

**KNOW, UNDERSTAND AND
SO PROTECT YOUR LOCAL LAND-
SCAPE:**

PANG VALLEY
WEST BERKSHIRE UK

Published by the Friends of the Pang, Kennet and
Lambourne Valleys. In A5 format 158 pages ISBN
978-0-9543597-2-0.

The European Landscape Convention falls down — or will fall down if it is unable to create a local awareness of the singularity of local landscapes and regional ones, and engender love, care and respect for them. This particular publication about the Pang Valley (see below) and the exposition by Terry Regan (in previous pages) are both demonstrating how local awareness can be heightened.

So here is something tangible to buy: the book of the film of the disc of the article. This is not a description of the Woodlands Archaeology Audit project (see earlier) but a thoughtful landscape history accompanied by cross referenced walks. It is illustrated with **drawings by Dorcas Ward** who has allowed me to publish the exquisite frontispiece illustration on this page. It has abundant Ordnance Survey walks maps and colour photos; it may be a model of its kind. It deals with an identifiable tract of countryside. Copies at about £10 plus postage from:

Dick Greenaway
The Cottage
Ashampstead Common
Pangbourne
Reading
RG8 8QT ...

... and yes he is a friend of mine (ex NRA) a meticulous surveyor writer and compiler.



Picture credits:

Photos and map (OS 1877) of Pang Valley woodland by Dick Greenaway; woodland painting on this page by Dorcas Ward; front page photograph and panorama of Lyn Idwal by Rosemary Young; urban art photos by Brian Goodey; Landscape circle photographs by Terry O Regan.



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Landscape Research Extra

45

January 31st 2008



Copy deadline for LRE 46
March 31st

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Bud Young

Hearing all around

Although I had brought my camera, I had foolishly left the spare battery at home; after one shot, the battery in the camera packed up and — to my intense annoyance and subsequent relief, I was liberated from the camera's tyranny, the urge it implants to seize views and freeze glimpses — and, let's face it, the vanity of imagining myself a master photographer, with an 'eye for a picture' making Art out of the disorderly raw materials of Nature, ambitious to

By Philip Pacey

With solitary Dartmoor stream photograph by Rosemary Young. This image is full of imagined sound but is put in not to confound the writer's thesis but to conform with the accepted notion "page one will be more interesting if it has a picture".



come away with trophy images like dead animals that boost the hunter's self-regard. Instead I could look out beyond the frame — there was no point even in restricting my vision, peering through fingers framing photos that might have been. But also, in addition to seeing through both central *and* peripheral vision, I could listen, hearing sounds from all around — and of course, hearing does that; that is to say, it doesn't lend itself to being focused in one direction until it picks up a sound

to concentrate on. Even then there's not much you can do apart from facing in the direction a sound is coming from, maybe cupping one hand behind each ear, and mentally focusing on that sound only. As The Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer says (in the best book ever on soundscape, *The Tuning of the World*) "The eye points outward; the ear draws inward".

We were walking from Windermere railway station, through a council estate and out into the countryside beyond, and thence to 'Blackwell', a delightful 'Arts & Crafts' house overlooking the lake. It was a glorious October day; from the council houses we stepped through a gate straight into the most exquisite countryside, gathering together many of the intrinsic features of the Lake District. A footpath led up School Knot, at 232 metres above sea level a miniature version of the higher peaks; we stayed on a lower path, wending through meadows from which rocky outcrops erupted, beside a stream, past trees in solitary splendour, in clumps, and forming patches of woodland. Their foliage and the bracken provided a comprehensive palette of autumn colours.

Earlier in the week I'd come across a scale of sound levels, of some amusement to me, as a retired librarian, since it included 'Public library' as a sound source! Now I found myself hearing sounds of the countryside and wondering where they should be inserted in the table. Here are some items from the original table with their decibel count, to which I have added (in italics) some of the sounds we heard:

Rock concert	110-140
Jet taking off	130
Drum kit	115
Pneumatic drill	110
<i>Petrol-engined hedge trimmer (close by)</i>	100
<i>Chain saw (in woodland some distance away)</i>	90
Hearing damage starts	85
<i>Me shuffling through fallen leaves (We were walking along a lane and my wife was concerned that we might not hear approaching cars because of the noise I was making).)</i>	80
<i>Stream forced through a conduit under the lane; a separate sound from each side)</i>	70
Busy restaurant	70
<i>Green woodpecker's laughing call—in front of us, behind us, this side, that side, close by, further off</i>	60 - 80
<i>Jays calling – 'tearing linen'</i>	60 - 80
<i>Buzzard mewing</i>	60
<i>Stream below us in the bottom of the valley</i>	55
Quiet office	50
Public library	30
<i>Leaves falling – colliding with branches and other leaves before finally hitting the ground</i>	20

<i>Powered glider, way above us</i>	18
Pin drop	15
<i>Hot air balloon, far away</i>	0
Beginning of hearing	0

Of course, I'm guessing wildly and probably over-estimating the carrying capacity of sounds that we heard relatively close to. A falling leaf can seem to come clattering down just above one's (unprotected!) head, but might not be audible a few yards away. Also, 'country sounds' probably seem louder because they tend to be heard in relative quietness, rather than above a continuous aural background. At one point we stopped in order to listen whether we could hear anything at all between sounds. My wife thought she could just hear traffic on the B5284, but the depth of quietness, if not quite silence, was impressive, and meant that the sounds we did hear were that much clearer and distinct. Thankfully we were spared the terror of low flying jets.

By default, photographs *exclude* sound. And yet a landscape is also a soundscape; to quote Murray Schafer again, 'The keynote sounds of a landscape are those created by its geography and climate: water, wind, forests, plains, birds, insects and animals'. Key-note sounds – or absence of sounds – provide the background; 'signals' are 'foreground sounds' and are 'listened to consciously'. Landscapes may also feature 'soundmarks' – acoustic landmarks – sounds which to human ears are so characteristic of a particular place that they deserve to be cherished and protected.

Entering a land/soundscape, we are immersed in it; it surrounds us. As a child I treasured a picture book which I still have, *Frou the Hare*, one of the Père Castor Wild Animal Books. It includes two illustrations which graphically represent sounds reaching the hare's ears from all around 'within a radius of over a mile', and in one case, from all points of the compass. Hearing is, of course, vital to anyone or anything intent on surviving in a landscape which may conceal hostility; human, in a country at peace within its borders, we can enjoy the luxury of delighting in sound.

Coming back from 'Blackwell', we were vouchsafed a sight which my little camera would not have been able to capture. No doubt they heard us coming, assessed the danger and reckoned that all was well. What was it that caught *our* attention? – not a sound (or had our hearing been sharpened by a day of listening?); perhaps a movement, and the fact that the sunlight was catching one of them – two deer, among rocks and bracken on Brant Fell, staring at us, as we at them, both parties waiting to see who would move first.

PP

THE NORTH WESSEX DOWNS WOODLAND ARCHAEOLOGY AUDIT Dick Greenaway

The North Wessex Downs area of outstanding natural beauty (a UK landscape designation) lies across central southern England. It comprises 1,730 square kilometres of chalk downs between Reading, Swindon, Devizes, Andover and Basingstoke. Across the area 10% of land cover is woodland, with most being located in the eastern half of the area, across West Berkshire and north Hampshire – here woodland density is around 22%, a similar coverage to that of the Chilterns which adjoins the North Wessex Downs across the River Thames which forms its north-eastern boundary. Many of the woods are small but there are several large areas such as Savernake and in the Pang Valley. In 2005 a study was commissioned to inform a Woodland Strategy. This noted that, although the open country contained internationally important archaeological sites such as Avebury, Silbury Hill and Lambourn Seven Barrows, almost nothing was known about the archaeological content of the woods.

Woodland archaeology is a branch of Landscape Archaeology. It is the study of the history of a landscape using the features preserved in its woodlands, using the distribution of plants within the woods and by using documents relating to the woods. The plough is archaeology's greatest enemy. Far more archaeology has been destroyed by farming than by development and motorway building combined! Historical features often survive within woods in pristine condition when they have been ploughed flat in the fields around the wood and they survive best in Ancient Woods. They have survived because woods are not ploughed and they have remained unrecorded because landowners have been reluctant through history to allow people into their woods. Think of the 18th and 19th century exhibits of mantraps and spring guns in Folk Museums! In addition, mapping features in woods is more difficult and more uncomfortable than mapping features in open country. And aerial photography is of little use because of the tree canopy and only the newly devised, and hugely expensive, Lidar remote sensing system can penetrate to ground level. Even this has to be checked on the ground to decide whether a detected feature is really a mound or is just a pile of logs.

As examples of features which can be preserved in woodland, a 15th – 16th century deer park in the Pang Valley contains a well preserved Bronze Age round

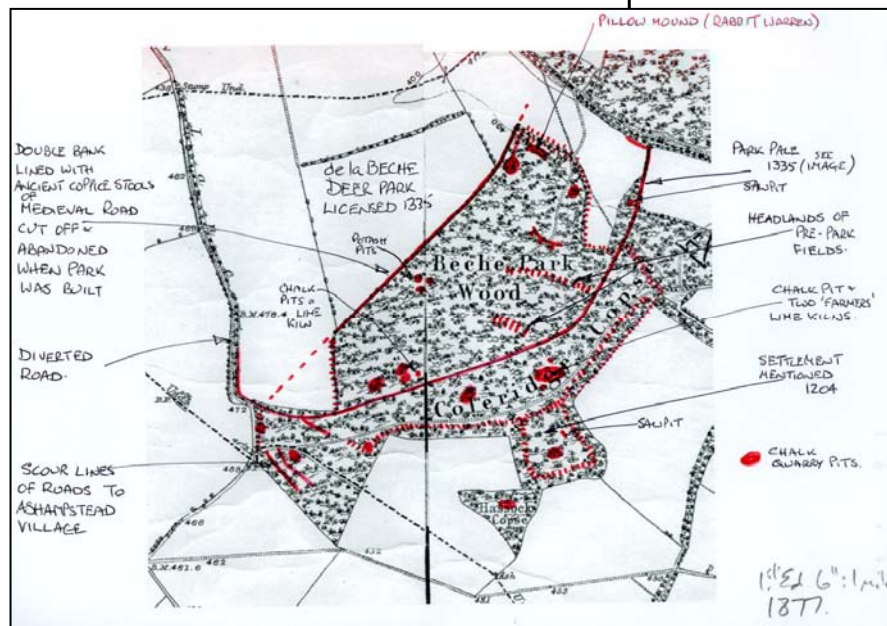
barrow; several 13th – 16th century deer park pales with associated pillow mounds and parkers lodges; remains of woodland industries are common and small scale brick kilns have been found; World War 2 features exist in some woods. Below in order, is a bronze age barrow (Hampstead Norreys), a Scotch



brick built brick kiln and part of bank highlighted by bluebells which carried the Beche Park pale.

One of the appealing aspects of Woodland Archaeology is the variety of disciplines it uses. In addition to the normal documentary research both

geology and botany can be used to illuminate the findings on the ground. Pits and quarries are often found within woods and their purpose can be determined using a knowledge of the local geology. They may have provided clay for a local pottery or brick works, chalk to sweeten the soils in the surrounding fields or gravel to repair parish roads. Botany can show which areas of a wood have been undisturbed for a long time and dating the trees and coppice stools growing on archaeological features can give an indication of the date of the feature. An 800 year old yew tree (such as found) growing on a bank means that the bank must be at least 800 years old. Distribution maps of Ancient Woodland Indicator Species plants can show up old fields.



The local County Archaeologists are closely involved. They supply the mapping and any known data from the Historic Environment Record and they receive the final maps and reports. Alongside the training we compiled a detailed handbook to help guide our volunteers in project protocol and practical aspects of the project. This was issued at the training courses. It is also published on our web site so that surveyors can download sufficient record forms etc and receive updates as the project evolves. (www.northwessexdowns.org.uk)

From the beginning we were convinced that the flora of a wood would provide excellent supporting evidence of its history. We put on an ecological training day in April 2007 for our existing volunteers and anyone specifically interested in botanical surveying who had not been drawn into the project though the archaeological or surveying aspect. The day attracted 35 potential surveyors. We taught a simple technique of species mapping, and species recognition with the help of a botanist from the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. The value of Ancient Woodland Indicator Species was also demonstrated in a particularly species rich wood. The results of our ecological surveys will be shared with the relevant Environmental Records Centre.

So how are we progressing?

Teams started work in January 2007 and we have teams working in six general locations, most of them on more than one wood. Most landowners have been receptive and we have only experienced one case of adamant refusal. The North Wessex Downs landscape area has many influential supporters and the network is being used to effect a change of heart! The key to this is a strong protocol of gaining landowner permission with codes of conduct, access constraints and with risk assessments being completed well in advance of access. Helpfully, it is undertaken with the support of the Forestry Commission.

The project seems valuable in many ways: the reports that are produced are lodged with the Historic Environment Record, helping the archaeological community to better understand the evolution of landscapes; they are also presented to the woodland owner who can gain valuable insights into the development of their woodlands, and may use the findings to incorporate the conservation of features into their woodland management plans. The project will evolve as our

It may be of interest to know how we approached the Pang Valley project. In the first year we recruited sixty potential surveyors and held training courses in November 2006 and January 2007. The courses comprised two consecutive Saturdays and were structured with half the day spent indoors on lectures and the other half in an adjacent wood. We realised at the concept stage that we could not hope to do full, closely controlled, surveys. There are simply too many woods. However, we wanted to do more than just a 'walk through'. We therefore trained surveyors to explore and map their wood using a network of compass and pacing traverses starting and finishing at points which can be identified on the OS 1:2500 map. Features found along the traverses are measured in from known points on the traverse. We have found this system to be repeatable and accurate when carefully carried out. Since our training days a new GPS receiver has arrived on the market which will give repeatable positions in woodland. This will be incorporated into future surveys.

volunteers become more experienced, and importantly, it is an open ended project. The work can be transposed to other areas of the country and is not time limited – which is just as well considering the number of woods that need to be surveyed!

DG

MEASURING UP OUR LANDSCAPE

Terry O'Regan
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There are probably places in every nation that one should visit at the right time! I had never been to the Hill of Tara until two years ago. Why did I wait so long, you might ask? Maybe I was not ready, for it is not a dramatic place and if I went sooner it might have disappointed me. I went to see the landscape rather than the hill. If I had gone when I was younger I would have gone to see the hill and I might not have seen the landscape at all! As I stood on top of the grassy mound in the centre of 'Raith na Righ' (Rath of the Kings), surrounded by many earthen circles I slowly turned through 360° acutely aware of the great landscape circle that radiates out from the modest Hill of Tara and the successive generations over thousands of years whose spirits shared that vista with me. On the previous day I had visited the Hills of Lough Crew to the west of Tara and drank in a similar and perhaps more exciting 'circle of landscape'.

Is such a spiritual sensation a good enough reason not to build a motorway (as we are doing in Ireland) within the spreading curtilage of the Hill of Tara? This would be a difficult case to argue at a planning appeal in the commute preoccupied atmosphere of the super-heated Irish economy of recent years. Yet landscape and people are inseparable and where you have people, you have memory. It was no accident that Simon Schama gave the title 'Landscape and Memory' to a book that was really about landscape and people. Memory is about time and the human perception of time changes a two dimensional picture into a multi-dimensional deep evolutionary landscape.

I have been intrigued with landscape circles for some years; they have inspired my recent response to the most common question I have faced over the past 12

years from concerned citizens - "What can we do about the destruction of our landscape?" The most disturbing pattern that emerged from contributions by community representatives at successive Landscape Alliance Ireland (LAI) National Landscape Forums in Ireland has been their abject sense of powerlessness in the face of rapid landscape change. Powerless citizens will turn their backs on their landscape regardless of experts, research, legislation, landscape character maps, guidelines or ironically, even the European Landscape Convention. It is vital that we marshal the energy and interest of all citizens into the process of day to day landscape management. The European Landscape Convention (ELC), places

The seven steps of the landscape circle**

The sequential steps of the template assist communities in identifying, assessing and valuing the elements of their landscape, equipping them to proactively protect existing landscape quality and to intervene creatively in the processes of change and development at work in the local landscape.

1. Scoping the study area – a circle on a 1:50,000 Discovery Map – radius circa 1km - urban, 2km - village/surrounds & 3 - 5km – open countryside.
 2. Research – local/general.
 3. Creating an Image Observatory – photographs etc.
 4. Information gathering – listing the landscape elements.
 5. Evaluating your landscape – the LANSWOT analysis.
 6. Identifying actions and actors.
- Completing the report and becoming a landscape active community.

Designed for individuals and groups; it can focus on landscape only or framework a landscape/heritage study as in West Cork. Ideally introduced over a number of workshop sessions, it is also suited to 'distance learning'. A handbook will be available from LAI - introducing the concept of landscape, describing the seven steps, the outputs and references, and giving checklists, guidelines and specimen sheets. The Council of Europe European Rural Heritage Observation Guide is recommended as an additional supporting reference text as it deals with landscape and heritage in a very tangible, non-technical, vernacular and Europe-embracing manner.

***charmingly Irish (and how) the author gives us 6 steps. Note though the value of 'seven' the magical number.*

great stress on consultation, but citizens must have a more participative role than mere consultation to play in order to achieve and sustain the high quality landscape envisaged by the Convention. The stakeholder consultation usually associated with landscape character assessment has been non-existent. However, unless it forms an integral part of an on-going community engagement with landscape, consultation only provides a short-term bottom-up token gesture.

Community participation is challenging at the best of times. Communities are not easily awakened to their landscape unless it is threatened or abruptly altered.

Under these circumstances, I decided that the measure of the landscape is a circle! The 'Landscape Circle Template' is intended to provide an integrated community tool for active participation in sustaining and enhancing landscape quality, with the added value of engaging with 'top-down' scientific and administrative landscape management machinery. First introduced in autumn 2006 as part of a West Cork Leader community heritage training course, 'The Landscape Circle Template' has a 'landscape shamrock', as its core - a trinity of interlinked processes involving a novel circle-based scoping approach, add to this the LANSWOT analysis tool - (Landscape Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), and then couple it with a Landscape Image Observatory.

The value of this three-lobed landscape approach is its capacity to integrate economic progress and heritage/environment/landscape in an easily grasped community-based management framework. Embedded in the local landscape, it guarantees a 'sense of place' and a 'sense of belonging' to one's own area and articulates the importance of local distinctiveness in reinforcing key life values.

A landscape circle study could be completed in a time frame of 6 - 12 months, allowing time for subjectivity to mature into objectivity.

A living landscape requires community engagement and this will not easily happen of its own accord in developing economies let alone an Irish economy where a tiger chased its tail for too long in increasingly destructive circles. To meet the challenges of tomorrow's landscape we need to ask questions of today's landscape. The community has the answers and must be heard.

The West Cork experience and other trials indicate that 'Landscape Circle' studies could achieve important goals in building/strengthening landscape awareness, ownership and respect at community level, influencing and contributing to best practice for the enhancement / management of the landscape. **T O'R**

[Go to page 8 for a worked example of this method]

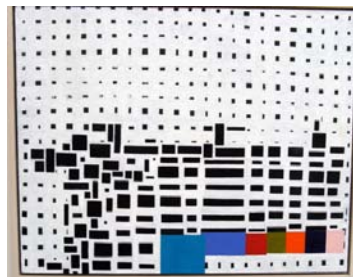
GOOGLESCAPE : POST-VIEWS OF URBAN LANDSCAPE

Art Biennale in Venice
Brian Goodey

Previous comments on the flaws in Munster 07 (see previous LRE — 44) notwithstanding, I was committed to the regular pilgrimage to the Art Biennale in Venice, the epitome of any Grand Tour. The counterpoint between a unique, living, townscape, for which most readers could sketch the key features (bridge, square, pump /fountain/church, pedestrian ways) and the various national murmurs of contemporary art, is hard to beat.

We started at the British, Emin, show on the basis that things could only get better; I was not disappointed.

The best – and they're gone now so you can't check – were **Sophie Calle's** French Pavilion and **Monika Sosnowska's** architectural occupation of the Polish Pavilion (Google for details). Half – or more – of the fun of the Biennale is discovering new aspects of the city, often beyond the tourist track, and then dipping into a national Pavilion where either the ubiquitous video or something rather more stimulating is erected.



There were very few 'paintings', with landscape largely now the preserve of the photographer, and there, enough to realise that boundaries are being pushed. A minor theme, but one, which struck this embedded geographer, was the recurrence of paintings and graphics which responded to the aerial photograph or map. Invented maps recurred, maps of ideal cities, type patterns of contemporary development, mazes that could be real places, and patterns, which were utopian places. The abstraction from the aerial photograph has, of course, been used in graphic art since the beginning of the last century, but today more artists seem to be interpreting and extrapolating from the aerial view.

The US artist Thomas Nozkowski is but one example (others illustrated here have lost their attributions.) The ready availability of aerial photography on the Web (now used as a matter of course in most TV newscasts) provides images, which, through zooming in and through the unsurprising regularity of land-

scape and urban morphology when viewed from the air, offer a slight sense of understanding, and indeed control, over how our landscape is put together. I suspect that a declining number of landscape users are equipped with experienced or learned tools to understand how places have been constructed over time. The aerial view implies that we can know what is around us. Artists have tapped into these images as a basis for their syntheses or propositions.

The model, or analogue, of three-dimensional environments serves this purpose of understanding and control even better – the on screen walk-through deconstructs the detail and directs responses to real place. One brilliant contribution to the Biennale was the Morrinho ('little hill') model landscape from Brazil. Certainly not part of the official Brazilian Pavilion, this is a reproduction of a favella (informal housing area) produced by local kids from found materials in 1998. A miniaturisation of favella conditions, it was opposed by Brazilian police, who thought it was a planning tool for local drug dealers! It has now travelled the world, and with accompanying video provides a brutally accessible entry into the slum landscape (see <http://www.we-make-money-not-art.com/archives/009677.php>).

The Morrinho Project was adjacent to a Biennale café area, its accessibility and extra-gallery position providing relief from the relentless series of objects on white walls in the surrounding galleries.



Reflecting over my coffee (writes Goodey) am aware that the same accessibility applies to a very different medium, the graphic novel, which offers 'comic' illustration and visual media compatibility, whilst exploring layers of time/place meaning. It took an 80-year-old former colleague to alert me to 'Alice in Sunderland' by Bryan Talbot, published this year by Jonathan Cape. Talbot is, I am assured, a star in the medium and he has chosen to explore: Sunderland, through complex layers of landscape, topographic and

personal meaning, assisted by Lewis Carroll's links to the area. As an urban trail enthusiast I was directed to it, but the reviews suggest that Talbot is breaking boundaries and creating links in the presentation of person in place of which we should all be aware.

Each two years the Biennale reminds me to reappraise my understandings of art, and especially of landscape and place in contemporary society. It is as much as I can do to gather and digest and I must leave the weaving of new demi-theories and paradigms to those who need positive RAE exercise results.

But as at each Biennale, good things are happening, they need to be shared with others with the expectation that new understandings will result.

BG.

VIVRE AUJOURD'HUI DANS L'ESPACE DE NOS AÏEULS A joint French-English LRG conference: Lille April 3-4th

We have been in discussion with two very notables on the French landscape scene for some time and are delighted that, largely organised by them, we are to meet for a two day conference in Lille on April 3/4th. Lille is selected both for its long industrial and coal mining history, and its efforts to recreate a landscape for today's post industrial generation. Hence the title. Lille is also well situated for non air travel from London (and other parts of the UK). Eurostar anyone?

Le premier thème sera orienté vers les paysages considérés comme reliques de la révolution industrielle, et ré-inventés comme patrimoine environnemental ou culturel. Ce thème sera en particulier abordé lors du premier séminaire organisé dans le Nord de la France. Il permettra de s'interroger sur la manière dont les populations locales, ici comme dans des zones similaires d'Angleterre, acceptent cette nouvelle définition de leur « héritage » ou participent à un environnement qui pourrait se révéler être une transition limitée entre les anciens paysage du labeur et leur homologues contemporains. Le séminaire aura un intérêt particulier pour ceux qui sont impliqués dans la rénovation, l'héritage industriel, l'archéologie industrielle et le paysagisme.

At the event parallel translation will be provided. And a celebration dinner. Yes with wine.

LRG members warmly invited.
Further information from Bud Young (editor of LRE, Contact details p9)

LANDSCAPE CIRCLES: AN

EXAMPLE. Terry O'Regan
Following on from '7 steps in the Landscape Circle'

distinctiveness and yet is manageable for a small group or individual as a study area.

It contains many of the landscape elements common to the coastal areas of South West Cork - a gently rolling agricultural landscape, fields enclosed with earthen banks/hedgerow, mixed woodland, public pathways, streams, a small river, a lake, wetlands and reed-beds,



I have suggested the particularly well-endowed

an exceptional sand and shingle beach with dunes and rocky headlands and a more open 'former demesne' landscape in the vicinity of Castlefreke Castle which commands a sweeping view of the surrounding landscape and Rosscarbery Bay to the Southwest.



'Rathbarry/Castlefreke Landscape Circle' just southwest of Clonakilty, West Cork as an example of the 'Landscape Circle' approach. With a radius of 2 km, it demonstrates how a relatively small circle contains a landscape of diversity and high



The features making it a very distinctive area relate to the impact of the Castlefreke demesne which gave rise to a 'landscape ensemble' of Castle ruins, an abandoned church, stone gate-lodges and other stone buildings in the vicinity. The unique walls of the demesne were constructed from the very distinctive local slate type stone quarried nearby and set in both vertical & horizontal alignment, radiating out from the castle as 'landscape corridors'.

The local community, very successful in the Tidy Towns competition have recognised and largely protected the unique quality of their landscape and engaged in on-going works such as woodland footpaths and restoring the Sprigging School (originally erected by Lady Carbury to teach young ladies the skills of lace, crochet and needlework).

This landscape circle illustrates the difficulties of trying to take cognisance of a very strong local landscape characteristic - a second time layer - new residential entrances inserted into the distinctive roadside walls are constructed in stone, but often in different non-local stone and clashing building styles.

The integrity of the Rathbarry/Castlefreke landscape is very vulnerable; it deserves wider recognition. A landscape circle study would crystallise the local understanding of landscape, and ensure that large or small interventions more fully respect its very unique landscape character.

Not every landscape circle will be as blessed with natural and cultural heritage, but each 'Landscape Circle' study will reveal local landscapes of character and distinctiveness - each requiring its own balanced strategy of protection, management and enhancement/planning.

T O'R

The views and opinions in this publication are those of the authors and the senior editor individually and do not necessarily agree with those of the Group. It is prepared by Rosemary and Bud Young for the Landscape Research Group and distributed periodically to members worldwide as companion to its refereed main journal Landscape Research.
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SOUNDS IN THE LANDSCAPE

says it is a rural contemporary arts organisation which works closely with communities in and around Dartmoor. It has produced a publication based on a



map of Burrator (a south Dartmoor reservoir). The area covered is much wider (20 km^{sq}) and is portrayed in map form - a brand new map of the area originated by Hanno Koch (who was recently appointed cartographer to HM the Queen). Using this map, groups may walk one of two identified routes and pay attention to a sequence of soundscapes. The project is called "Walk your ears". The text is aimed at late first school and two local primary schools were engaged in its development. It draws attention to birdsong, gravel and rocks underfoot, the sound of the wind and of water and stones dropped into ponds; crows battling against the wind, cows eating lunch and the child's own voice echoed in the dark stillness of a potato cave. This unusual term tells you that the project combines historic and archeological features and these are portrayed on the map as well as the land use and vegetation cover. The map itself is a little gem. The sounds are also offered on a podcast to listen to at home or to listen on your MP3 player as you walk - (OW!)

BY

**LRG SNOWDONIA EVENT:
Plus Thomas Firbank, author 1940.
And Cynefin or home range**

We were promised a field excursion in Snowdonia and the Conway Valley (North Wales) and the two days were of unparalleled sunny clarity of the kind that lifts the spirits. Snowdon's notables attended and explained. We were about 20 people on the first day when leaving the facilities above Nant Ffrancon we walked the rocky path up to the Lyn Idwal. We talked on the way and we discussed a wealth of topics relating to to place as we stood in the sun, the glassy water of the lake ahead of us. It was about ownership and management, about artists and their vision, about conservation and about sheep and how they territorialise the mountain. The concept of Cynefin (see below). Someone pressed hard to encourage thoughts about the sheer experience of being here on the mountain. At an evening meal in Bettys y Coed we enjoyed talks by Gareth Roberts and John Gittins on the art and literature of the area and began to see greater depths than ever in our two board members.



The following day was also glorious and the four of the group found themselves separated from the main flock and enjoying immensely, discussions of art and



experience as they passed through or idly stood in a series of lead mined, now wooded and heather covered landscapes. So many things to discuss. Later we visited the famed Ugly House, HQ of the Snowdonia Society and heard about their work and status. A very worthwhile and enjoyable two days.

'I Bought a Mountain' by Thomas Firbank. 1940. Publisher George G.Harrap and Co Ltd, London, A founder member of the Snowdonia Society was Esme Firbank and the book cited below (by her husband about sheep farming in the area) is well worth reading: I quote a little from it here.

A description of the place (in 1940)

'We turned and made toward the Glyder; the precipice

was on our right, And on our left were huge grassy hollows which fell in swoops towards the hidden mountain wall. An occasional sheep snorted and stamped at the dog, before bounding away, till it was swallowed up by a fold in the ground. The peak of Glyder Fach came nearer but her towering head began suddenly to fade. Over Snowdon, rolled white clouds, like breakers tumbling a corpse, and their spray reached out in tentacles across the gap towards us. And in a moment the Glyder was gone, veiled from our view, leaving us enticed as if by a wanton woman. The hills were wholly feminine in their wanton caprice'... 'The shepherd gave up and turned downhill. Our world was a few yards in diameter, and in its unreality it seemed as we stood still and the rough ground slid silently up to us and past us'.

The concept of 'Cynefin or home range

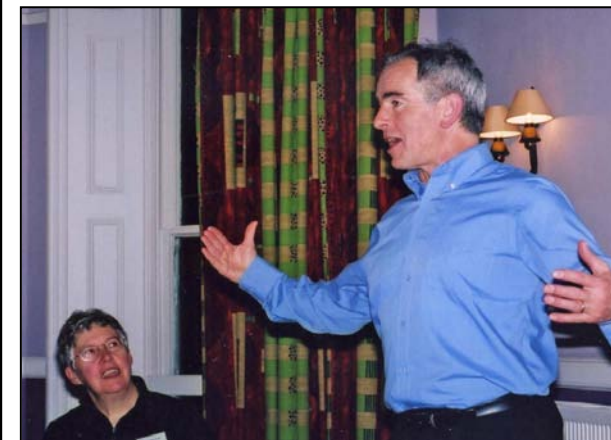
'The open mountain carries a permanent flock which knows the boundaries. Each year the ewe lambs are kept to enter the flock, and the four year old ewes are sold off to make room for them. Thus there are always four generations of sheep on the mountain. Every farm has its own earmark, a combination of slits and notches on the two ears, which is not duplicated within a twenty mile radius... The permanent flock stays at home by a mass heredity which is rather like the intuitive cleverness of birds. Each ewe has her own beat and will always be found near the same grassy hollow or sheltered gully. She brings up her lamb on her little range, and when in time she is

sold, the lamb carries on the tradition, and eventually bequeaths the domain to her own offspring. This legacy multiplied by a thousand individuals ties the flock to its home Sheep from adjacent farms naturally mingle along the common boundary, but if a dog is sent along the dividing line the sheep make for their respective sides like hairs parting before a comb'.

Editors note: do we see echoes of our own, human, attachment to neighbourhood and local landscape here. The notion of parish and or stamping ground. But how many can say "Lived here man and boy these 50 years....."

**REPORT NOTE ON SHEFFIELD
ELC EXPERT SEMINAR**

Our LRG conference went well and has been praised by senior functionaries dealing with the European Landscape Convention (ELC). About 55 from all over Europe attended (plus one from Africa) each representing their countries at a high level within the landscape field. The greatest delight for your editor was to meet such a range of Europeans. We were well supported by a number of UK sponsors, the names you might expect and a report will be issued as soon as possible probably in March. All or parts of this may be sent out to LRG members. Sheffield University acted host to the meeting, and it was expertly organised by Gareth Roberts and Professor Paul Selman (LRG directors) tirelessly assisted by Gareth's daughter. Paul is professor of Landscape at the University of Sheffield who supplied the ultra modern venue for the second day.



Good get together, fine speeches, a lot of fun and here and there a frisson of warm intimacy... Deliberations, grave political moments. Names on application!