link to the slate mines in Blaenau Ffestiniog thereby realising the lucrative freight revenues that this trade would bring. The LNWR chose to make the rail connection with Blaenau by striking down the Conwy Valley. Both arrived at Blaenau within two years of each

other in the early 1880s .

The Conwy Valley line continues to carry passengers albeit the slate industry has long been in decline. It runs through some of the most spectacular scenery in Britain and is a great fillip to the tourism economy of this region. The GWR line closed following the announcement that the Tryweryn valley and part of the adjacent blanket bog moorland of the Migneint, through which this railway passed, was to be flooded to provide a water supply for Liverpool. Liverpool Corporation faced with opposition from Welsh MPs, and other groups opposed to the reservoir tabled a private members Bill and set about enlisting the support of Westminster MP's.

The legislation was passed and thereby obviated the need to obtain the approval of the local planning authorities to the development. The work proceeded apace and the village of Capel Celyn and many surrounding farms were drowned and communities forcibly shifted. The public outcry that ensued was both persistent and occasionally violent. It spurred the revival of the Welsh Nationalist Party, led to the election of 3 Plaid Cymru MPs and hastened calls for devolved Governments in the UK.

This episode remains a cause celebre in Welsh history. Locals shun the reservoir and Liverpool Corporation belatedly in 2005 apologised formally for the injustice that had prevailed. Ironically the decision to drown the Tryweryn valley hastened the closure of the railway line too and heralded the announcement by the British Government that it would accept the recommendations of Dr Richard Beeching that many more rural railways should be closed. Beeching is still widely vilified by many for recommending such swinging cuts to the railway network. It is said to have hastened the demise of rural communities in Britain. The publication of the Modernisation Plan in 1955 saw British Rail-

ways begin to withdraw steam locomotives and replace them with diesels. This served to pour further salt on the wounds of those who had come to love steam. By 1968 the work of scrapping steam locomotives had all but been completed.

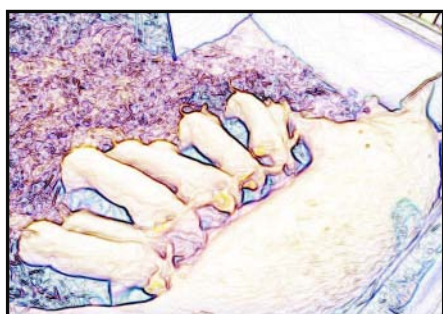
Apart from some rare occasions such as the event witnessed on 25th February most people today below the age of 60 will never have had the pleasure of experiencing landscapes made more sublime by the presence of a powerful steam locomotive hurtling through at speeds approaching to 100 mph. Those enthusiasts who invest huge amounts of their time and personal resources in railways still offer the rest of us hope that future generations will on — rare occasions — be able to experience the pleasure of seeing and smelling steam locomotives in our landscape.

Gareth Roberts

I am very grateful to Ivor Harding for his help in checking dates and other railway facts and to Robin Patrick for the photograph of the Flying Scotsman .

ONE PIG, 9 PIGLETS

Our latest E-Bulletin lists 9 conferences concerning landscapes. Why is this? Cynics such as this editor are tempted to see the proliferation of such events as evidence of a widening of the definition landscape. An extraordinary broad spectrum definition of landscape can also be taken from LRG's research priorities. Is landscape the New Geography? The New Environment? A way to satisfy a spectrum of opinions? All



tastes around a common theme?

THE 'WALK YOUR LANDSCAPE' CONFERENCE

Potential conferences nowadays may make their appeal for papers prefaced by a wealth of ideas to guide authors. And so it is with this conference on walking the countryside. If you aim to put together a conference you may well have become pretty expert in its sub topics. I am guessing that that is the case here. So read what they say and learn without going — or book in!

.....ONE GREEN FIELD: WALKING, LANDSCAPE, AND ECOCRITICISM Call for Papers for Critical Survey, Autumn 2016

Walking is prominent in recent creative non-fiction in the UK and Ireland. It is hypothesised that this has happened because wayfaring offers unique opportunities for our times. Encounters on foot allow us to observe endangered non-human nature and to reassess undervalued landscapes or environments. If this is true, we should see less walking in pre-modern literature, except in the cases where mystics, misfits, urban rustics and adventurers have found their muse on the hoof, or have a particular affinity with wildlife and wild adventures. In the case of Early Modern literature, the poet Edward Thomas suggested 'The century of Pope and Johnson is looked down on for nothing so much as for being townish and for thinking one greener than another. We forget that, nevertheless, their fields were greener than ours, and that they did not neglect them save in poetry' (1913: 17). Perhaps, rather than being motivated by environmental concern, the popularity of walking literature is due to new prose forms including the 'new nature writing'. Perhaps we might even conclude that the literary aspects of such writing have supplanted 'greener' forms of engage-

ment.

This call for papers asks for contributions that explore the recent proliferation of walking-based literature, either in terms of the creative and historical developments that have allowed this to take place, or in terms of the unexplored byways that may illuminate our current concerns in terms of broader movements. Walking literature offers a particular openness to hybrid forms and themes, and so this issue of Critical Survey does not limit itself to nature writing nor to rural and pastoral literature. There are no limits to historical or geographical scope, except that the essays should primarily focus on British and Irish works of literature where the act of walking and the non-human landscape are simultaneously prominent. Contributions that cite the body of work known as 'ecocriticism' or 'green studies' would be particularly useful in potentially opening up new ways to consider both contemporary and historical texts where the landscape and material nature have active roles in the production of the text, and it would be helpful if authors address whether this writing is or can be relevant to environmentalist thought. Since Jonathan Bate's *The Song of the Earth* and Romantic Ecology consider the Romantic tradition of green studies, this journal would particularly welcome essays that move beyond these ideas, even if the modern walking text cannot avoid reference to the Romantic traditions.

Suggestions for contributions that would be welcomed include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The relations between walking literature and earlier countryside traditions
- Walking in fiction and poetry
- The 'new nature writing' and psychogeography
- Pastoral, anti-pastoral and post-pastoral walking
- The activist or dissenting spirit of literary walkers from an

environmentalist or social perspective

- Walking and landscape art
- Walking and the weather or climate
- Travel writing and walking
- Pilgrimage and walking
- Urban walking
- Material ecocriticism and the ways that walking can address the relationship between culture and material process (including biological and geological processes)
- Walking and deep time, evolution and anthropocene
- Walking and health
- Archipelagic walking

All of these are valid themes for this special issue of *Critical Survey*. The key questions that we seek to address are whether there is one green field of walking literature in Britain and Ireland, and, if so, whether it is as 'green', in both senses of the word, as we might suppose.

Revised drafts: 31 July 2016
Dr Anna Stenning and Pippa Marland, University of Worcester, Green Voices Research Group,

BATH STONE AND THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

Looking for a house in Bath one notes that not only is it a town built in a lovely Jurassic limestone and famous for this and the classical architecture that such stone allows, but that this was mined at shallow depth via inclined adits and quarried at the surface in the very close outskirts of the town. The area around Combe Down across the River Avon southeast from the rail station and the general area of Widcombe Hill are two important locations. By contrast Oxford's honey coloured building stones come from way out of the town at a scatter of quarry locations (no mines) and some of its stone has been imported from Bath.

Close into Bath most quarries are out of use or restored. The remain-



Incline at Hartham Park quarry away from Bath suburbs

tunnels and galleries huge blocks and miners as well as evidence of a still flourishing extraction industry. Stretching it only slightly, the stone makes possible the celebrated architecture, and its surrounding landscape.

But returning to house hunting I now find that my favourite house stands precisely above



ing industry which is very productive is mostly developed as mines at some distance from the town.

There is a lot of landscape history to engage the curious. Once brought to the surface stone was transported along tramways and through tunnels to yards closer to the city centre. Many such lines are evident, one such as a dead straight surface footpath. Another such line with a length of tunnel has been established as a recreational cycle way complete with lights — Sounds inviting.

The internet shows that limestone blocks were and are typically huge, and it is not so much their size that is astonishing but their homogeneity/uniformity. This suggests uniform periods of sedimentation in the warm seas of the Jurassic. The internet offers views of an astonishing underground landscape of

two shallowly situated tunnels. Is this a bargaining counter?

Notes

David Workman A brief history of stone quarries at Combe Down. *Journal of the Bath Geological Society*, No. 23, 2004.

WJ Arkell *Oxford Stone*. Published by Faber and Faber 1947.

The Internet carries a wide spread of background information on the subject. Of course.

