

landscape
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Contributors

Roger Dalton
Josh Peacock
Gareth Roberts
Owen Manning
Nancy Stedman
Brian Goodey
Anna Jorgensen
Paul Hardy (Artist)
Bud Young

TERMITESCAPE !

Three hours riding in a safari vehicle heading for a bush camp deep in the Moremi Game Reserve in the Okavango region of northern Botswana introduced the subtleties of the savanna woodland landscape. With an amplitude of relief of just two metres this savannalandscape is flat but comprises a surprising mosaic of habitats from riverine forest, marsh, shallow pans variously part water filled or dried out, closed





and open woodland and part vegetated alkaline rich sandy areas. In addition to the seasonality of the rains the guide books point to three major influences on this landscape. Firstly fire - yes areas of blackened woodland are clearly evident, next elephants - yes pushed over trees, broken branches and stripped bark are universal and finally

and equally universal are the mounds created by termites. The frequency of their occurrence is eye catching and it is amazing that insects both here and indeed across the tropics can create vertical features of real landscape significance to the extent that the term termitescap appears appropriate. It is totally credible that densities of 100

per hectare have been recorded elsewhere in Africa.

The dominant species of termite in the Moremi is of the *Macrotermidiae* which harvest leaf and woody material and create pale grey mounds of diverse irregular cone shapes up to about 3m in height. Individual colonies may number



millions and the mounds serve, via a central chimney and intricate systems of micro passages, to regulate the temperature of the central nest and the 'fungal gardens' used to break down plant cellulose. The well fed termites store fat and protein (reportedly they are nutty in flavour when deep fried) so termite eating aardvarks dig holes in mounds which in turn may be used as refuges for reptiles and small mammals. As well as scratching posts for mammals like warthog, perching birds bring in seeds such that mounds may have a covering of grasses or have trees growing from them. When abandoned by the termite colony mounds slowly degrade to form shallow rises in the landscape.

The frequency and variety of shape of termite mounds will be but one of many lasting memories of this excursion into the sub-tropical wildscape. It is clear that termites are central to the savanna ecosystem in the recycling of vegetative material and as a source of nutritious food. Seemingly termites feature in the fossil record as early as the Cretaceous i.e. at least 60 million years ago, a testimony to long term evolutionary stability!

Roger Dalton.

TERMITES — THE SOIL BACKGROUND

'Mounds vary in height from less than 1m up to a maximum, in *Macrotermes spp* of 9m. Approximately circular in plan, they vary in shape between species, and the conflict between destruction by rain splash and the reconstructive efforts of the termites can result in bizarre forms. Mounds can be constructed in a few months. They typically last 10-50 years before being abandoned, but on archeological evidence an age of 700 years has been claimed (Watson, 1967). Mound frequencies vary widely, from less than one to over 500 per hectare, and may occupy over 5% of the ground surface. Where they are abundant, a strikingly regular pattern is exhibited on air photographs, which can often be diagnostic of a particular soil type'.

Anthony Young, **Tropical Soils and Soil Survey**, page 122, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1976.

URBAN LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY: SCIENCE, POLICY & PRACTICE



Conference review from Josh Peacock. IaleUK 2014

Iale UK have over the last few years provided conferences on

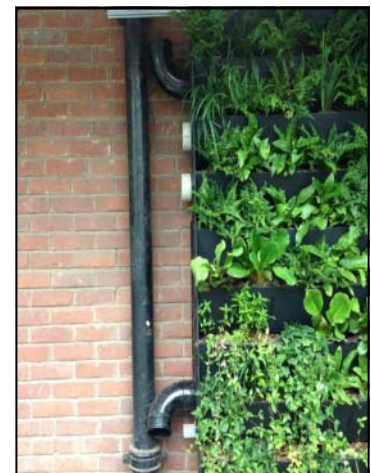
'Landscape ecology: linking environment and society' in 2012, and 'Changing European Landscapes: Landscape ecology, local to global' in 2013. The 2014 conference focused on cities, highlighting that in the UK more than 80 per cent of people already live in urban areas with 70 per cent across Europe. **James Millington** the outgoing chair of ialeUK, in his introduction to the abstracts (see <http://iale.org.uk/conference2014>) suggests that, '*...the study of interactions across space and time between the structure and function of physical, biological and cultural components of landscapes – has a pivotal role to play in identifying sustainable solutions.*' (Millington, 2014, p6) The conference took place over three days and included presentations from academics, practitioners and policy makers from the USA, Australia, Israel, Czech Republic, Germany and Ireland amongst many from the UK, ensuring views and research gave a global perspective.

Personal highlights from the breadth of topics and discussion included the 'urban conservation trap', highlighted by Professor **Ingo Kowarik** of the Technische Universität Berlin, whereby evidence of higher volume of species within the urban environment relative to rural areas, is used to support development within sensitive natural habitats. However, whilst the volume of certain species may be greater in some cases, the species diversity is generally not. Despite this cautionary warning for promoting urban green infrastructure or novel habitats over more sensitive and diverse natural habitats, research was presented which identified cases of

high diversity in the urban environment. Research by lead author **Christopher Hassall** from the University of Leeds highlighted that diversity within urban ponds was generally greater than that of rural ponds. It may be that this is due to the wider range of urban pond types relative to rural types. **Tim Hall** of The Woodland Trust Scotland, suggested that many urban environments could theoretically be classified as urban forests, due to their comprising over 20% stands of trees and ecosystems over 0.5Ha in area, provided through trees in streets, gardens and green space integrated within the city infrastructure.

Misha Leong from the University of California, Berkeley, presented research on the relationship between bees and flowering periods arising from native grassland habitats, agricultural areas and urban environments. This highlighted how various species were dependent upon differing flowering periods, and how the extended flowering periods as a result of garden planting was key to supporting a number of species, outside of the peaks of nectar provision from agricultural and native sources.

Further research was presented on the viability of green roofs and vertical gardens, with the cost of vertical gar-



dens highlighted and concern on specifying drought resistant species for roofs. **Dusty Gedge** of The Ecology Consultancy highlighted London's first down-pipe fed green wall opposite Potters Field and downpipe planters within the grounds of residential flats.

Lionel S Smith at the University of



Fig. 20. Rush hour congestion is a problem for large industrial estates; the beginning of the surge home at Team Valley Estate, County Durham.

RUSH HOUR 1936 or 1962

Laughably empty of traffic by today's standards.

An early British example of the layout of Team Valley industrial estate (near Gateshead) developed by William Holford in 1936. Extract from **British Industry and Town Planning**. Author Anthony Goss, pp 67 and 77 published by Fountain Press 1962, London.

Reading presented research on grass free lawn (www.grassfreelawns.co.uk), which required significantly less mowing and increased water infiltration and drought tolerance and supported a wider range of nectar seeking species through its floristic diversity. It also looked verdant and partially retained the lines of the mower, giving the approach potential appeal to a range of gardeners, landscape designers and parks departments. The ecosystem benefit of richer humic matter was highlighted in research presented by lead author **A.Ossola** from the Green Infrastructure Research Group, University of Melbourne, which identified the importance of vegetation complexity in creating leaf litter which functions as a surface water sponge, with beneficial effects on water regulation.

An innovative approach to improving water quality using mycofiltration, (with potential indirect benefits on water clarity and landscape beauty) was highlighted by The Wandle Trust, UK (soon the 'South East Rivers Trust') lead author **Bella Davies**, further to a trial on the River Wandle. It will be interesting to gain an update on this once the trial has run.

JP joshuapeacecock@yahoo.co.uk

Josh Peacock. *The views expressed are not necessarily those of his current employer. Image: Detail of a vertical rain garden at Tooley Street, London which aims to use only rainwater for irrigation, undertaken by Dusty Gedge of the Green Infrastructure Consultancy.*

WHERE LAND MEETS SEA

By Owen Manning

LRE 70's "Sea Stories" has touched on how we, a nation no-longer sea-faring yet drawn by a modern "culture of the sea-side", regard the ancient presence of the sea itself. Here are some of my own thoughts and memories, arising from odd sights and sounds in places visited by chance over the years.

From St Ives one gloomy Christmas, memory comes of the endless echoing roar of surf rolling out of darkness, blowing up narrow streets, around sudden corners: endless yet varying at every encounter around the complicated sea-front In tiny one-street Borth one bright February I heard a gentler yet more insistent roar of waves breaking in parallel along its solitary straight beach, gleaming in calm cold sunlight and raising by their repeated advances a mist of pulverised spray into which the town faded ghostlike. In Criccieth on the Lleyn Peninsula, clustered round its castle in a hot July, the sea as calm as it can be, one heard only the quiet conversation of little waves lapping and nibbling at the beach, easing the shingle into curious arabesques between the groins.

Resorts can be wilder than this, as recent winters have shown, but in more remote places a mightier scale altogether operates.

Along a huge beach in N Ireland, I've heard a deeper roar as waves advanced in long slow lines one behind the other, casually breaking into wide swathes of foam: a classic holiday beach one

might think, like that frothy watery tumult full of leaping bodies so beautifully illustrated by LRE 70 – but not so: not for us National Trust volunteers on a wild September day years ago, venturing in after a day's work only to be warned by the first fierce backwash to go no further into the hissing crests ahead. Like a foaming staircase they mounted to the sky, heavy, glittering and dangerous. Deaths had occurred here.

On Fair Isle in an August gale I saw rocks big as houses overtopped by foam-capped mountains of water within sheltered South Bay, while at Durness in Sutherland came an extraordinary November day of snow-covered beaches vivid against dark Cape Wrath and a dark northern ocean, from which breakers swept in wide hissing crescents through Balnakiel Bay, raising hundred-foot plumes of foam against inland cliffs. Far out to sea, a line of white slowly mounted one distant rock, climbing two-three times its height before slowly descending its near side like a Niagara – so slowly as to prompt a study of the OS map: the rock was one hundred feet high, four hundred across, nearly five miles away. Staring mesmerised over a headland later, I watched breakers charging the black cliffs with the sound of great doors slamming, leaving them smoking with spray to their summits.

This was what Rachel Carson had spoken of in *The Sea Around Us*, quoting from the *British Islands Pilot* on events hardly imaginable to sheltered southerners: "(when) upon the open coast the sea..... striking upon the rocky shores rises in foam for several hundred feet and spreads over the land.....The roar of the surge may be heard twenty miles."

I hope it is from more than mere boyish excitement that such things impress me. They did not always: for a toddler on his first seaside outing the noisy shining stuff over there held no meaning; I turned my back on it (so I am told) to attend to the interesting sand. Even children dabbling in the sea itself hardly bother where these frothy hills of water come from; only later may come a sense of wonder at their hugeness, power, and endless interactions with the land. Others may come to



“The Seaside” more for other attractions, though surely willing to accept, as they huddle over ice-creams dodging the spray, that something else may have drawn them here from their inland lives: to this edge where land meets sea, and other forces operate.

Waves surround us. Britain is encircled by a chain of noisy watery events *eleven thousand miles* long, connected each to the next in a constant discourse with the land, a continual shifting of hard stuff to and fro: an extraordinary presence yet one which hardly enters our minds. Even more remarkable, beneath this restless movement is the greater movement of the tides: a mighty drawing back and forth of a single great wave up to forty feet high, twice a day around our entire perimeter – and still we are unaware, until storm-driven calamities hit the headlines; people die, landmarks disappear, and our favourite sea-front seems strangely altered. People who live there notice sooner, of course.

The immensely greater movements of the land itself, as over geological time it heaves upward and wears away, are beyond our awareness, yet the marvellous landforms left behind can almost be seen as wavelike: the rolling hills and escarpments breaking over broad valleys where convoluted river channels finally connect us back to the sea's edge. And here the sea itself, in its own time, on its own scale, ceaselessly works on the feast of materials presented to it: carving out and renewing headlands, bays and beaches along coastlines of bewildering variety – nowhere greater than around these islands -- where eventually frail humans come to settle: first to survive, and then to play, and maybe even to meditate on how all this came to be.

Wave-watching helps. Stare at the waves of the sea for long enough, hypnotised by their endlessly advancing rise and fall, and a sense of these huge

slow forces will come – especially at night, when detail is submerged and only size and power remain. At night those great Northern Ireland rollers, roaring below me – invisible till one after another they broke into abstract lines of whiteness in the dark -- spoke less of danger and more of the limitless realms from which they came.

Watchet in Somerset, recent spur for all these memories, has something else to say, standing as it does in a zone of hugely high tides, its harbour rising cliff-like above ledges of rock descending far down and out to low-tide level. To either side stretches a primaeval landscape: endless stretches of rock, swathes of grey glistening sand, slopes of startlingly white pebbles, all building up to red and grey cliffs, blocky and contorted. It is hard to believe the sea can climb this far from its lowest ebb -- but it does. Watchet's harbour overflows in record tides, while along the coast deep overhangs show where the power of tides and storm waves has undercut the cliffs themselves; huge tumbled chunks litter the beaches their entire length.

This is a savage yet vivid scene, difficult to tear oneself away from even with a returning sea muttering in the distance. Below the cliffs a middle-aged lady with a little dog sits sedately on a rock, massive overhangs looming near: a favourite spot of hers, she tells me. It wouldn't be mine, though I don't say so; such choices may be the norm on this menacing coast. Public notices warn visitors of the many ways they can die here, but Watchet's residents hardly need warning; they know what the sea can do.

All around our coastline the settlements stand, all coping with the presence of the sea in their own ways: all with stories to tell.....

OM

HOVERLA, UKRAINE

A landscape of celebration and pride

by Gareth Roberts

What is it about mountain summits? Why are they so significant? Some measure of achievement - we did it? A symbol of national identity? A place of contemplation? Up above the World so high. I did not set out to Hoverla to find an answer to these questions but in early July I undertook a ridge walk linking highest peaks of the Chornohora Mountains which forms the border between western Ukraine and eastern parts of Romania, Hungary and Slovakia. These mountains are well rounded and not too challenging. My three day hike from Pip Ivan was scheduled to end with a rendezvous with my friends at Hoverla (2016 metres) Ukraine's highest mountain. They had travelled down from Lviv to spend the weekend in their dacha in the mountains. We had agreed to meet on Sunday 6th July at the summit of Hoverla and they would approach the mountain from the south east following the popular trekking route from the Zarusliak mountain sports centre.

Having camped overnight I set off early for the ascent of Hoverla from the less popular Romanian side having met only a handful of people on my way that morning but what greeted me at the summit was truly gob-smacking. First a stainless steel cross appeared on the horizon, then very suddenly I was sharing a flat open windswept and stony summit surface, barely the size of a football pitch, with several hundred people. People of all shapes and sizes, young and old, parents, children and grandparents were there along with several parties of school children and groups of university students. Many were clearly ill equipped for this trip but almost all had scrambled to the summit clutching Ukrainian flags,

neckerchiefs and hats. Young lads in their judo clothes posed for photos with their coach, mountain runners, and even acrobats and tightrope walkers had come all contributing to the carnival atmosphere. A light plane buzzed us circling round and round the mountain and the crowd waved and cheered to the pilot who gave us the thumbs-up.

I watched people come and go in droves as I sat waiting for my friends to arrive. I estimated that several thousands of people made it to the top of Hoverla that day. Even as sultry weather gave way to thundery rain,



they continued to come, mud bespattered and wearing makeshift raincoats from plastic bags, driven on by national pride in their mission to make it to top.

What I experienced on the summit of Hoverla was very moving. Those I spoke to made it clear to me that this

‘pilgrimage’ had been prompted by Vladimir Putin’s annexation of the Crimea and the Russia backed separatist attempt to take control of the eastern Oblasts. The sheer scale of the outpouring of patriotism, flag waving, impromptu singing of Ukrainian songs and chanting of anti-Putin slogans came as a pleasant surprise to me but proved a little intimidating too! When a man standing close to me suddenly started chanting and a large crowd responded by hopping up and down in rhythm to his beckoning I enquired of my friend what was going on? She replied that he was chanting *‘Hop up and down to show your support for Ukraine. If you’re not hopping then we must assume you’re Russian!’* so I quickly decided to join in!

My experience on Hoverla that day set me thinking about the loftiest mountains in other countries, how they often are totems of national pride, places of pilgrimage, places to be celebrated and defended at all costs. More about those some other time, perhaps.

G R
July 2014

WORKTOWN NEWPORT : DISCOVERING THE DRAWINGS OF FALCON HILDRED

A journey into Dorset was like that. Never knowingly having entered the county though I must have done, I was determined to see a ‘Battle of Britain’ Class engine working the Swanage Railway. I did so in August as part a rail-linked tour of several places long been on my diary list. Of Dorset I had heard and pictured much, but the immediate effect was startling, the Corfe Castle steam-past, like Whitby Abbey earlier in the year (another steam link) another fine marriage of carriage and outlook.

There comes a time – and it is come – when one must make sure that long sidelined views and visits come into play and aside from a very muddy Dorset Steam Fair, winding back to a rail-head from Swanage gave sight to the Vulcan bomber streaming in over sedate Bournemouth’s Air Show. For a summer when no retreat to the sun further south was necessary, my choice of venues proved very rewarding.

There was at least one exhibition in the series of stop/start rail journeys, a combined Paul and John Nash collection of early landscapes at the Royal West of England Academy in Bristol. Bristol was never a settled townscape, and I was as surprised by new insertions, a canal ride, and the sophistication of Bristolian public space use as I was by any juxtapositions in the Nash collection. This was the one exhibition I intended to see on my tour.

But the exhibition which left much more of a mark and is the subject of what follows. I found by accident, and that it should be termed ‘a discovery’ says rather too much for English insularity and reliance on London paper listings. To backtrack – my daughter lives in a tall Edwardian house just above Newport town...sorry ...city, centre. When we visit we usually aim straight for her house on her hill and, recently at least, I have neglected the city centre.



I find it quite difficult to develop affection for Newport. I've rambled around town and found a drab tonal variety, highlighted by public art (often sidelined or destroyed in the name of progress) and by the diehard joviality of city users. And then there is the Transporter Bridge, a working dock, brave Victorian remains and the very upfront investments surrounding the Ryder Cup and maybe even the recent NATO summit. Somewhere an urban expert described a country town as one where you can see the countryside from the centre and that's another quality of Newport. Much more evident are the remnants from waves of industrial decline that hit those who came in from the country. It's time for a new wave of city building: a vast new shopping scheme and University buildings have swept aside a post-war retail mall (and the celebrated mural monument to the Chartists

which it contained). I realised too that I had never seen Newport's Museum and Art Gallery which, the web-site advised me, had pictures of significance. In the corner of the rebuilding site, on the upper floors of what might be mistaken for a retail outlet is Newport's art collection. **Here I must halt this amble, take breath, and report on what was on view in August 2014** – especially as online facilities mean that you can see much of it after you have read this piece.

You will now have gathered that I share, with my generation, affection for, and interest in monuments — static and moving — of industrial history. In Banbury now there are blue plaques — erected and pending — commemorating L.T.C. Rolt's role in canal and railway preservation. In the late 1960's and early 1970's industrial archaeology was as much

about retrieving the meaning of fading landscapes as it was about buildings or equipment preservation. In 1975 David Gentleman provided a visual summary of buildings in context for a set of posters (sponsored by the RIBA for European Architectural Heritage Year) and it was his, Gentleman's, images, leaked occasionally onto his many stamp designs that provided the graphic imagery for industrial heritage.

Back in Newport, the major exhibition, "Worktown: The Drawings of Falcon Hildred" which had toured Wales in 2013 came as a genuine surprise. Here was an artist who combined accurate records of commonplace industrial and housing landscapes with detail and light which took you by the hand to re-visit or seek out his places. Hildred, who lives, works and exhibits in his restored Pant-





yr-Ynn Mill at Bethania, Blaenau Ffestiniog, has dedicated his life to recording the commonplace of the industrial landscape. His geography embraces Coventry and Birmingham where he trained, and London, but largely the rapidly fractured 19th and 20th settlements of Wales.

The Newport exhibition which closed there in September, featured possibly his most attractive and place-stating set of drawings and illustrations; they had been commissioned by Newport Museum and Art Gallery in 1988. Set apart from the main exhibition they captured the fine grain, slopes and surprise buildings and views in town, as well as the Transporter Bridge, to which Hildred had dedicated a book. Exhibited here was a Newport I know. So what more can a graphic artist say that the camera cannot catch? Hildred is the master of detailed annotation and the eye-catchers that only draw the quiet, sedentary observer. The exhibition gone, how do I convince you that here is an artist and recorder of landscapes that deserves your attention? A number of possibilities

First, the Newport collection by Hildred will remain in Newport and, even if not on regular exhibition, should be available to view via a phone call to the Gallery 01633 656656 or e-mail museum@newport.gov.uk. But that is only one small part of the story. With the exhibition comes a book,

Peter Wakelin : Worktown : The Drawings of Falcon Hildred published in Aberystwyth by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, 2012. This book is less of a catalogue than a richly illustrated and detailed exposition of the man's work and his subjects. It demonstrates the amazing variety of atmospheric effects with which Hildred surrounds his architectural records ... almost no image adopts the same style, viewpoint or textures yet one is assured of the record's accuracy.

No wonder then that Welsh Royal Commission, in partnership with Ironbridge Gorge Museum, persuaded the Heritage Lottery Find to contribute towards the acquisition of a collection of some 600 of Hildred's illustrations which now form the basis for **The Falcon Hildred Access and Learning Project** and these images may now be reviewed at www.coflein.gov.uk and www.peoplescollectionwales.co.uk.

Hildred remains an active artist with many strings to his bow – building conservation and urban design proposals included. His own web site www.falconhildred.co.uk headed **'Watercolour drawings recording the towns, structures and landscapes of 19th Century industry'** is, I think, something of an understatement. Its contents and links will provide the reader with the visual evidence lacking here.

Although admirable, technical recording can distance the viewer from the subject, translating an historic town or landscape into archival evidence. To me Hildred's greatest quality is to endow his views and buildings with a meaning beyond the technical report, a meaning which the viewer feels drawn to seek in the environment. More than 'pictures of' he offers 'invitations to view' and to express one's own responses.

I was truly rewarded by my decision to visit Newport's Museum and Gallery; in addition it gave me fresh hope for Newport's interest in its past.

BG

Thoughts on a third publication for LRD.

The Board has asked three of its members to consider whether a third publication sitting between LRE and Landscape Research in tone and content is a possibility. They will review proposals in December. If any Member wishes to contribute ideas that might help I invite them to send these to me Bud Young, Editor of LRExtra. My email address elsewhere in this issue. If the publication goes ahead we may need a number of correspondents.

Editor

LANDSCAPES AND WEATHER

By Nancy Stedman

I've been following with great interest the recent items on sound in the landscape, and now, in the current issue of *Landscape Research* (39/4) — see *Anna's Companion Guide* on page 10 — which focuses on fresh approaches to visual methods in landscape studies, I notice the first paper: Do preferences for waterscapes persist in inclement weather? by White et al.

All of which raises for me the difficulty of understanding our responses to landscapes when conditions are so variable. So for example I once travelled home by car from a work meeting on a route that took me across the moors of the North Pennines. It was January, it was about 3.30pm., I was tired and it was already getting dark. Added to that it was beginning to sleet... I shuddered at the wide open, bleak and darkening spaces around me, hoped that the car wouldn't break down, and hurried on to my warm home for a cup of tea and supper. But I was well aware that had it been a fine spring day, or a day in August with vast swathes of purple heather, I would have had no hesitation in stopping and taking the opportunity to enjoy a stimulating walk across the moors, enjoying spotting birds, butterflies and flowers on my way.

But I wouldn't want it to always be a summer's day! Although I was keen to get away, that wintery experience was memorable in itself, and only throws into stark contrast the delight to be had when the conditions are better.

Which then makes me think of some responses I recently got from a visitor survey at Ribbleshead in the Yorkshire Dales. Ribbleshead is at the heart of the Dales, where one can get panoramic views of the peaks of Pen-y-Ghent, Wharfedale and Ingleborough. Then there is the added bonus of the iconic Ribbleshead viaduct, carrying the Settle-Carlisle railway in the middle distance. It is a big scale, wide open, treeless, empty and exposed landscape — one that I would suggest is exhilarating for those who like such places, but probably intimidating for those who prefer more enclosed and gentle landscapes.



We selected a Sunday in early August to carry out further questionnaire surveys in the area. This was at the start of the school holidays, and we hoped to get a slightly different perspective from surveys done earlier in the year. Visitors could have expected a fine and sunny and glorious day, but no, it was only 12C, and in addition there was a strong wind and driving rain, making it feel very much colder. It was dark and murky, with the clouds so low that they obscured the tops of the peaks. It was *not* a pleasant day! (especially for those of us standing around conducting the interviews...).

Our survey included a range of questions aimed at finding out who was visiting the area, what they were doing there, and where they were coming from and going to. The majority of those interviewed were walking — usually 2 or all 3 of the Peaks — whilst others were visiting to look at the view and in particular the viaduct. The questionnaire ended with two open questions, to be asked without any prompting:
What have you most enjoyed about your visit?
Has anything spoilt your visit?

What impressed me was that the response to the last question, in 34 of the 41 interviews carried out, was either 'Nothing' or often 'No, nothing!' said spontaneously and with enthusiasm. In one case it was 'not even the rain!'. Then in 15 of the interviews there came a qualification — 'the weather', but this was only added on reflection after the initial 'No, nothing!' response. In two instances this was then immediately counteracted — they had enjoyed it, as 'it's atmospheric!'.
Notably, in three interviews the weather was mentioned *specifically* as something that the interviewees had most enjoyed about their visit.

I hesitate to draw any firm conclusions from this. Clearly the weather has a strong influence on how we experience landscapes. We can find inclement weather exciting and challenging; it changes our perceptions of a place. So if I was asked which view of Ribbleshead I 'liked', either on our survey day or on a balmy sunny day, I would choose the latter. But that doesn't mean that I didn't have a memorable experience when out on the cloud smothered day... And I believe that the impact of one weather condition is heightened by the knowledge of what it can be like in other conditions — we need to experience the lows to fully appreciate the highs.

NS

15 September 2014

Notes: Nancy is currently working with Europarc Consulting Ltd. on a visitor management plan for the Ribbleshead area. Her client is the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, which has been successful in getting first stage funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Landscape Partnership scheme for the Ingleborough Dales.

LIGHT ON MUD-FLATS

by Bud Young

We walk through the town of Topsham on the Exe Estuary past the Dutch gabled houses and others with their little protruding captains' windows. We come to the Goat Walk, a raised path at the edge of the tidal flats. From here you look out across the Estuary to Powderham and if the tide is low as it was at our visit, it is where expensively equipped birdwatchers locate their tripods and gather to view wading birds. The Goat Walk had been undercut fractured and made impassable by this year's February storms but has been expertly restored with a fine brick edge. It is a notable feature of the town and house prices here are very high, boat owners and people of influence abound, visitors add value.

Relatives of the dead (may they, the dead rest in peace) have sited perhaps a dozen benches here to allow us to sit looking out over the estuary and the mud flats. Whole lives have been sat here enriched by the changing seascape; tides in and out, the light on the mud. A thousand and one quiet afternoons.

We dry off a teak bench. Bausch and Lomb x8 binoculars though superbly sharp do not place us in the ranks of real bird watchers so while Rosemary focuses on stilt legged wading birds I just sit; the light changes, there is an exciting sky, clouds rolling, rain sweeping across Exeter and places the other side of the estuary. The tide is exceptionally low. Our umbrellas are as yet unopened.

Anyone with an interest in landscape water colours will immediately recognise this scene, will realise that marsh-girt-estuaries-at-low-tide with small boats is one of the most commonly painted subject for the water colorist.

They vary from the stunningly lovely to the inept. They offer horizontal layers of mud, water mirror calm or ruffled, reeds and the stronger colours of farmland and woods. It was exactly so today and the light changed from menacingly cloudy to intensely bright as clouds moved evaporated and reformed in the southwest wind. "Look at those three birds" (mere specks half a mile away) says the woman at my side. I take the binoculars and refocus to find three birds set in the most intense horizontal band of light. It is an OMG moment. I sweep around (periscope up) and thrill at an emotion of changing colours, incandescent silver around the birds, darker but still bright away from the sun, less brilliant more colour saturation to the west, the darker mud flats, the merging soft green of pasture beyond golden reed beds and the earthy brown of a ploughed field. A strong green patch of woodland. A tiny thread of a train sounds its horn as it glides down to Dawlish.

BY

A COMPANION GUIDE TO LANDSCAPE RESEARCH, VOLUME 39/4: Fresh approaches to visual methods in landscape Studies.

Editor Anna Jorgensen

The visual aspects of landscape have been, and continue to be, one of the most disputed areas in landscape research.

They go to the heart of questions about what landscape is and how we experience it. Is landscape primarily a series of views, or is it a far more complex phenomenon that we experience with all of our senses and being? How do we bring our knowledge and experience to interpret what we see? Does this de-



A NEW DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

STOP PRESS As this publication goes to the printer, Paul Tabbush is delighted to announce the appointment of Dr Sarah McCarthy to the above position. You will read more about her in the next issue, or like me (Editor) do an internet search. Welcome to you Sarah.

The main elements of the post are:

To increase the reach, profile, effectiveness and impact of LRG in achieving its aims and objectives primarily but not exclusively by means of:

- enlarging our membership and facilitating a greater level of members' engagement with and participation in the Group's actions;
- constructing a larger and active partner base amongst a wide range of landscape-related organisations at European, if not world level, as well as in the UK; and
- establishing and maintaining a fuller portfolio of outward-facing activities.

Key tasks will include:

1. Contributing to and coordinating the Board's reformulation of the Group's strategy;
2. Coordinating and contributing to the implementation of the strategy;
3. Developing new partnerships with other bodies and interest groups with similar aims
4. Seeking new sources of project based and strategic income;
5. Fostering members' engagement and participation;
6. Improving the range and quality of services offered to members;
7. Setting up a digital newsletter for communication to a wide audience of academics, practitioners and students, with information on events, calls for papers, new projects, calls for project proposals, recent publications;
8. Coordination of a dissemination project (linked with HERCULES and the LRG Research Strategy);
9. Establishment of and administrative support for an annual or at least biennial LRG International Conference.

This is a major step for LRG; it should help us to reach a much larger audience, to improve what we offer to members, and through the membership to have a wider say in the ways that landscapes are understood.

Paul Tabbush, Chairman

pend on our own perspectives? Are the perceptions of a tourist different from a farmer, or those of an urban dweller from someone living in the countryside, or in a remote landscape with few traces of human influence? If visual impressions only represent part of the way we experience landscape, can visual images legitimately be used as surrogates for exposure to real landscapes in landscape research? What do representations of landscape tell us about the landscapes themselves, and about their makers and cultural contexts?

Questions such as these have been repeatedly revisited in landscape theory and research from at least the 1970s onwards. It's fair to say that for some landscape researchers, visualization in all its forms represents a valid, exciting and rapidly developing field of enquiry, whereas for others its limitations far exceed its potential. Obvious fault lines between these opposing views seem to lie between the social sciences and the arts and humanities, and/or between quantitative and qualitative approaches. Critiques of research using visual images as the replacement for actually being in a landscape include the difficulty of finding images that somehow represent that landscape without introducing variables that are not measured in the research design (e.g. the presence of people, weather conditions, colour), and of knowing which aspects of the image viewers are responding to, as well as the question of whether just seeing a landscape can stand in for the whole gamut of experience we get from being there.

This special themed issue of Landscape Research presents seven papers in which visual representations of landscape are central to the research design. They all grapple with the types of questions outlined above, and are innovative both in the ways in which they use visual images, and in the manner in which they cross traditional disciplinary and methodological divides.

The first paper in the collection, by Mathew P. White, Deborah Cracknell, Abigail Corcoran, Gemma Jenkinson and Michael H. Depledge, *'Do Preferences for Waterscapes Persist in In-*

clement Weather and Extend to Sub-aquatic Scenes?', looks at first sight like a conventional preference study, in which the research participants are asked to evaluate a series of digital images as a proxy for being in the actual environments; but has a number of refinements. The research participants are asked to evaluate the images shown for stress relief and emotional response, as well as preference, and colour and weather conditions are included as variables in the research design. The inclusion of under water scenes is highly topical given the common use of fish tanks as aids to relaxation in healthcare environments.

In *'Accommodating New Housing Development in Rural Areas? Representations of Landscape, Land and Rurality in Ireland'* Karen Foley and Mark Scott use representations (digitally manipulated photographs) of different housing densities as visual cues in focus groups to examine the relationship between 'visual amenity' and rural housing development. Their findings go far beyond issues of visual preference to address differing understandings of rural living.

'Local Visions of the Landscape: Participatory Photographic Survey of the World Heritage Site, the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras' by Yoshito Kikuchi, Yoko Sasaki, Hiroshi Yoshino, Junko Okahashi, Masahito Yoshida and Nobuko Inaba also addresses similar issues, but in a very different context. In this study the underlying meanings of this landscape are explored through photographs taken by the research participants: the farmers who produce the cultural landscape in this world heritage site.

The next couple of papers *'Swedish Pasture—An Exploration of Perceptual Attributes and Categorisation'* by Åsa Ode Sang, Caroline Hagerhall, Johan Pihel and Kenneth Holmqvist, and *'Eye-tracking Analysis in Landscape Perception Research: Influence of Photograph Properties and Landscape Characteristics'*, by Lien Dupont, Marc Antrop and Veerle Van Eetvelde, both use eye tracking technology, a relatively novel technique that is attracting a lot of interest in visual landscape research, and which enables researchers to determine

which parts of an image a viewer is looking at. Ode Sang et al.'s paper used this approach to explore which landscape elements are associated with research participants' internal concepts of Swedish pasture, and Dupont et al. examined the impact both of image content and photographic format on the ways images were viewed.

In *'Safeguarding Cultural Heritage in the Urban Fringe: The Role of Legibility'* Gro Bjørnstad Jerpåsen and Mari Sundli Tveit contrast the archaeological and visual legibility of heritage objects, such as grave mounds, in the peri-urban landscape, using photographs to explore how changes in the appearance and context of these objects may detract from their meaning as bearers of cultural heritage, and showing how visibility and legibility are connected. Finally, a similar theme is explored in Ülke Sillasoo's *'Landscapes, Vegetation, and Folklore in Late Medieval Art: An Iconographic Study Based on Selected Austrian and South German Panel Paintings'*, which examines the relationship between realism and symbolism in depictions of landscape and plants in the late mediaeval panel paintings of Austria and South Germany.

This collection of papers demonstrates that there continues to be huge potential for the innovative use of visual images in landscape research. However, all but one of the contributions were essentially social science papers, and it would be very interesting to have some papers, or even a special issue, devoted more specifically to the use of visual images and visual methods in arts and humanities research in landscape. Please get in touch if you have some ideas!

AJ

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Editorial enquiries:

Bud Young, Airphoto Interpretation,

TQ13 8NL

emails to young @airphotointerpretation.com



GOLDEN MORNING

This is a picture I just bought — saw it and loved it — and I cannot keep my eyes off it. I have hung it opposite my bed so it greets me at the beginning and end of the day. My question is why should this particular landscape appeal to me. And perhaps it will appeal to no one else among the readership of this publication. At first I felt that the golden sky was a bit corny, a rather old fashioned device best suited to the cold drawing room of a Great Aunt, but I now love it. And that burst of yellows like witch hazel flowers in the centre of the picture. Perhaps it is

about the proportions or the position of the principal focus; or that I see no shadows; perhaps about the division between foreground, middle ground and background so clearly understandable and yet not contrived. Perhaps it is the differing intensities of colour saturation or the fine lining of the grass vegetation, or the fact that I love hazel coppice and woodlands. It is a lonely picture: the artist alone got out to see this on a snowy day and so it appeals to my solitary tendencies. It is done in pastel, something I am not familiar with. Is this what gets to me?

It is kind of luminous. If you are reading this on computer go to 150%!

As ever I have searched the Internet for the artist Paul Hardy (Rev) and find that he appears as the author of a book (sold by Amazon) demonstrating method in pastel landscapes. He seems from the writing on the back of the picture frame to live in Exeter. I think he is brilliant but that is surely a very personal preference. I have an address for him so will send him a copy of LRE. As owner of the picture I think I have the right to show it here.

Bud Young

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