

At the Landscape Research Group board meeting yesterday we decided among other things (see later) that we should approach you, our members to find out more about your interests. Groups naturally wish to be relevant and to do so, it would be good to have some feedback. If you are with me, and the Group, on this (it was I who proposed it and have to carry it out—such is the nature of volunteering) I will prepare some ideas that you may like to respond to. Many years ago we made a similar effort to understand our membership. And of course all this is information that will **not** be passed on in any form to commercial marketers or others.

The very well attended Board meeting yesterday developed quite a buzz, as we considered a number of papers to develop increased activity, funded by your subscriptions and the continued commercial success of Landscape Research (an international journal that comes as part of your subscription). Ideas which a committee will discuss and if agreed, will seek to develop are:

A much increased website activity

a more prolific (four issues a year) and more widely sourced LRExtra
the potential for small 'landscape enquiry' field meetings

more joint conferences

student seminars *and*

an increase in our now well established student dissertation competitions.

increased international activity and the links that come from this.

Landscape Research, the Group's journal is to move to five issues a year. This marks an important increase in the number of quality papers being submitted and is a mark of recognition and success.

If you have any ideas or views on all this or would like to take an active part in rolling it out we invite you to contact us at my address in the box below. I would be grateful if you would also respond to my "questionnaire" - see insert. **Bud Young September 21st 2006**



Address corrected.

In LRE 39 Michael Davis' email should have read michaelrdavis@btinternet.com. He has asked me to correct it so as to obtain your feedback. Please feed back.

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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Landscape Research Extra

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Balloons for 40?



www.landscaperesearch.org

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Peter Howard
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Martin Spray
Bud Young
Philip Pacey

Barefoot into the Ocean: The Waddensee meeting

On the coast of Waddensee of northern Germany the ancient battle between sea and land is being now fought between local people and ecologists who seek to conserve the coastal environment. This is summed up by the sign *'Eco-dictators: No Thanks: God made the Sea, the Friesians the Coast.'*

This problem was at the heart of a meeting at Tönning, in Schleswig, sponsored by the German research organisation, GKSS which, though as an organisation fixed firmly in the physical sciences, wished to hear from the social and cultural disciplines using the coastal problem as a focal point.



Here, as in the whole coastline from the north Netherlands through to southern Denmark, the incursions by the sea in occasional great storms, these then relentlessly countered by the local people with new dykes and polders — are the twin pillars of their history. To some extent this well-known problem has been exacerbated by elements of ethnic politics. This is the region of *'Landschafts'* described by Kenneth Olwig, with local polities, largely independent both of German and Danish princes. They have made the land and the law to go with it. Add to that three ethnicities, (German, Danish and Friesian) and there are all the elements for a political row.

The dispute has been simmering for some time, as scientific conservators have sought to protect the fauna and flora of the region against exploitation and against extensification of farming, right up to the latest, most seaward dyke. Rising sea levels have obviously sharpened that dispute still further, with ecologists urging 'managed retreat' allowing some polders to flood as valuable wildlife reserves, increasing the area of wetland. Resisting the ecologists (who seem to be given the sole blame for this) has at least had the result of giving a cause for unity among various 'amts' and 'landschafts' that have previously been fiercely independent.

But how easy it is for language to fail us. Throughout the three days of debate, where the problems of the local National Park were consistently to the fore, I had taken for granted that the German view of a National Park was roughly the same as the British view. However, a trip to Westerhever at the centre of things, and out onto the sands on a bitterly cold Saturday with lashing wind and rain, showed how wrong I was. In effect, the German National Park forbids all access out onto the sands, saltings and sloblands except with special consent. I reflected that it was a great privilege that I should get cold, wind-swept and drenched, a privilege not shared with the locals.

With this sudden realisation - that the control of the 'ecologists' extended not only to intellectual and economic debates about future land uses, but to a day-to-day prevention of enjoyment of this 'own backyard landscape' - I found my sympathies changing somewhat.

Clearly this is an area where the problems of participation are peculiarly sharp and will need the most careful handling. British National Parks, largely because of their unusual missions to encourage access and promote natural beauty, are precisely the model that might be used elsewhere.

Meanwhile there is a particularly valuable outcome of this meeting, which is the foundation of a German (language rather than nation) Landscape Research Group which will be affiliated to LRG. It will, of course, provide a platform for cross-disciplinary research across institutions. We hope that readers of this will encourage their German friends to join by contacting Martin Doering at Martin.Doering...@gkss.de

[Again dear reader please remove three dots before @. Without these dots the address goes to blue and we pay more printing charge for colour pages!]

Peter Howard

Philip Pacey

On not climbing mountains in Corsica.

Although I'm nearly 60 and have done my share of travelling, I can still be taken by surprise.

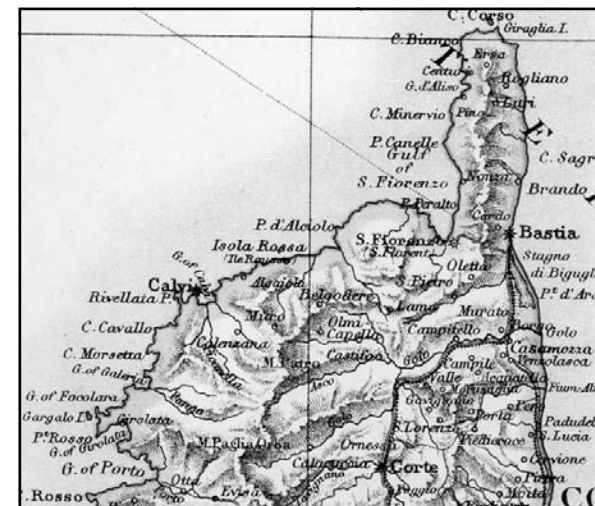
Of course, it helps if you haven't done your homework. We had not taken the trouble to consider exactly how the ferry from Nice would approach Calvi. Lulled by the monotony of the four hour voyage, a first bottle of Corsican beer, and infinite gratitude for a calm sea, we were sitting on the wrong side of the boat wondering why there was still no sign of land. Not noticing any significant movement among other passengers, on a whim I wandered across to the other side, and was totally unprepared for what I saw - the old citadel of Calvi catching the sun; shadowy hills behind, and to the left, mountains that took my breath away, lightly wreathed by wisps of cloud; mountains that seemed far higher than was reasonable, apparently without foothills or any kind of preamble.

By now most passengers were lined along the rails - it's a wonder the boat didn't list on that side - and I climbed up to a higher deck for a better view. As the ferry turned into the harbour, I was thrilled by glimpses of the mountains above the ship's superstructure, primordial massive rugged rocks rearing above shining white, featureless nautical surfaces. At this moment a sailor appeared and ran up the French and Corsican flags.

Next morning the mountains had retreated - or rather, they had lost their ruggedness, for with the sun behind them they appeared in soft silhouette, so the proposition that a train might take us around, through or over them seemed less absurd. Indeed, that is what happened, although as the journey went on, the railway seemed less and less feasible, and each time the train lurched around a sharp bend above a perilous drop, the possibility of experiencing sea sickness on land suggested itself; happily, this embarrassment was avoided.

Our holiday had been designed as a rail tour, and two nights and a day at Corte offered the only opportunity to walk into the landscape and make real physical contact with it. Arriving at Corte at dusk, our first impression was of an old but shabby mountain town unspoiled in much the same sense that Ankh Morpork is unspoiled (readers of Terry Pratchett's 'Discworld' series will know what I mean). But one should never judge a place until you have seen it in daylight and when the sun is shining. The next day was bright with not a cloud in the sky; ideal for walking, but, needing to travel light, we hadn't brought our walking boots.

Setting out on a footpath which led out of Corte into a mountain gorge with nothing in between, we were forced to retreat when it became obvious that our footwear was hopelessly inadequate. Plan B was to walk along the asphalted road out of Corte into the Gorges de la Restonica, a tame alternative which in the season would certainly have been spoiled by traffic. But on this October day we had the valley almost to ourselves. And it was here that I was taken by surprise for the second time in three days. Looking ahead of us, we saw what seemed to be smoke drifting across the road. It had been a very dry summer; was this the beginning of a forest fire? What should we do? - try to put it out? Or run back down the valley to sound the alarm? For a fraction of a second I felt myself close to panic. And then it happened again - a gentle puff of wind, which, we saw, blew a cloud of pollen from a tree just ahead of us. And no, I can't tell you what kind of tree it was. Grateful, and bowled over by the beauty of it, curiosity simply didn't kick in, and I still think of it as a kind of miracle, a Burning Bush without flame.



Martin Spray

Early imprints

"The first things we know must always be the most familiar. They are the closest, the ones we have known longest. We walk away to other things in the distance, things that were once far off to us. These first things never were far off, and can never be left at a distance. We think we are walking away from them, and wherever we go we carry them with us, without knowing it, and when we return to them everything

recedes to its distance again." [Eleanor Farjeon in *Kaleidoscope -1928*]

I recently walked over the moors in Galloway to admire the drystone walling of some old enclosures. This, to be precise, was August 21st 1975, in fine weather without midgets. I preferred it that way... though there *could* have been cloudbursts, and insects by the ton - because our wakeful reruns of memory are interactive. The fact that my diary says 'sunny, a bit warm' is of little moment. It was how I wanted it. I'd have preferred to actually *be* there, striding through the heather. Well... maybe. Because of Parkinson's Disease, many walks I now take are unreal - 'virtual' ones, in my head. This is not without problems.

There is a particular place I am often in. I have known it almost six decades, since crawling in the grass there. It was a favourite scene for my childhood, and became a sort of anchorage point in my life. In his poem 'Do not go gentle into that good night', Dylan Thomas urges us to fight the extinguishing of life - of our individual lives; but this is inevitably pointless; and surely is not the point. New lives begin, and new infants crawl to explore the world; and we want them to have grass to crawl in, as sweet as we had, and their own havens. My own children had wild, not *quite* as sweet, grass; and I think are anchored.

Once, I went to My Place with them. I was to feel a little of that let-down of a place changed to somewhere that refuses to match the memory - and to feel a little of that confusion, when one's children enjoy it as *you* did, because they know nothing different... With the loss of sheep grazing, tree-encroachment had banished the mounded bushes of bilberry. Where I knew a dozen kinds of butterfly (and probably missed some), I showed my daughters only six. It was a busier place; the near-by city is nearer-by... you know the story!

Nostalgia is a dangerous game - because it pretends the dead are living. By my last return, ten years ago, the scene, ecological succession notwithstanding, was becoming tame, with the testaments of urbanisation creeping in at the edges. I was 'out of touch' with it, and out of sympathy: it wasn't *My Place* as it had - jealously - once been.

I did not and do not belong there. I must stop the pretence, and 'hand it on'. The memories I have, however, remain mine only. Quite by accident, I've been there again.

Curiously dreamlike: I heard only the hum of my computer, and the smells were of the stale air in my study - **but I might have been anywhere in the world.** With a click, I could visit... not my anchorage, but the place - maybe just for a few minutes - of a

local photographer. Nor my time: behind the screen was early summer: beyond the window was winter; and in my head it was ten - or rising sixty - years ago.

We explore the world, and make our relationship with it, outwards, from places that have meaning for us because of the "steady accretion of sentiment", as Yi-Fu Tuan puts it. As a child, I touched. For years, when it 'belonged' to me, I enjoyed the accretion. That place still flavours my life. Now, in my study, I can keep returning... but I guess I'll not. All I can do is follow my mouse along a prescribed, odourless, silent, route. An old diary or a photograph, one can hold; but the scene behind glass? - that is a sprite: aloof, and tantalising.

[This is a modified version of an article, 'Flickering lights', on pp 38-40 of *Ecus* 26[1], 2005: the issue's theme is 'Extinction of experience'.]

Peter Howard

The French Research Programme into Landscape and Sustainable Development for 2005 – 2008

In July 2006 the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development conducted a seminar in Paris to launch their research programme on Landscape and Sustainable Development, to be coordinated by Cemagref, under Daniel Terrasson. The Scientific Council that had selected the 16 research projects was chaired by Yves Luginbühl and comprised 14 landscape specialists from 5 countries and several disciplines, including the author (Peter Howard LRG International officer).

This report outlines the themes of the research programme, lists the main projects with contact details and the organisations responsible, and adds some less formal comments. In all cases the research teams would welcome contact with other workers in the same fields. Some of these teams, largely Francophone have conducted their bibliographic research on a thoroughly multi-lingual basis, but there are others that would welcome some more input on English (and other) language research.

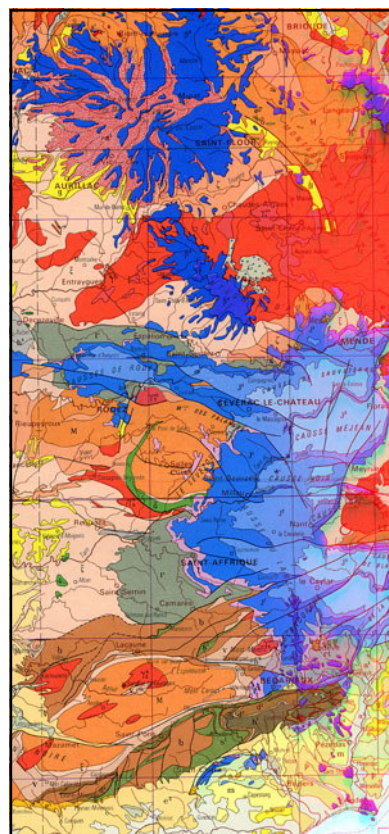
There are three main themes of research: First: Landscape, the sustainability of the processes of landscape development, and of landscape interventions, with three fields:

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- the theoretical dimension;
 - relations between the three pillars of sustainability (ecological, social and economic); protection, management and enhancement of landscape, considered as interventions.
- Second: The European Landscape Convention (ELC) and the ability of present landscape actions to achieve its objectives. This has two fields:
- relating landscape instruments to the particular articles of the ELC and the various methods developed to achieve the ends of the ELC, including the various actors and the different scales.
- Third: The economics of landscape, including:
- supply and demand for a variety of uses;
 - economic regulation of landscape;
 - the contribution of landscape politics to local development; the evaluation of new forms of employment.

The first group of three presentations came under the heading of Taking Account of Landscape Dynamics:-

'Landscape & Biodiversity: participative evaluation of sustainability of management



'strategies' was introduced by Jacques Lepart of Montpellier. This is a programme with five case areas, the Grands Causses (see geological map) the Garriouges north of Montpellier, and the Petite

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Camargue in France, and the Cairngorms and the Thames gateway in UK. The UK team is led by William Sheate at Imperial College, Wye, Kent. The focal discipline is Landscape Ecology, also with economics, and this could be seen as an ecological deployment of actor network theory, and much concerned with participative exercises, partly between disciplines to estimate sustainability. There is also much concern with species and habitats, notably some special target species.

'Linear green structures: the dynamic of forms and functions in agricultural landscapes'. This team, examining the role of hedges, tree belts and similar structures in the agricultural landscape is based, not surprisingly in the Breton bocage country was presented by Jacques Baudry of the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique at Rennes. The team has many disciplines, including law, sociology, agronomy, hydrology and ecology, and there are cooperating teams in the Netherlands (Alterra), Denmark and Switzerland. The primary field study area in France is around Plein Fougères, concentrating on the spatial organisation of the 'greenveins' and the contribution of many disciplines to this understanding.

Landscapes with trees: multiple values in local sustainable development in Southern Europe was presented by Sylvie Guillerme of GEODE at Toulouse. It is concerned with the many landscapes with trees (but not forests) in the lesser mountains of France (Cevennes), Spain (Andalusia) and Italy (North Apennines). The project will result in an atlas, among other outcomes, creating a typology of these complex and often threatened landscapes, with a great biological, ecological and genetic wealth, concentrating on their multi-functionality and the impact of social and economic processes. Other partners include the Universities of Genoa and of Granada.

The afternoon session consisted of four presentations on the theme of the evaluation of political and institutional processes, chaired by myself, in schoolboy French. It was more terrifying than the oral exam 45 years ago!

Cultural and Natural Landscapes: changes and conservation was introduced by Marie Roué, of the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, in which building we were seated. It is concerned with the participation of local populations, and the mapping of their categorisations of landscapes, and their local knowledge, in two places which have been designated largely because of their nature, but cultural features are now being regarded as of greater importance. The disciplinary collaboration is between ethno-ecologists and biogeographers, and the field regions are the Pyrenees (where control by fire was a traditional technique) and Lapponia in north Sweden, (with its

Sami population). Ole Magga of the University College of Kautokeino is the contact there.

Exceptional and Everyday landscapes: a comparative analysis of European viticultural World Heritage Sites. Serge Briffaud of the Ecole d'Architecture et de Paysage at Bordeaux, previewed a project of importance for most French (and for me) by comparing the sites of St Emilion, Cinque Terre near Pisa, and Tokay in Hungary. The problem here is the influence of ownership, and capitalist enterprise, both for the product and for tourism. Clearly market forces produce changes not envisaged either by UNESCO or by the local people (and the Tokay vineyards particularly have traditionally been peasant run.) The suggestion is that World designation reinforces globalisation, and that the European Landscape Convention has to find a way to avoid that.

The emergence of the politics of sustainable development in a trans-frontier context: the example of the upper Rhine was appropriately given by both André Guillerme (Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers) and Christoph Bernhardt (Technische Universität, Berlin). There was a considerable historical element to this project tracing the history of cooperation across this frontier, (essentially the Rhine Rift valley above Strasbourg) throughout the twentieth century, despite the conflicts and disputed territories. This cooperation has been for several purposes, not least hydrological control, but the research investigates the development of the idea of sustainability in all three countries (Switzerland is included) and the need for common policies.

Wind-farm landscapes: Aeolian politics between the environmental and the landscape agendas was another highly international project, in France, Portugal and Germany. One of the German contributors is Werner Krauss (LRG and Nordic Group), but the presenter was Alain Nadaï of CIRED (Centre International de Recherche sur l'Environnement et le Développement). Wind farms became something of an *idée fixe* during the seminar, as they can encapsulate the apparent conflict between landscape and sustainability objectives. Most of the objectors cite landscape as the issue, although whether bird life and noise are regarded as part of the landscape is a nice point. And 'NIMBY' appears to have entered the French language.

The third session, of just two papers, was concerned with the economics of sustainable landscape.

Justice, sustainability and landscape policies: an analysis of economic and social processes, was introduced by Tina Rambonilaza of Cemagref, Bordeaux, and was very concerned with seeking equity between the various economic actors, and the different generations. The project will be achieved in

cooperation with H.K. Wyrzens of BOKU University (Austria). The regions under particular study are the Pays de Loire and Niederösterreich, although this project was very concerned also with urban greenspace, and tracing the administrative channels of landscape policy.

Walid Oueslati (based at Institut National



d'Horticulture in Angers) was responsible for a different kind of project, setting up a **European Consortium of Landscape Economics** (CEEP). This will link agricultural,

environmental and spatial economists across Europe although 'the consortium is open to disciplines dealing with landscape notably ecology, geography, sociology and law'. The purpose, of course, is to share research practice, and in particular the economic results of various actions taken under the European Landscape Convention.

Readers who are still awake will appreciate that an overnight break at this point was much appreciated, and next day we re-assembled in a non-air-conditioned room at ENGREF (Ecole Nationale du Génie Rural des Eaux et des Forêts). Everyone waving fans and sheets of paper was an obviously more sustainable air-conditioning than the real thing, but the paper waving result was a curious form of performance art. The first session concerned relationships between governance and stakeholders.

Sustainable management and the landscape resource: using and regulating a natural resource is a Franco Swiss project, presented by Jean-David Gerber, although the team is led by Corinne Larrue of Tours University. This was a very cleverly theorised paper, postulating not only many kinds of observer, and many users, of the landscape, but also a group of 'fournisseurs' or purveyors, and looking at their formal rights, their access rights and their image rights. The fieldwork areas are Candes St Martin on the Loire, the Brenne, Lochois in France, and Chasseral in the Jura, and the Aletsch Glacier. The Swiss coordinator is Peter Knoepfel at Lausanne.

Place and function of landscape at the heart of the



processes of governance in the rural and peri-urban areas of the Alpine Arc (France, Italy, Switzerland) was presented by Emmanuel Guisepelli from Chambéry. Governance became a major theme of the seminar, well illustrated by this project, examining the various systems of governance in comparatively similar places, and the way in which landscape is articulated within them. The mixed team of sociologists, economists, agronomists and ethnologists is particularly keen to tease out the values and influence of experts within the policy structures.

Sustainable development as the ordinary preoccupation in the practice of the landscape architect; the example of the PACA region (Provence, Alpes, Cote d'Azur) This project originates from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure du Paysage at Versailles (represented by Pierre Donadieu) and the Laboratoire Méditerranéen de

Sociology at Aix-en-Provence, (Jean-Samuel Bordreuil). The research will focus on a critique of over 50 projects over 15 years of landscape interventions in the region, and examining them for their sustainable elements, which they see as largely opposed to an econo-technical vision. Major changes here include fast expanding towns and the rapid abandonment of the rural areas.

Sustainable development as the criterion for wind-farm landscapes. An analysis of social disputes concerning 'aeolian parks'; case study of Finistere and comparison with Quebec. This was presented by Sophie Le Floch of Cemagref and Marie-José Fortin from University of Quebec, and argued for 'governance' becoming the fourth pillar of sustainability, especially with the conflict between local and global needs demonstrated in wind-farm

Below are the emails of all those mentioned. For broader details of the entire research programme, which will shortly appear on both the MEDD and CEMAGREF websites, readers are advised to approach Daniel Terrasson. Daniel will happily reply in English, for the quality of which he will probably apologise – though it is a great deal better than my written French!

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disputes. The research focuses on the content analysis of documents, throughout the history of these projects.

Routes in landscape and the landscape of routes.

The problem of access to the landscape lies as the focus of this project – though the French 'chemin' is difficult to translate, encompassing as it does everything from a footpath to a motorway. Veronique van Tilbeurgh presented, although Laurence le Du-Blayo is head of the team (based at Rennes), but others include Gareth Roberts of LRG and Tomas

Germundsson of Lund and Nordic LRN. There are obvious problems of a route net that evolved for the use of farmers adapting to the quite different needs of observers, and the approaches here include the agronomic, geographical, legal, sociological and historical.

There were two further papers:-

Dynamic landscapes—erosion and sustainable development in the Mediterranean mountains, was led by Marianne Cohen though Anna Ribas of the

University of Girona in Catalonia is also involved. This is an historical study of these mountains now subject to major and connected changes— abandonment of the agriculture and consequent fire; frequent torrential erosion; and some local intensified production notably of olives. Clearly there are also a new set of values emerging with the new residents including second-homers.

Ecological art and sustainable development: organising an international conference and a preparatory seminar, presented by Nathalie Blanc (University of Paris 1) and Jacques Lolive (University of Pau), with cooperation from the University of Lancaster. The rise of land art, eco-art and public art can lead to important benefits in arousing the conscience of populations to issues of sustainability, as well as ameliorating the 'biological functional' landscape with a social and aesthetic influence. The organisers are intending to produce a major international symposium, currently planned for spring 2007, together with a joint exhibition of work.

Anthology

"The marshes were just a long black line then, as I stopped to look at him; and the river was just another horizontal line not nearly so broad nor yet so black; and the sky was just a row of long angry red lines and dense black lines intermixed. On the edge of the river I could faintly make out the only two black things in all the prospect that seemed to be standing upright; one of these was the beacon by which the sailors steered—like an unhooped cask upon a pole— an ugly thing when you were near to it; the other a gibbet, with some chains hanging to it which had once held a pirate. The man was limping on towards this latter, as if he were the pirate come to life, and come down and going back to hook himself up again."

Great Expectations Charles Dickens. The boy Pip encounters Magwitch the convict at the start of the story. Horizontals, verticals and fearful objects and a single figure, moving. Charles Dickens does not write much landscape into his stories.

"Breasting the regular swells of land, on a red dirt road as true as a line of longitude, the car was like a boat at sea. The ocean was hardly more solitary than this empty country, where in forty miles or so I had not seen another vehicle. A warm westerly blew over the prairie, making waves, and when I wound down the window I heard it growl in the dry grass like surf. For gulls, there were killdeer plovers, crying out their

name as they wheeled and skidded on the wind. *Keel-dee-da! Keel-dee-da!* The surface of the land was as busy as a rough sea—it broke in sandstone outcrops, low buttes, ragged bluffs, hollow combers of bleached clay, and was fissured with waterless creek beds, ash white, littered with boulders. Brown cows nibbled at their shadows on the open range. In the bottomlands, where muddy rivers trickled through the cottonwoods, were fenced rectangles of irrigated green".

Jonathan Raban Bad Land: an American Romance Page 1. First Published by Picador 1996 author. Jonathan Raban writes about the fertile image and projected dream of this part of the United States (Montana) put across by the railroad developers and the dry uncertain reality confronting the settlers at the end of the 19th century. Another passage (p6)

"Once the eye grew accustomed to the dizzying sweep and chop of the prairie and began to focus on the details, the whole country presented itself as a graveyard, it was so strewn with relics of the dead: single fenceposts, trailing a few whiskers of wire—the body of a Studebaker, vintage circa 1940, stripped of its wheels and engine, on a sandy knoll—a harrow deep in the grass, its tines rusting to air—on the tops of the buttes, small cairns of carefully piled stones. For as far as one could see the dead had left their stuff lying around, to dissolve back into nature in its own time at its own pace. A civilization of sorts, its houses, cars and machinery, was fading rapidly off the land, and it wouldn't be long now before its imprint was as faint as that of the Plains Indians' tepee-rings or the shallow grooves worn by the single-file herds of buffalo".

Jonathan Raban has also written about a journey down the Mississippi in "Old Glory".

In a very different vein, which we may now see as half way between sentimental (gushy) nostalgia and a clarion call for the Nation, H.J. Massingham writes this about the English Cotswolds. The date 1937 and publisher (Batsford Books) almost defines the style and approach "let England stand up for its ancient but threatened heritage" Be amazed at the welter of adjectives and commas. Writing style not recommended.

"...and in a lonely region where the woody slopes are so graduated as not to disturb the serene lines of wold after wold passing into the infinity of space. This is the journey where the transition from the stormy landscape of the Edge to the calms of high plateau is best to be enjoyed, because the change from the swirl of hills to the indivisible ridge, from cleft to trough, is not the usual mutation, but the slow conquest of *largo* over *presto*. Yet the country itself is actually wilder and more remote than along the populated

Edge, and though the views are neither so varied or so extensive, the breadth of scale distils an equal value. It is among these swinging crests and inclines, where the grey stone of the drinking-troughs stands upon the umber fallows and the swallows of the upland spaces meet the questing rooks from the woodland slopes that the hamlet of Througham lies half-way down the fall of the ridge. Farms and cottages are scattered down the hillside like a flock of grey sheep, and, just where the slope takes a sharper angle of descent, a three sided farmstead directly faces the hanging woods draped over the side of the companion ridge".

Dear Reader doesn't this leave you gasping! Massingham wrote a lot of books for Batsford starting with English Downland 1936, The Cotswolds 1937; Country Relics 1939; Chiltern Country 1940; The English Countryman 1942; The Wisdom of the Fields 1945; and Where Man Belongs 1946. He wrote many others. They are what we would now call a celebration of the Nation's landscape and rural heritage, then considered deeply eroded by industrialisation and townsmans loss of rural moral fibre and memory of heritage. And they spanned WW2. To all of these notions, JB Priestly (English Journey) offers a refreshingly down to earth antidote. It might repay looking for parallel approaches in the publishing world of today.



"What should I read dear crow?"

Special issue of Annales de Geographie 649/2006-09-27 **Wilderness and perceptions of nature in N. America.**

Christine Chis-Auby, Roland Paskoft, Fernand Verger **Climate change and the land holdings of the Conservatoire littoral: erosion and flooding scenario** Ann. Geo 648206 pp115-132

DT Tudor and AT Williams **A rationale for beach selection by the public on the coast of Wales, UK** Area 2006 38.2 pp153-164

Daniel Trudeau **Politics of belonging in the construction of landscapes: place making, boundary drawing and exclusion** Cultural Geographies 2006/3 pp 421-443

John Wylie **Cultural Geography in practice Smoothlands: Fragments/landscapes/fragments** Cultural Geographies 2006/3 pp 458-465

Review essay **Aestheticization and the cultural contradictions of neo-liberal sub(urbanism)** the review investigates Landscapes of privilege/fortress/privatisation of public open spaces Cultural Geographies 2006/3 pp 466-475

Bequeria S, Lopez Moreno JI, Gomez Villar A, Rubio V, et al **Fluvial adjustments to soil erosion and plant cover changes in the Central Spanish Pyrenees** Geografiska Annaler Vol 88A/3 pp 177-187 2006

Soren C Lassen and Timothy J Brock **Great Basin imagery in newspaper coverage of Yucca Mountain** The Geographical Review 95/4 pp 517-536, 2005

Joby Bass **Message on the Plaza: landscape landscaping and forest discourse in Honduras** The Geog Review 95/4 pp 556-577.

Shoufann Fang, George Gertner, Guangxing Wang and Alan Anderson

The impact of misclassification in land use maps in the prediction of landscape dynamics. Landscape Ecology pp 233-242, Vol 21.2 Feb 2006

Tobias Plieninger **Habitat loss, fragmentation and alteration – quantifying the impact of land use changes on a Spanish dehesa landscape by use of aerial photography and GIS** pp 91- 105. Landscape Ecology 21.1 January 2006

Gerry Barnes and Tom Williamson. **Hedgerow History: Ecology, history and landscape character.** 160 pages illustrated - 35 colour and 35 black and white. The Windgather Press. ISBN 1-905119-04-06 Published February 2006. Price £18.99

As reviewed in Area

Adrian Harvey, Anne Mather and Martine Stones **Alluvial fans: geomorphology, sedimentology, dynamics** Geological Society of London Special Publication 251, 2005 256pp £75 ISBN1-86239-189-0

Sue Clifford and Angela King **England in Particular: A celebration of the commonplace, the local, the vernacular and the distinctive.** Published by Hodder and Stoughton 2006 for Common Ground. ISBN 0-340826616-9. 512 pages, encyclopedic style, many small line drawings £30.

10

Bud Young
Worthington & Westmacott
re-visit NAL areas

I was barely aware that the New Agricultural Landscapes (NAL) project initiated in 1973 had been kept going by the Countryside Agency. In that year, it was an important report and documented the damage to landscape being done through grant aided farming. It benefited from the collaboration of an agriculturalist Tom Worthington (founder director of Reading Agricultural Consultants) and a landscape specialist, Richard Westmacott (for many years at the University of Georgia). Though to me it seems only a few years ago, one has to remember that 1973 was as close to 1940 as we are the other side of it. And 1940, well it was the U-Boat Atlantic food siege ('Britain the Island Fortress'), the great ploughing of grassland and the justification of state aided food self sufficiency at whatever price to the environment.

In 1973 the two authors employed three ways to research their seven 50 km² study areas: the detailed questioning of farmers — what landscape changes they had made and why; an illustrative photographic survey within each area and the use of the Tandy Isovist method of spatial analysis which, in a 360° view identifies the different physical/landscape elements that form the viewer's horizon. This analysis allowed you to 'quantify landscape' — 1973 was the era of quantification — as opposed to characterisation of landscape.

The isovist viewpoints were randomly selected along roads and tracks to which the public had access. When probed as to the value of airphotos, the vertical view, Tom comes out strongly for the ground-based view, as airphotos, which are so good at quantification of change do not offer ground-based users of landscape the information about what they actually see as they pass through it. And anyway, the Commission felt unable to justify the overflying of the seven areas at that time. Which is sad!

The Isovist method (try Googling the UCL paper) allowed comparison between sites within each study area and 'measured characterisation' of the study areas' landscapes as an aggregate of ten sample points. Done at the same level of detail, it also allowed a measure of change in any area over a period of years. This method says Tom was the only quantifiable ground based method then available. Does it remain so?

The exuberant volume of summer growth has a major effect on our response to a view and how the further

views are blocked. Other matters such as the height of the observer and the exact point taken for the isovist also matter. No isovists were undertaken in 2005.

In their surveys, the camera lens used has always been of 50 mm focal length and in the first report photos in a panorama were manually stitched together. Nowadays this stitching process is widely offered on a digital camera and last year's revisit was done in that way.

The best aspect of the work as seen in the 2005 survey is that the illustrative photos (set one below the other) offer four identical segments of view each differing only in date: 1972, 1983, 1994 and 2005. They are immediately understandable. The landscapes pictured are often remarkably unchanged. The Cambridgeshire sample shows the greatest changes, often to drainage dykes, but against this there is volume growth of poplar lines. The Herefordshire sample shows very little change and indeed in many of the samples there has been a signal improvement in hedge volumes extending also to new hedge planting. Buildings in the landscape tell a story of affluent incomers and often-good farm building conversions surrounded by out-of-character suburban style landscaping.

In my opinion the most telling part of the well illustrated report of 1973, was that it proposed ways in which farmland might be strengthened as landscape. New field corner planting, less severe hedge management, tree planting to hide ugly farm buildings and so on. It made predictions as to future trends in landscape impoverishment. Working from this, it was taken up by the Countryside Commission (as was) and developed into a programme of ten 'Demonstration Farms' which sought to influence neighbouring farms — each farmer selected being a peer group leader.

The 2006 report 'Appraisal and Overview' sections draw on a great deal of thoughtful observation — beyond fieldwork alone — of authors who have been involved with the agricultural landscape for forty years.

Meanwhile I am amused that thirty three year later (this evening in fact) I see Waitrose's new advert: "Waitrose grow onions on fields where wide hedge margins are left for wildlife." Interesting how long it takes to get from the 1973 report and the campaigning efforts of the few — see the article by Merrick Denton Thompson page 1 of LRE 38 — to mainstream consumer opinion.

Further commentary on this report will appear in LRE41. The report can be downloaded from: http://www.countryside.gov.uk/Publications/articles/Publication_tcm2-29715.asp or from the weekly Newsletter "Planning" for 15th September 2006: "Agricultural Landscapes 33 Years of Change" where it is cited in a one page report by David Alexander.

11

Bud Young
English landscape as a part
of English culture

It begins with a very small Franco-German touring caravan, so small that people point at it and smile; and two good American bicycles made in Taiwan. The first trip is to the Cotswolds to Long Compton a site next to a 17th Century mill recorded in the Domesday Book. Night temperatures drop to minus 7.5° C. The fog clears, the hoar frost sparkles and crunches underfoot. We cycle from medieval furrowed site, from hilltop village to village, one 15th C pub and three churches all very different. Ten miles out we reach the well documented deserted village of Lower Ditchford, just a crow's swoop east from the Roman road, Fosse Way. On our return, the mill owner, Parish Clerk and a lovely man (who had been born in the upstairs bedroom 82 years before) refused site rent on the basis that we had shown extreme hardiness.

A second trip takes us to Shropshire — broad valleys afforested slopes, and by bike to the tiny town of Clun where we perch on a castle mount which controls two valleys approaches. A large church unexpectedly Victorian inside. John Osborne who once looked back in anger lies quiet in the churchyard. We are alone on the campsite which is one of those small orchard meadows next



to an ancient sandstone farmhouse; red brown fowl wander the orchard, a dozen buzzards sun themselves high on a grassy slope below the woods. Three miles north, we drive up the Long Mynd, a place of fearful slopes, a long mountain, we look out over many counties. The highrise buildings of Dudley offer a marker eastwards and we can see Bredon Hill down near Tewksbury. We drop down to Church Stretton, both medieval and Edwardian

and drink Shropshire Lad beer in an intriguingly old 'High street back range' buttery. Civilized.

Other trips immerse us in the Somerset Levels and the little hills that rise from them like islands in a marsh. Easy cycling despite a strong east wind the length of Long Load. A wonderful barn owl patrols its rectangle of dykes; there is plum jam for sale from the church porch at High Ham. And on another Levels trip — this time in an idyllic, muggy summer landscape with elderflowers, May blossom and cow parsley — we do a long marsh circuit beginning at the cathedral city of Wells. Oh what a delight that place is! A lovely small scale market square a cathedral and a bishop's palace and moat. And like the good middle class (1930's) person that I am, I attend choral mattins at the Cathedral.

Yes of course it is all 'very Massingham' (see my adverse comments in Anthology) — all very Batsford books, and stupidly delightful, perhaps for its simplicity, its sense of exploration of England in full cultural, visual, sensory and historic detail and certainly for the opiate effect of cycling.

Another exploration takes us north of Sherborne and the isolated ridgetop campsite had unmodified remains of an antiaircraft battery from WW2. There is the brick messroom and the large arch-roofed underground shelter and the fortified circular gun area. All post Massingham — 1940s. Fields close by are edged with traditional stonewalls made from broken up WW2 runway concrete. We cycle north

to the Beacon (see photo on this page). The drought had whitened the grass and it felt like Andalucia. We could see Glastonbury and beyond that we see Wales. One mile from us, just north of Cadbury Castle (see guidebook) runs the A303, the familiar world of trunkroad networks and the swish of tyres, the 'normal world'. Here, though, we were alone in a steady breeze; alone except for a London professional man and his baby son. He talked of space and bringing up his children in the country.