

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH GROUP

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH EXTRA
No 7 WINTER 1990/1

WHO KNOWS EASTERN EUROPE?

Graham Sumner's report on the Wales/Australia landscape and literature conference sharpens one's awareness of the gulf that can exist between those who live and are affected by the hugeness of a country's landscape and those who take one or more parts of it and focus their literary, academic (or design) energies on it. LRG of course comprises a broad spectrum of souls attracted to landscape in a variety of ways and scales.

Applying this then to Eastern Europe - who amongst us even knows its physical geography, let alone its broadest landscapes. And if one had an issue of Landscape Research devoted to Eastern Europe (Romania? Poland?) would one focus on the 1000km Vistula, on the Polish Plain, on the Carpathians or alternatively examine who had created the landscaped parks of Warsaw or investigate the landscape ecology of a state farm. To move **out** from the particular or **in** from the panoramic overview - that is the question.

For me the second way is best but looking at my ignorance yesterday as I read about Poland I realised that landscape cannot be separated from people from national history and from culture. Without these it is shape mass and form but has no meaning. And perhaps that is why (and here I change course) maps and statistics of landscape change which have no cultural attachment should be re presented in an historic and cultural context.

HELP WITH PROJECTED LRG EVENTS

Gareth Roberts (Snowdonia National Park) would be pleased to hear from readers interested in contributing to, attending or helping organise a conference on the mapping of early landscapes (say post 1600). His home address is Dolwen, Trawsfynydd Gwynedd LL41 4SP Wales.

Carol Jones, chairwoman of LRG's Events Committee would be pleased to hear of any member who has a background interest in the landscape of residential environments. In particular we would like to hear of a member capable of a organising or helping with a conference on the subject (with strong support from an experienced events committee). Considerable basic work has already been done on this. Contact Carol Jones, Department of Architecture and Landscape, Thames Polytechnic, Dartford, London.

DISAPPEARING MEDITERRANEAN WETLAND LANDSCAPES

Wetlands are among the world's most seriously abused habitats. In the Mediterranean region there are still some areas of tremendous international importance for wetland wildlife, but all the best areas are under immediate serious threat. For decades reclamation for agriculture has been tranforming millions of hectares of coastal lagoon, reedbed, and marsh into prairie. More recently intensive fish farming, often involving highly polluting methods, have been damaging the delicately balanced ecosystems on which these habitats depend. The loss of traditional practices such as salt production, since Roman times a feature of the coastal landscape, has placed under threat such birds as flamingos and avocets, two of the symbols of the region's former richness. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is calling for an EC wide management strategy to safeguard the remaining areas.

Laurence Rose, Nature Conservancy Council, Taunton.

DIVERTED IN THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE

Before any reader imagines otherwise, the 'diversion' of my title is to the 'Jardin D'Acclimatation' and its multi-faceted play environment, rather than to any doubtful pleasures elsewhere in the Bois.

How much use might we expect of an English urban park in early December? Whilst the dog-walkers and roaming families might reappear, the Bois seem to offer so much more - a Jewish youth outing, dog grooming, karate training with a tree... and the 'Jardin'.

This is a layered escape for urban children and their parents. Picturesque cottages and farm buildings, a residue of rather sad domestic and zoo animals, and the remains of mature 19th century planting provide the first layer. Superimposed and intermingled are generations of amusements and attractions - rides, fairground booths, play structures and novelties. There is a gentle admixture of the commercial and the free; next to a snack stall, a triangular-plan shelter housing a shining sequence of distorting mirrors. Through 'windows' into neighbouring buildings and sites the casual visitor borrows from a commercial bowling alley, a riding school, and a childrens' museum.

This is a childrens' park which should not be judged in adult terms. The joints between buildings and spaces are ragged, many of the 19th century park surprises have been destroyed, planting and feature buildings are not in peak condition (though the tall brick dovecote survives). The combination of crazed crazy golf and wandering ducks in La Ferme du Golf is wonderfully eccentric.

In one corner of the Jardin is the Musee en Herbe, a glazed childrens' museum set around a courtyard, managed by Direction des Parcs et Jardins de la Ville de Paris, its current presentation (until 31 March 1991) is Le Jardin Musical.

You really need to have a small child with you to openly enjoy the three related displays which link the exhibition spaces. The major sequence of the indoor garden is guided by large 'instruments' which encourage children to create sounds from found and contrived objects - steps and stepping stones from sound boxes, submerged recorders, bell and wire wheels of various types, 'Come and make music with your body' is the invitation. The experience draws the envy of adults who hover near their children until no other adults are in view and then....

In addition there is an opportunity to experiment with synthesizers, and, with prior booking, a workshop for children to use novel instruments.

'Le Jardin Musical' is designed by Structures Sonores Baschet and given its season of presentation, is largely set indoors with external links of musical sculptures. If you are in Paris any day before the Spring, these Jardins are well worth a visit.

Brian Goodey

THE AMENITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE OF RIVER CORRIDORS

Messrs Green and Tunstall at the Flood Hazard Research Centre, Middlesex Polytechnic have produced the results of their research (Publication No 171), which involved interviews with 1500 people - how the public use river corridors and what features they like about them or how they might be improved.

As might be predicted (?) people are looking for quiet, environmentally rich places with adequate lavatory facilities and paths but without too many other people. They are prepared to pay for improved water quality but this is because a moral concern for a better environment. They have a reasonable idea of what is meant by a polluted river but judge a 'good river' as one which is attractive (in other terms). They have no clear expectation of what are the characteristics of an unpolluted river. Trips into the river corridor brings them only part of the time to the river's edge.

The research supports the case for water quality improvement because despite the low extra value placed on clean water by river corridor users the total number of users is very high, rivers being more attractive to people than parks.

It is noticeable in this report that the rivers subject to scrutiny varied from a major river - the Severn at Shrewsbury, to a small brook - the Yeading (Harrow, Middlesex). Recent airphoto interpretive work on the River Stort (Herts) (by the author of this note) for the National Rivers Authority (Thames) draws attention to the well known fact that a short section of river corridor may show many abrupt changes in landscape, biological richness, sense of remoteness and accessibility along its length. For the last reason it is not used or perceived in anything like its entirety, nor can one talk of the river corridor as a single recreational/landscape entity. A criticism then of Green and Tunstall's report might be that the real landscape qualities of their sites and relative importance of river channel versus other valley delights is not considered in detail, at least not in the paper received.

R N Young

OTHER JOURNALS

ARBORICULTURAL JOURNAL 14(3) August 1990
The greater part of this number is an important study of tree roots with 87 photographs which many professionals will want to have as an original copy in their library.
P E Gasson & D F Cutler **Tree root plate morphology** 193-264
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PLACES: A Quarterly Journal of Environmental Design

Calling for submissions the editor explains what he wants as follows - We will publish descriptions, drawings, photographs and discussions on all types of places. We are interested in places big and small, special and ordinary, public and private, old and new, hidden and found, run-down and tended. 'Places' will look at how people have shaped satisfying places, with and without professional assistance. And 'Places' will focus on the shifting lines between the public and private domains, with particular attention to public spaces in the service of shared and egalitarian ideals of society. In particular, we encourage: explorations, reflections, visual essays, contrasts, research results, fantasy design schemes, perceptions, memories and hopes, manifestos, argument, dispatches and standards.

To submit papers or subscribe, contact: Todd W Bressi, Associate Editor, Places, c/o Design History Foundation, 330 W 42nd St 11th Floor, New York, NY 10036

PLANNING HISTORY

This bulletin is produced three times a year for the Planning History Group whose prime aim is to increase an awareness of developments and ideas in planning history in all parts of the world.
The contents list of Vol 12/2 1990 given under "Other Journals" offers an idea of their range and suggests that LRG members may find valuable material in the Bulletin. Any enquiries or correspondence to their editor Professor Denis Hardy, School of Geography and Planning, Middlesex Polytechnic, Queensway, Enfield, Middlesex EN3 45F Telephone 081-368 1299 X2299

FREESCAPE

Luke Greysmith, recent graduate in Landscape & Architecture has asked us to announce 'Freescape' which describes itself in the following paragraph.

This magazine (3 issues for £3!) is the first of its kind by students of landscape architecture at Manchester Polytechnic. It is a response to a need to broaden the outlook and learning of landscape designers. While primarily being based around the course at Manchester it is hoped that we can reflect what is happening and changing in the profession and respond quickly to new ideas about landscape at a grass roots level. Individuals may develop personal strategies for design but sharing inspiration and documenting ideas can only put landscape design in a better position for future debate about our environment.

One of the aims of Freescape is to establish greater links between landscape students of different years, courses and countries.
Manchester Polytechnic, Department of Landscape and Architecture, Loxford Tower, Lower Chatham Street, Manchester, M15 6HA

STREETWISE

Maps, Town Trails and Interpretation is the main theme of the Spring issue of Streetwise, the quarterly magazine of the National Association for Urban Studies (NAUS). At its forthcoming conference and AGM NAUS will be considering the implications of the British government's recent White Paper on the Environment for Urban Studies. There will also be a session about the role of Local Environmental Action Plans. NAUS is planning another conference in the autumn in conjunction with Learning through Landscapes on the theme of Using School Grounds.

Streetwise aims to raise awareness of **urban** environmental issues and to encourage participation in the development of environmental policies and in local initiatives to improve the urban environment. The magazine, says its editor, Richard Welsh, includes material of interest to teachers, policy makers and everyone concerned with urban environmental issues. The summer 1991 issue of Streetwise will focus on the theme of Child-friendly Cities. Contributions and ideas are invited by mid-April.

Further information about NAUS and Streetwise:
The NAUS Administrator Lewis Cohen Urban Studies Centre, Brighton Polytechnic
68 Grand Parade, Brighton BN2 2JY England

LANDSCAPE AND LITERATURE

In the United Kingdom there is a growing core of specialists drawn from many of academic disciplines united by their interest in Australia. The problem of mixing individuals with interests ranging from economic geology and climatology through literature to political and literary theory, is that, having found the common ground of Australia, a very large number of bridges must be built for communication to take place. Even then communication can be limited. Within Australian Studies the gap between 'literati' and 'environmentati' (the terms are merely a convenient shorthand!) has been a difficult one to bridge except superficially, and yet the environmental richness of Australian literature and the uniqueness of the Australian environment cry out for a closer mutual understanding.

The 1987 Exeter AmCAS/LRG 'OASES' conference attempted to bring people and ideas together. The Centre for Australian Studies in Wales held a first meeting in 1988 on the theme of 'Wales and Australia'; the second symposium, 'Landscape and Literature' furthered the study of links and contrasts between the two countries, and drew specifically on the strength of human/land links in the two: hence, 'hiraeth' and 'dreaming'.

The first paper of that meeting 'In search of Wales: : Landscape and Identity between the Wars (Pyrs Gruffudd, University of Nottingham) set the local scene, supported by some of the worst summer weather of 1990 outside, and most drew out the 'hiraeth' and closeness of the Welsh to their land. The contrast of images between the characteristically wet and hilly, somewhat forbidding, Welsh scene and equally daunting images of the Sunburnt Country and the Dead Heart could hardly have been greater. Links between the two

countries were reinforced by the subsequent three papers. Cassandra Wall (Oxford) expertly analysed Bruce Chatwin's "On the Black Hill" set in Wales and "The Songlines" set in Australia. The frequent allusion to landscape and feeling for it, again provided a way of drawing out the contrasts and similarities between the two countries. Andrew Hassam (Lampeter) and Jack Camm (University of Newcastle, NSW) presented papers dealing with emigration to Australia. Andrew Hassam's concentrated on the literature and environment of the early migrants in "Narrating the Passage: Sea Journals and the Voyage Out", using the journals of Surgeon Thomas Mitchell, and diaries of Richard Watt and Fanny Davis. Jack Camm's paper highlighted the landscape 'imagery' used to entice would-be immigrants to Australia between 1830 and 1920. It is sobering to consider that to most Britons and to the characteristically suburban Autralian populus the sometime romantic images of that country still differ markedly from a reality dominated by isolation and a harsh environment. "Neighbours" and Dorothea McKellar's "My Country" prevail.

The afternoon session was directed at the portrayal of the landscape, in its widest interpretation, in contemporary Australian writings. Peter Bishop (South Australian College of Education, Adelaide and Nottingham University) and Colin Patrick (Lancaster University), respectively an engineer-turned-geographer and geologist, considered works of David Malouf, Robyn Davidson, Gerald Murnane, Paul Hewson and Linda-Marie Walker, and Patrick White. On the other side of the environment/literature 'Great Divide' Brigitta Olubas (University of New South Wales, Sydney) and Wenche Ommundsen (Deakin University, Geelong) presented papers dealing respectively with "Identity and Place in Recent Aboriginal Writing" and "Mapping the postmodern mind: topography as text in the fiction of Murray Bail".

Discussion was lively, and revealed mutual misunderstanding (or friendly rivalry). The literate criticised the shallowness of the lovers of the environment who demonstrated their frustration at an apparent lack of appreciation by literate experts of the fundamental importance of environment to virtually everything Australian by the literati! Clearly the building of bridges over this Divide will be a slow and painstaking process.

Some of the papers delivered at the symposium are shortly to be published in "Australian Studies", the journal of the British Australian Studies Association.

Graham Sumner,
Centre for Australian Studies in Wales

SHEILA FELL (1931-1979) ARTIST OF CUMBERLAND

An exhibition of paintings of "one of the most outstanding landscape artists of her generation" is currently touring the England and Scotland.

Sheila Fell's work is powerful, vigorous, yet poetic and moving. She was deeply involved in Cumberland (part of the English Lake District), and painted it in many moods. People, animals and buildings are always an integral and essential yet intimate part of her paintings. It is certainly an exhibition not to be missed by anyone interested in British landscape painting, or anyone interested in a very personal yet truthful portrayal of the Cumberland landscape.

Having visited the exhibition, I cannot understand how she has remained relatively so unknown; her early death, bringing short her output of passionate paintings, is both tragic and a great loss.

A quote by Sheila Fell included in the exhibition catalogue, summarises her approach:-

"I have no interest in any painting which does not have its roots in reality - or tap root at least. The closeness of my relationship with Cumberland enables me to use it as a cross section of life. All the landscape is lived in, modulated, worked on and used by man."

The exhibition has been to Salford, but you may catch it at:-

Royal Academy of Arts, London 15 Dec - 15 Jan 1991
Rozelle House, Ayr, Scotland 26 Jan - 9 March 1991
Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal (the Lake District) 16 Mar - 28 April
Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, East Sussex 11 May - 23 June
Bede Gallery, Jarrow, Tyneside 4 July - 11 August 1991

Nancy Stedman

THE LAND LONGS FOR ITS PEOPLE

This extract quoted by permission of Ioan Bowen Rees was first published as 'Opinion' in Countryside Commission News 46. Its author, chief executive of Gwynedd (North Wales) was born and brought up in the small town of Dolgellau in the south of Gwynedd. It links people, their homes and the landscape and reflects the idea of Hiraeth (a longing) that formed part of the conference reported by David Sumner in this issue.

"Significantly, the most evocative volume of landscape writing in Welsh is Sir Owen M Edwards' **Cartrefi Cymru (The Homes of Wales).** In his essays, the domestic landscape not only inspires distinguished individuals but also permeates the society that produced them - poets and writers, social and religious reformers, a musician, a martyr, most of them brought up on small farms in what are now the three national parks of Wales.

In a sense, the nearest English-language equivalent is Raymond Williams' posthumous novel, **People of the Black Mountains.** According to a reviewer of the second volume of this book, its dominant theme is "the connections between human kindness and human rootedness". The review went on: "Faith in people and faith in a place cannot be divided".

Williams himself said: "This extraordinarily settled and that extraordinarily open wild country are very close to each other and intricately involved...As the eye follows them...the generations are distinct but all suddenly present."

I am concerned about the absence today of this dimension, (continues Ioan Rees). Recently, I crossed the Carneddau from Llanbedr-y-cennin in Dyffryn Conwy. Encountering only one human being, I passed the ruins of home after home of the kind that had inspired Owen Edwards. On the broad shelf above the valley, a whole society had disappeared. Creating more wilderness is not an obvious priority in Wales, whatever the position in East Anglia."

Comment This excerpt recommends itself for identifying the feeling of something lost from the landscape which one might properly and prosaically call its vitality. The idea that places need people as people do places invests landscape with a an additional rather mysterious spirit world dimension a landscape inhabited by benign spirits which accumulate from generation to generation and may at any moment make themselves felt. It is an idea familiar to church goers and visitors to holy places but implies something more than 'a wonderful sense of history' and not the same as the genius of the place.

VOX POP LANDSCAPES

At the recent conference of LRG at Nottingham, on the problem of Landscape, Heritage and National identity, everyone must have felt some sympathy with Patrick Wright, asked to give a paper on Saturday evening, after a substantial meal. His secret for this event was to soothe the audience with an apparently unstressful approach and then produce a sting in the tail. We were treated to a pleasant ramble around the landscape of Purbeck, especially the area under the control of the Ministry of Defence, complete with a great deal of historical background on Weymouth Bay and its perception. The Bay is apparently another English Bay of Naples, along with Torbay, Plymouth Sound, Minehead Bay, Scarborough Bay and no doubt many more!

Given the academic audience, and the anti-nationalist tenor of most of the papers, the discussion of the army's presence in the area was enough to give most noses the superior tilt which comes from knowing there's a rather nasty smell about which cannot be attributed to oneself. The sting in the tail was then revealed: when the local gentry made efforts to oust the army they met opposition from the local working people. If we as leading landscape academics had cherished feelings of knowing 'what were the best landscapes' it was a well timed thrust.

It is very clear from the historical study of art, literature and landscape itself, that an elite view of landscape, usually based on obvious political and social motives has been dominant in the past. Such a view certainly still exists, and is probably most manifest in the National Trust's view of England. The social elitist motives behind gentrification, both in town and country, are pretty clear, and clearly pretty.

Academic opposition to such a view of England has largely been a negative deconstruction of its myths and mores, with very little in the way of an alternative view of the country on offer. To see the alternative, one probably has to read modern literature, and visit exhibitions of modern (but emphatically not modernist) works of art. The new vision of England is clearly in opposition to the traditional elite view, most spectacularly in its untidiness. It is still largely a rural England but littered with plenty of old barbed wire, corrugated iron shacks, overgrown hedgerows and copses, allotment huts, waste tips, filthy farm yards, and old barns, perhaps ripe for conversion but clearly unconverted.

The urban version lurks in the inner districts of mainly northern industrial cities - and a love of industry, albeit obsolescent if not actually derelict, is quite clear. Such a vision is very obviously at odds with the elitist view, tidy, pretty, Southern and rural which the new scholars so abhor. Perhaps this new vision would be the vision the scholars would prefer, if they had time to construct a positive view.

However to assume that this new vision is in any

way that of the "people" is completely false. For one thing a very large number of the "people" would support the clean and tidy rural image. For those who do not, their aspirations and preferences are likely to be opposed to the new scruffy look as being exactly those landscapes which they are trying to ignore or suppress. In fact the new vision is an aesthetic view as elitist as the self-conscious discovery of vernacular elements, fishing villages, farmsteads and villages, was a century ago.

Jacquelin Burgess (now a board member of LRG) has done a lot to illuminate these genuine preferences of the people. They can also be seen in many housing areas in the country, where householders are busy "doing it themselves."

Peter Howard

RECORDING BRITAIN

It is not easy to justify a note on an exhibition which has closed. 'Recording Britain' was at the V & A, high in the Henry Cecil wing in the Autumn. But there is a book, Gill Saunders, David Mellor and Patrick Wright's **Recording Britain** (David and Charles, £29.95), and the exhibition is touring in 1991, so look out for it.

'Recording Britain' reflects a home front initiative which yielded a parallel, but lesser-known body of work to that of the Second World War artists. Both programmes were stimulated by Kenneth Clark and Recording Britain, which yielded over 1,000 pictures in the period 1940-3, was supported by Harkness funds through the Pilgrim Trust.

The exhibition selection features a hundred works by watercolour and topographic artists such as John Piper, Michael Rothenstein, Rowland Hilder and Kenneth Rowntree, but also harks back to early 20th century traditions of tight, formal recording.

Some images will be known to regional audiences - a towering bright Saling Church sticks in my mind from an Essex exhibition in the 1950's. But here the purpose of the exercise becomes clear in the quietly structured sequence which underlines the historic purpose of the project.

Here, in wartime, the dark warnings of Clough Williams-Ellis and Joad, of the CPRE, and the closeted teams of reconstructionists were heeded and quiet scenes of the village, farm, and town reported.

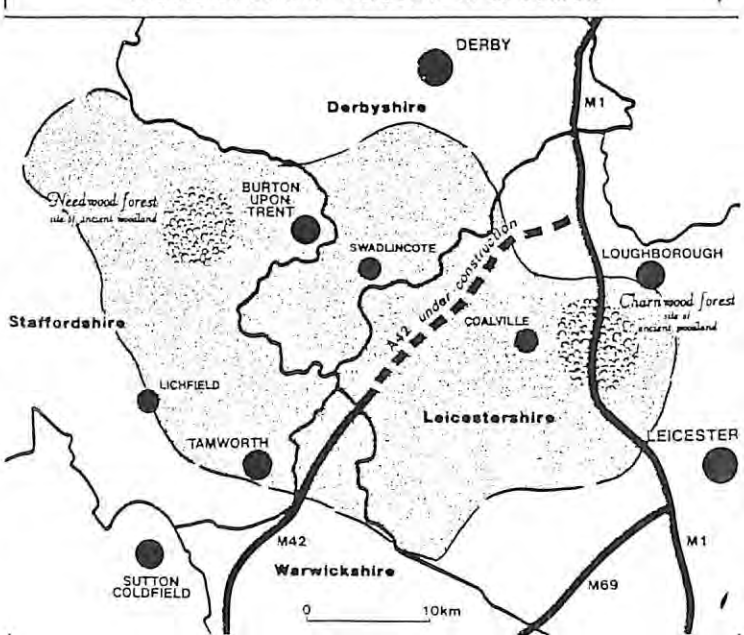
It was to be the world we have lost, but as enduring as is the Englishness of the Nash-influenced style of many works, is the sense that many of these quiet scenes have survived to our day. Maybe the book will prove to me that they do not.

Brian Goodey

CHANGING THE FACE OF THE ENGLISH MIDLANDS

The future location of the United Kingdom's New National Forest is now decided and we show it in the accompanying map. A group of technical officers from the local authorities involved will guide the creation of this forest over a period of at least 30 years.

The New National Forest area of search



MOOR PARK, HERTFORDSHIRE: INFORMATION PLEASE

Dear Sir,

I happen to read a publication of yours. I am interested in any research to do with the gardens of Moor Park, Hertfordshire during 18th century of Lord Russel 17th Duke of Monmouth up to Lord Ebury's occupation. The gardens were laid out by Capability Brown and Temple. If any of your members have information of the above please advise. Many thanks

M E Wiggs, Bradenham Moor Lane, Rickmansworth, Herts.

Reply please direct to Mr Wiggs.

SHOULD YOU READ?

Special issue on landscape:-

* **Aperture** No 120 Late Summer 1990, entitled 'Beyond Wilderness' is on landscape photography with articles by J B Jackson et al, and many photos. (Aperture, PO Box 6678, Syracuse, NY13217, USA)

* **Built Environment** Vol 16 No 2 1990 is devoted to Landscape Planning: Some European Perspectives, with contributions from Italy, Spain, Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands.

* **Planning Perspectives** Vol 5 No 3 1990 is devoted to the history of the Garden City.

* **Landscape & Urban Planning** Vol 19 No 2 1990 is devoted to interactions between Local Populations and Protected Landscapes and is guest edited by Ervin Zube.

* **Planned Outlook** Vol 32 No 2 1989 is devoted to planning in Scotland.

* **The East Midland Geographer** Vol 12 Nos 1/2 1989 is devoted to Parkland design and management in the East Midlands.

* Peter Bishop **Consuming Constable** (Diet, Utopian Landscape and National Identity), Nottingham University, Department of Geography, Working Paper 5, July 1990

* John Taylor **The Preservation of England** 2-13 John Corner & Sylvia Harvey **Heritage in Britain** 14-21 Jeremy Seabrook & Nick Hedges **The Meanings of Environment** 22-41 Ten-8 No 36 Spring 1990

* A G Fielding **A Kodak in the Clouds** History of Photography 13(3) 1990 217-230

* M Folch-Serra **Place, voice, space: Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogical landscape** Environment & Planning D Society & Space 8(3) 1990 255-274

* David Tyldersley & Ian Collis **Nature Conservation and Local Government - a review of progress** Ecos 11(4) 1990 13-19

* David Baldock & Nigel Haigh **The environment and 1992** Ecos 11(3) 1990 10-15

* Michael E Patterson & William E Hammett **Backcountry Encounter Norms, Actual Reported Encounters and their relationship to Wilderness Solitude** Journal of Leisure Research 22(3) 1990 259-275 (How many people before the place seems crowded?)

* B Yang & R Kaplan **The perception of landscape style: a cross-cultural comparison** Landscape & Urban Planning 19(3)

* M Gidley & R Lawson Peebles **Views of American Landscapes** Cambridge 1989 ISBN 0521 364353

* Roy Haines-Young, Nick Ward & Mark Avery **GIS in forestry and environmental management** Mapping Awareness 4/9 1990 51-54

* David Thomas **The Edge of the City** Trans IBG 15/2 1990 131-138

* Sarah Jones **Is there a 'place' for children in geography?** Area 22/3 1990 IBG 278-283

* Nick Ward, T Marsden & R Munton **Farm landscape change: trends in upland and lowland England** Land Use Policy 7/4 1990 291-302

* **Countryside and nature conservation issues in district local plans** Guidance on the recommended treatment of these issues in local plans. Published jointly with the Nature Conservancy Council. CCP317 £5.00 ISBN 0 86170 276 X

* **Advice manual for the preparation of a community forest plan** This manual gives general advice on how to prepare a community forest plan as part of the process of creating a community forest. CCP271 £15.00(looseleaf) ISBN 0 86170 256 5

* **Planning and management of areas of outstanding natural beauty** Professor Gerald Smart and Dr Margaret Anderson's appraisal of developments in AONB planning and management practice during the 1980s, with recommendations for the future. CCP295 £10.00 ISBN 0 86170 253 0

* **Changes in landscape features in England and Wales 1947-1985** an extended summary, with graphs and tables, of the results of the monitoring landscape change survey carried out for the Countryside Commission and Department of the Environment. Available only from: Countryside Commission, John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3RA CCD44 £2.00

* Paul Wagner **1000 municipalities for the European environment - Spain** in Metamorphosis - The EC newletter on the environment

* Nicky Court & Mike Hughes **Hampshire's Countryside Heritage - a progress report** Hampshire County Council £2.95 ISBN 1 871940 02-8

* Andrew Mullaney **Greater Manchester landscapes - The Flashes of Wigan and Leigh** Countryside and Wildlife No 4 Summer 90

* Chris Spencer, Mark Blades & Kim Morsley **The child in the physical environment** John Wiley 1989 £32.95 hardback

* Colin Ward **The child in the city** New edition, Bedford Square Press 1989 £7.95

* **European Environmental Yearbook** DocTer Institute for Environmental Studies/Milan 1991 2nd edition £60

* **Amenity valuation of trees and woodlands** Arboricultural Association 1990 ISBN 0 900978 17 1 £3.95

* Adrian Lisney & Ken Fieldhouse **Landscape Design Guide - Volume 1: Soft Landscape and Volume 2: Hard Landscape** from bookshops of from Gower Publishing Company, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 3HR £35.00 per volume

* **European Environment** from European Research Press Ltd PO Box 75 Shipley, West Yorkshire BD17 6EZ a new journal in February 1991 Subscription rates: £18 p.a. for individual and £38 p.a. for institutional subscriptions

* **A Brief for the Countryside in the 21st century** - the proceedings of the final conference in the Future Countryside Programme, The Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures & Commerce 8 John Adam Street London WC2N 6EZ October 1990 £3.50

GO EAST YOUNG MAN

Last July I organised a trip to Poland for 20 staff from British National Parks. Our objective was to visit three National Parks in south eastern Poland, meet their staff and representatives of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

This was my first visit to Poland since the lid had been prized off the regime of General Jariselski. Memories of earlier visits over 20 years to eastern Europe are dominated by the dull greyness of their totalitarian bureaucracies steadily blanketing out cultural and landscape diversity.

To keep the cost of the trip to a minimum I arranged for us to travel from Oostende to Zakopane in Poland by coach. This journey was to prompt a number of good humoured but vulgar limericks.

Despite the harrowing nature of the journey, we all agreed that it was an experience which had heightened our awareness of how two diametrically opposed economic systems could at their worse have generated landscapes so equally devoid of character and individuality.

Collective farming has raged through eastern Europe like a tornado sweeping aside family farms. Very much the same is true of Western European agriculture and the effect the CAP has had on our landscapes and rural societies. Both systems have in their own way been totalitarian, and in their endeavour to explain and conquer nature their outcome has been to largely destroy and disinherit themselves from it.

Those parts of Europe which have managed to survive have done so in part because they were "marginal" in terms of the opportunity they afforded for improvement and or, because they have been designated for special protection. The record of Poland and other eastern European countries in the designation of such areas is generally good. Protected area designations have been legislated for since the early 1930s in Poland, and the country has 13 National Parks (parc narodowy) as well as ten landscape parks (parc krajobrazowy) - also termed 'nature parks' where for a large part development and human activity has been eliminated. There are also numerous areas zoned as protected landscapes and nature reserves.

The countryside around Zakopone with its backdrop of the high Tatras was an immense relief from the heavily industrialised landscapes of the Katovices, Dresdens and Zwickaus that we had passed through to get there. One has an intense sense of something profoundly wrong with industrial eastern Europe. My son's first comment on awakening in the coach to the acrid yellowness of a Dresden morning was of the heavens having been soiled (in welsh - "beuddu'r nefoedd"). Perhaps young children are more intensely rooted in the natural world than we adults.

For decades the Padhale District of south eastern Poland which contains Zakopane, was the poorest in the country. Thousands emigrated to North America in seach of a better life. Many of these have since reinvested in their homeland, returning there to marry or to send money to their families.

This district has now the highest per capita income in Poland. It is reported that $1000 invested in the Banc Narodowy will accrue interest equivalent to the average annual per capita income. There are considerable numbers of new houses being built in the countryside around Zakopane and many families share their time between farming and other work. Many are extraordinarily large, and built in response to the increasing demand for accomodation from visitors to the region.

Gareth a board member of LRG will be organising a two week mid July trip to visit Czechoslovak national parks and protected areas (including the low and perhaps the high Tatra Mountains). Travel to the area will be via plane to Vienna and there will be two days in Prague. He expects the cost to be about £300. He may be contacted at his home "Dolwen", Trawsfynydd, Gwynedd LL41 4SP North Wales.

I felt a strong affinity for these mountain people, seeing in them qualities not dissimilar to those I find amongst small family farming communities in upland Wales. Both it seems, are under pressure from bureaucracies intent on their modernisation in the service of a "scientific world view".

I smiled wryly on reading the note on the dining room of our hotel in Zakopone which declared that our evening meals had been rescheduled to allow the waitering staff to get home early to help with haymaking. I could but wonder how long the 'new order' would tolerate such conflicts of interest.

Zakopone is the place for Poles to go on their holidays. Foreign travel has traditionally been restricted and is expensive for most Poles. Zakopone offers outstanding scenery and varied recreational opportunity. Poles seem to appreciate what their countryside offers them and are eager to enjoy it. The Tatra National Park is under great pressure and this is very evident from the serious

erosion that has occurred on some of the lower level trails in this Park. There are other threats too. Air and water pollution, unsuitable forms of development and tourism pressure greatly worry the staff we met in all three National Parks.

There are spectacularly wonderful landscapes in Poland and elsewhere in eastern Europe which are now severely threatened. Although the commitment to environmental conservation is high in these countries their economies are very weak and the resources needed to manage these areas properly are increasingly hard to find. Eastern European Park managers do need our encouragement in the face of this crisis. I hope young people will look eastward in a conservationist spirit of co-operation and support rather than in the rapacious manner that characterised our forebears westward migrations little over a century ago.

Gareth Roberts, Snowdonia, North Wales

LANDSCAPE WITHIN AN INTERNATIONAL RIVERS CONFERENCE

Those who attended the international conference for the conservation and management of rivers organised by the NCC at York University will have heard an extraordinary range of topics. Some were deeply woven about with methodologic research relying on huge data inputs, among which one lost sight of the river. There were papers to categorise river landscapes at a national scale for example in New Zealand and to classify river characteristics for example in S Africa - where their work is at a very early stage and observations have to take account of huge inter river transfers of water. In the Northwest United States evaluation of the amenity value of rivers goes in for sophisticated data collection and seems capable of supporting a lot of consultancies. There were papers also about community involvement: "this is your scenic river; let's have a community river council; let's go rafting together! Hardly british I whisper with admiration: one way of welding a community into a common landscape cause.

One speaker spoke boldly about the inadequate fragmented systems of control and regulation in Scotland's rivers. "He's very brave" whispered someone later, and from the corner of my eye I noted a Director General looking as if betrayed.

The most effective but least sophisticated presentation came heroically from a slightly built Czechoslovak girl who with others had fought, protested and eventually won a legal marathon to protect human scale traditional landscapes against an awful and anonymous beaurocratic system. The applause at the end was sustained and emotional. How it contrasted with the minutely researched science and glossy, though sometimes colourless, presentations of certain well supported academics.

One of the last speakers took not a reach or a mini-catchment but the whole of the River Vistula as his subject. Vistula links Cracow & Warsaw and flows more than a thousand kilometers before it reaches the Baltic at Gdansk. Though hugely polluted in its lower part it has sections of great naturalness - with sand banks braided channels and riverine forests. (I was personally appalled that I know nothing of the Vistula - how is your East European geography?). Poland has seen so much division and political struggle that much of the river has escaped the damaging efforts of the river engineer - the kind that might have occurred in a rich, settled economy. The Vistula deserved a River Valley Landscape Park said the speaker. It's value to Poland is the equal of a sea coast, lakes or mountains.

Four day's worth of conference papers provided a lot to digest and were backed up with an extensive 'poster display'. Less than a tenth of the papers were of direct interest to landscape and much was very scientific and close focussed. Yet many of the ecological and geologic process matters dealt with are topics that landscape practitioners would do well to know about, if not in depth.

R.N.Young.

MISCELLANEOUS HARVEST PRODUCTS

Well blow me down if harvest bales aren't being erected everywhere the latest a mini Stonehenge to compete with Salisbury Cathedral, see Landscape Design 193 p6. I blame this rash of straw sculpture on our note in Issue No 3 of this newletter (Harvest bales in the landscape). Since then they have popped up both as adverts and as street art. Have they yet found their way to the Royal Academy.

A harvest product that hasn't been appreciated at least by the Council for the Protection of Rural Wales is the black packaged silage bale see the September issue of Habitat. "Silage bags in the landscape." 15% of all silage, say the CPRW, is now packaged in this way and may be stored in the corner of fields creating visual untidiness and a litter problem. Formerly a thatched haystack in the corner of the field was a pretty sight like a cottage. A flat roofed tarpaulin covered stack was less attractive. At least a silage bale behind a neat little fence shows something of human activity in our landscape and there's little on display in most of the rural countryside.

MEMBERS NEWS

John Metson, LRGs Development Officer over the past three years has now completed his appointment and at the last meeting was asked to join the Board. He is now working on a dissertation on Shelley and landscape in the Department of English, Durham University, England.

Bud Young, editor of this newletter takes up a position in mid january as visiting tutor in airphoto interpretation at the Committee for Aerial Photography, the University of Cambridge. He will be there for 12 weeks divided between spring and autumn.

The **Cambridge Committee** have an important collection of vertical and oblique airphotos many taken to record archaeology and landscape history. David Wilson the Curator is author of "Air photo interpretation for archaeologists" (Batsford, 1982). His predecessor JKS St Joseph with M.W. Beresford (of Leeds University) wrote "Medieval England: an aerial survey" (Cambridge University Press 1958 and 1979), and author Richard Muir drew on the Collection for a more widely known book "History from the Air" (Publisher. Michael Joseph London 1983).

The Committee has a survey plane at Cambridge, have a close link with the Nature Conservancy Council and are active in the field of vertical air survey, with a special interest in survey to support research and repeat flying that offers a view of the changing landscape.

Within this unit Bud Young will offer practical instruction in habitat survey, land use for planning, landscape and forestry. He will continue his normal practice work. Those interested should contact him through his advertisement in this issue.

A VALLEY BEFORE THE FLOOD

This is the title of an exhibition, presented by Simon Timms, Archaeologist at Devon County Council, which focusses on the archaeological landscape of the valley of the River Wolf in a gentle pastoral valley in remote west Devon.

The lake and its many bays now beginning to occupy the valley and its tributaries is called Roadford Reservoir (Grid reference SX42/90 Sheet 190)

The exhibition contains photos and maps as well as salvaged and archaeological objects. The area, visited by the editor when its farmhouses were being taken down in 1986 is shown to have been much more populous and to have comprised a number of scattered hamlets. Over the centuries population and standing buildings have shrunk and only the main buildings have lived on to the 1980's. The chronicle of change in the area has drawn heavily on documentary research supported by field work and excavation. A paper "Flooding Red Spider Country - the making of the Roadford Reservoir" (see Should You Read) is available as an offprint from Devon County Council.

Exhibition times and places:
Plymouth City Museum 19 January - 24 February
Burton Art Gallery, Bideford 9 March - 20 March
Exeter Central Library 23 April - 11 May

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The views and opinions voiced in this newsletter are those of the authors and the editor and do not necessarily represent those of LRG as a Group.

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