LANDSCAPE RESEARCH EXTRA 19
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The Landscape Research Group promotes interdisciplinary thought on landscape. It has members in more than 40 countries

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 whole. It is prepared by Rosemary and Bud Young for the Landscape Research Group and distributed to its worldwide readership as a companion to its main journal Landscape Research. Enquiries to Bud Young, Airphoto Interpretation 26 Cross Street, Moretonhampstead Devon TQ13 8NL Tel 01647 440904, Fax 01647 440009 We are glad to print letters, written pieces,pictures, and notices of landscape events. We accept advertising fliers for which we make a small charge.

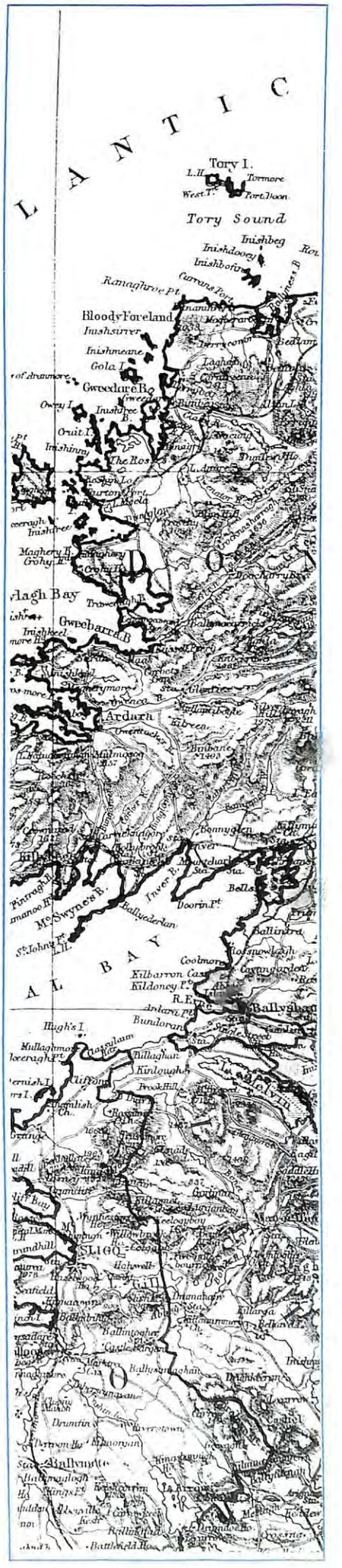
Wild Ireland - a review

"…. Glencar and Glenade seem to crack the hills asunder to disclose an enchantment of long lakes fringed with trees, thick woods, waterfalls. At the north edge the many-islanded Loch Melvin rests the eye with its vast flatness.....there a mile above the eastern end of the lake, rise the Doons."

"They are smaller than the surrounding mountains, these flattish topped vertical collared remnants of marine reefs pressed into a lasting firmness by the regular wash of currents, and surviving long after less densely packed rock around them was eroded away. They stand up like prows from the slopes and valleys about them, and for my money offer some of the most rewarding walks: crisp, quite tough, with amazing views. High on the ascent with a Doon or two below and another bigger one to overcome, you can look across a broad sweep of valley, hear a sheep's bleat or cough or a raven's churr come from the other side with the clarity of a bell, gaze over to the opposite hillside with its greens, browns, gaps of grey rock and wavy contours and view the giant doodles worked unconsciously by men cutting peat in the past. 'I'd never notice it. I suppose I was cradled to it.' a farmer down below said, curiously canvassing my opinion (which is patchy and covered with rust) of Churchill and Chamberlain, rather than talk of the land which is his life. Up here though, above the world, there is something Parnassian, with every ridge revealing some splendid picture of mountain, lake, wood or broad panorama." Pages 37-38.

This is one of many exciting descriptions of landscape in ***Wild Ireland*** *(both North and South) by Brendan Lehane, and one can turn at will and find others, for example, at the next turn on page 55:*

"The southern coast road to Achill has the best views. If you can judge mountains, as they say you can judge people, by the company they keep, then both Corraun and Achill are sensational. The haze that so often rises off the water of Clew Bay colours each different plane a slightly different shade of blue, and it is these degrees of distinction, as well as the variety, stature and shapes of the features seen, that makes progress such a pleasure. A slow sweep of the view from Corraun takes in the slant backs of the drumlin islands cluttering Clew Bay, the faded blue of the distant Partry mountains, the darker blue of Croagh Patrick, the hazily withdrawn Sheefry Hills, the huge shadowy wraith of Mweelrea and many other slopes, cones and curves of the Mayo and Galway Mountains."



Talking about the South East (Wexford) Brendan Lehane points out that all Ireland is not wild and picturesque. "The most remarkable thing about this stretch of country is its unheralded diversity. Only a few miles inland from the unending strands, gravel beds, dunes and lagoons of the coast, the country is all green hills, woods and pastures, not unlike the Kentish Weald."

Mixed with these descriptions are up to date observations of an ancient countryside in transition with European money. The author does not fall into the



common pitfalls of topographic writing which is to latch too heavily onto single buildings, historic figures or to write in that elite style that treats people in his landscapes as an offence. That said he deals interestingly with botany and wildlife and as shown in the first excerpt does not hesitate to describe his meetings with locals. He introduces telling little stories drawn from Ireland's literary figures and fascinating items of legend that will probably come fresh to most non Irish ears.

The text is attractively illustrated with colour photographs by Marc Schlossman, an American photographer. Some of the pictures are topographic, some concentrate on evoking the mood of the place, Aerial obliques which might have been used are absent, and perhaps distinguish it from geographic texts or a coffee table book. There is a scatter of half toned bird, animal and plant drawings.

It is one of the virtues of the book that it describes a landscape that most of us have considered out of reach and the media have ignored for 25 years. Ireland is demonstrated as an incredibly rich touring area and the text encourages us to explore. It has come at the right time for despite the renewed trouble with the IRA our eyes are now open to Irish culture and its possibilities to enrich our lives.

The book is one of a series under the general editorship of Douglas Botting whose description of a New Forest scene in the same series was quoted in LRExtra No4. The text divides between general and more detailed descriptions (denoted by different type sizes) and a section with addresses and telephone numbers, up to date in 1995, on practical information a visitor will find useful. There is a contents list and a detailed index with about 1000 entries. There are also useful regional maps and I found the simple device of encircling each of the exploration zones in a green line straight forward and helpful. For after all the geography of Ireland and even the location of its famous regions is largely unknown to those of us who may know France or Thailand better.

As a person immediately concerned in mapping and monitoring some of Ireland's wild places I find this book most helpful, but was disappointed that the description of the Eastern Mourne Mountains, a proposed internationally important site on account of its heather, did not mention this outstanding vegetation (though there was a photograph of grassier and more heather rich vegetation on opposing sides of a mountain wall and reference to grazing pressure). As if to put me straight (for this is not a scientific gazeteer of habitat types), my family pored over the book and declared their interest in a holiday in Kerry and Cork. I can recommend it for its descriptions which invite study and demonstrate considerable ability.

WILD IRELAND: A TRAVELLER'S GUIDE by Brendan Lehane is published by the Sheldrake Press London in association with Aurum Press 1995 ISBN 1351-329x 224 pp paperback with many illustrations, price £12.50. Reviewed by Bud Young.

FROM THE NEW REVIEWS EDITOR

Some of you will have noticed that I have taken over from Brian Goodey as book reviews editor of Landscape Research. As a relatively recent academic recruit, I may not be known to many, so I'm happy to accept the editor's offer of a space to introduce myself.

Landscape architecture, a profession which keeps you on cold, muddy sites throughout the winter and in hot, stuffy offices for most of the summer, wasn't my first choice of career. I went to Leeds University initially to study Philosophy and Psychology, later transferring to Newcastle and dropping Psychology. The switch to Landscape happened by chance. My landscape sensibilities were probably formed by a childhood in Barrow-in-Furness, the only nuclear shipyard with a National Park attached, but it was a year-out job in Cumbria County Council that introduced me to my first landscape architects. They were a happy bunch who seemed to lead an idyllic life, going off on long site visits to find tree-planting sites in Workington and Whitehaven, expeditions which involved long journeys through the Lake District. The drawing work did not look too arduous and the job was clearly on the side of the angels.

The mechanism for the switch was the B.Phil in Landscape Design taught at Newcastle. This is the course I now teach on, although it has been elevated to a Masters. I am pleased to say that we still operate a liberal admissions policy. Recent years have seen students with first degrees in Russian, English Literature and Fine Art, as well as the more typical Geography or Environmental Science.

I graduated in 1979 and spent the next thirteen years in practice, almost all of it in local authorities in Glasgow or here on Tyneside. My longest stint was with Gateshead Planning Department, where I was fortunate enough to become involved in contributions to three Garden Festivals - Glasgow, our own in Gateshead, and Ebbw Vale.

My return to academic life has provided me with the opportunity to pursue a long cherished personal project to examine landscape architectural theory through the lenses of philosophical aesthetics and environmental ethics. This study forms the basis of my PhD research, which, if all goes according to plan, I may have finished in time for the millennium! I also have a long standing interest in public art, in particular the area of overlap between site specific artwork and landscape design. With colleagues, I have also applied myself to some more sociological issues, particularly the contentious links between crime and environmental design.

I do not foresee any drastic change in the eclectic reviewing policies pursued by previous editors, although inevitably more books on design and designers may find their way onto the review pages. I am an avid reader of publishers' lists, but readers should not assume that they have to wait to be approached to write a review. If a new book appears that anyone feels our readership should know about, please give me a ring - I can be reached on (0191)222 6000 Extension 8812.

Ian Thompson Dept of Town & Country Planning, University of Newcastle upon Tyne

LANDSCAPE ALLIANCE IRELAND

Dear Editor,
As a recent recruit to LRG I would appreciate the opportunity of testing some ideas with your readers.

I am a landscape horticulturist working in the landscape contracting industry for the past twenty-five years. My growing frustration at our apparent failure to manage and care for our total landscape in a sensitive and understanding manner drove me to the conclusion that the only solution that could make a difference would be an all-embracing landscape policy for each country, and group of countries as in the European Union.

There is a multiplicity of disciplines involved in landscape research and management, there is an equal multiplicity of government and local authority departments dealing with same. There is a huge diverse body of people whose actions on a large or small scale effect change in the landscape daily.

How do you take the vast body of informed knowledge that is evident from all the conferences and publications over the last thirty or forty years and stitch them into the administrative structures of national and international government? I suggest that a major step along the way would be a policy declaration by each government which would recognise the vital importance of our landscape, urban, suburban and rural and would involve a defined commitment to the management of same. You might ask what difference would such an approach make, I suggest that it would lay the foundation for a proactive, creative approach to landscape management instead of what is largely a reactive, protectionist approach.

But that would be the top-down element and without a bottom-up approach it would be doomed to failure. How do you get people excited about, interested in and informed on their landscape?

I believe that forum style gatherings may offer a way forward, where all who are involved with, expert in, or concerned about the landscape would be invited to come together, say their piece, discuss and debate the whole topic of landscape. I organised such a forum in Dublin in 1995 and it certainly worked on that day, so much so that a Second National Landscape Forum will take place in Dublin on 17th May 1996. But to really work there must be local, district and regional forums and the proceedings of each must be published including questions and answers and motions decided etc.

I am in the process of setting up a coalition type organisation under the title Landscape Alliance Ireland and would propose to convene a European Landscape Forum in Cork, Ireland in the summer of 1997.

My reason for writing is to invite anyone with whom the above strikes a chord to contact me. I would like to establish the level of international interest that might exist for the concept and in particular to hear from those who might be willing to participate in a European Landscape Forum in '97.

In conclusion I would like to say that since joining LRG I have found its publications of great interest and can particularly relate to the all-embracing approach to landscape that they demonstrate.

I remain, yours sincerely

Terry O'Regan Landscape Alliance Ireland, Old Abbey Gardens, Waterfall, Cork Tel 021-871460 Fax 021-872503

A REPLY FROM DAVID COLEMAN

Lately chairman of LRG & Regional Officer at the Countryside Commission, London

Terry O'Regan's call for a policy declaration on landscape from European Governments will ring a bell with many LRG members.

In October 1992, LRG and Paysage & Amenagement organised a conference in Blois with the title: "Landscapes in a new Europe: unity in diversity?". Adrian Phillips, then Director General of the Countryside Commission, gave a paper on "Proposal for a Convention for the conservation of the rural landscapes of Europe" which was well received by the conference. The proposed Convention addresses -

* national action to encourage signatories to record the rural landscapes in their countries and to take steps to ensure the protection or enhancement of such areas within policies for rural development
* international action to develop a network of European Rural Landscapes, incorporating those landscapes which are considered to be of European significance
* supporting measures such as training, information exchange and perhaps a centre of European expertise.

I think it would go a long way towards meeting Terry O"Regan"s objectives.

The principle of a Convention was welcomed by the Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe and features in the IUCN action plan for protected areas in Europe, "Parks for Life", which is to be the subject of a conference in 1997. The Countryside Commission agreed to take the lead in promoting the Convention and has used various conference platforms to continue debate. Discussions within the Council of Europe have touched on whether the aim should be a full Convention or an advisory Charter. Also relevant is the Pan European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy endorsed by Governments in Sofia last year.

While we are still far from a conclusion, there is plenty of activity in this area. No doubt others will wish to contact Terry to offer ideas.

DC

THE DESERT IS NO LADY

The desert is no lady: south-western landscapes in women's writing and art. Edited by Vera Norwood and Janice Monk Yale University Press 1987

Some readers of LRE might well have discovered this fascinating collection of essays which explore the meanings and values that women writers and artists of different cultural groups in the south western USA attribute to their landscapes. But I heard recently from Jan that there have been new developments which might bring the work to a new and wider audience, especially those of us teaching courses on landscape and representation.

The book has been made into a film which features nine contemporary women writers and artists: American Indians, Luci Tapahonso (Navajo poet), sculptor Nora Naranjo Morese (Santa Clara Pueblo), tapestry artist Ramona Sakiestewa (hopi/Anglo), and painter Emmi

Whitehorse, (Navajo), Hispanic/Chicana writers, Sandra Cisneros and Pat Mora and Hispanic Painter, Pola Jaramillo, and "Anglo" painter Harmony Hammond and photographer/installation artist Meridel Rubenstein. All nine women speak eloquently about the meaning of place in their identity and work, and we see works of the artists and hear the writers reading selections. The continuity is provided by the landscapes in which the women work in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas primarily, with some forays into southern Utah.

Jan Monk is the executive producer, producer/director is Shelley Williams. The film was funded by the Ford Foundation, state humanities agencies of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Utah and several private foundations. It has been shown at a couple of international film festivals, and has just won best documentary award at the San Antonio TX CineFestival.

Internationally, the film is being distributed by the Arts Council, UK (contact: Ann Sinclair), and may be purchased for £50 as a video. This is for the PAL version (51minutes). There is also a 45minute version which will be distributed in North America by Women Make Movies.

If you would like more information, Jan can be contacted at The Southwest Institute for Research on Women, 102 Douglass Building, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ85721, USA. email: jmonk@ccit,arizona,edu Ann Sinclair.

And a final piece of news: the film is to be used as a basis for a 2hour session on gender, place and identity at the International Geographical Union (IGU) meeting at the Hague (4-10 August 1996).

The poem which prefaces the book is entitled

"Unrefined" by Pat Mora

The desert is no lady.
She screams at the spring sky,
dances with her skirts high,
kicks sand, flings tumbleweed,
digs her nails into all flesh.
Her unveiled lust fascinates the sun.

RECENT AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

March 29th-31st 1996 **Rethinking the architecture/landscape relationship** A conference at the School of Architecture, University of East London Further information from Jan Birksted, School of Architecture, Univ of E London, Holbrook Centre, Holbrook Road, London E15 3EA, UK Tel(+44) 181 590 7722 ext 3222 Direct line(+44)181 849 3681 Fax(+44)181 849 3686 email czes@hbmainuel.ac.uk

April 18-20th 1996 **European Symposium on Cultural Landscapes** Vienna, Austria Contact Mondial Congress, Att. Mag. Andrea Eichinger Faulmanngasse 4, A - 1040 Vienna Tel(+43/1)588 04-113, Fax(+43/1)586 91 85 Telex:111669 mreis a

June 19-20th 1996 **Perennial perspectives, creative [o]ecology and integral landscape design** - International symposium at the College of Arts in Arnhem and at Bingerden House, Angerlo. Information: Perennial Perspectives Secretariat, Leo den Dulk tel+31 26 4454042 fax+31 26 4425196

June 20-22 at Rutgers University On-campus Sessions, June 17-19,22,23 NewYork/New Jersey Off-campus Sessions **Paved to protected: restoration in the urban/rural context** The Society for Ecological Restoration 1996 international conference Contact Jean Marie Hartman or Steve Handel, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ on (908)932-2917 or ser96@aesop.rutgers.edu.

9-12th September 1996 at The University of Stirling, Scotland **The spatial dynamics of biodiversity:towards an understanding of spatial patterns and processes in the landscape.** contact Dr Ian A Simpson, Dept. of Env. Sciences, Univ Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA Scotland

October 9-12th 1996 The meeting of the **International Association for Landscape Ecology** (IALE) to be held in Warsaw will include scientific presentations, bilateral treatments and a scientific excursion to the Mazovian Lowland.Contact Dr Peter Dennis UK Secretary), The Macaulay Land Use Research Institute, Craigiebuckler Aberdeen AB9 2QJ.

TWO LRG CONFERENCES

LANDSCAPES IN THE ESA's

Friday 18th July 1996, The Great Hall, Seale Hayne, Newton Abbot, Devon

A one-day conference from 10.00 till 17.00. Coffee, lunch and tea will be provided.

Professor Ian Mercer until recently Head of the Countryside Council for Wales will be chairing the day, which will concentrate on the tensions between the need to maintain income and employment in Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and the need to maintain landscape qualities. South west England is rich in ESAs - Penwith, the Somerset Levels, Dartmoor, Exmoor, the Blackdowns - but examples will be also taken from further afield.

We want this conference to represent as many disciplines and professional points of view as possible. If you know of anyone doing research in or about ESAs - please let them, and us, know. If you are interested in contributing, contact the academic organiser:- Dr Martyn Warren, Seale Hayne Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Land Use, University of Plymouth, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 6NQ Tel 01626-325673 Fax 01626-325657, mwarren@plymouth.ac.uk

For further information contact:- Lyn Roberts, University of Plymouth, Earl Richards Road North, Exeter, EX2 6AS Tel 01392-475016 Fax 01392-475012, L1Roberts@plymouth.ac.uk

LANDSCAPES OF LEISURE AND PLEASURE (LRG/CRN)

1996 joint annual conference of the Countryside Recreation Network (CRN) and the Landscape Research Group 19-20 November 1996 The Bull Hotel, Peterborough

How will landscapes be managed into the next century? How will these landscapes accomodate outdoor recreation? Are you interested in influencing the thinking which will condition these issues? If so, then this conference is one not to be missed! The conference will bring together the skills and current interests of academics and practitioners in the areas of planning, development promotion and management of active sport and leisurely pursuits in the countryside.

The impact of leisure activities on the environment is the subject of considerable interest and debate, stimulated in recent months by Parliamentary and other reports. That debate now needs to be resolved, and this conference can help in that process.

Landscapes of Leisure & Pleasure will explore the significance of landscape as a source of leisure and pleasure for the public; illustrate ways in which leisure and recreational pursuits condition the character and design of landscapes and how the public perceive them; debate the future impact of outdoor recreation and leisure pursuits on our landscapes; try and provide guidance to policy makers as to how future demands for open air recreation in the countryside and along our coasts might be best planned, and consider how those landscapes might look and be managed.

After lunch and the welcome and introduction the conference will examine 'Natural beauty and love - amorous landscapes' - people's attraction to landscape as a source of contemplative leisure and sexual pleasure: Dr Jane Howarth (Dept of Philosophy, Univ of Lancaster) will explore the aesthetics of landscape and pleasure and Dr David Matlass (Dept of Geog, Univ of Nottingham) will consider landscape pleasures and the body. This will be followed by: "Hormones and hi-jinks: macho landscapes" - An analysis of the motivations which have led to demands for active sport to be located in natural landscapes. There will be an evening debate: 'That this house considers that public policy towards the development and management of sport and outdoor recreation in the UK is unnecessarily restrictive.' Speakers for and against the motion will include: Neil Sinden, Council for the Protection of Rural England, Terry Stephens and Philip Lowe.

On the second day we have arranged role play concerning conflict resolution in countryside recreation. Actual events will provide the inspiration for this session and delegates will play out the roles of sports managers, tourism entrepreneurs, conservation societies, landscape managers. To help focus on the task, each group will be overseen by a leader and will recommend action points following their discussion. These will later be presented to the conference. The session leaders are Roger Sidaway, (countryside recreation consultant), Susan Lawley, (Greenwood Community Forest), and Jacquie Burgess, (Lecturer at University College, London). The afternoon session will consider leisure landscapes of the next decade.

Further details from Catherine Etchell, Network Manager, Countryside Recreation Network; Department of City and Regional Planning; University of Wales College of Cardiff. POBox 906, Cardiff CF1 3YN Tel/fax 01222 874970; e-mail stoce @ cardiff.ac.uk

SHOULD YOU READ?

Social landscapes

James Duncan **Landscape Geography 1993-1994** Progress in Human Geography 19/3 1995 pp414-422

Towns and urban form

K Olds **Globalisation and the production of new urban spaces: Pacific Rim megaprojects in the late 20th century** Environment & Planning A 27/11 p1713

Mark C Jones & Kenneth H Lavrey **Street barriers in American cities** Urban Geography 16/2 1995 pp112-122

Richard Fusch **The piazza in Italian urban morphology** The Geographical Review 84/4 1994 pp424-438

Landscape areas & regions

CWJ Withers **How Scotland came to know itself: geography, national identity and the making of a nation 1680-1790** Journ Historical Geog 21/4 1995 pp371-397

Ecology and nature

RJ Pakeman, RH Marrs & RM Fuller **The bracken problem in Great Britain: its present extent and future changes** Applied Geography 16/1 1996 p65

Roger A Clapp **The unnatural history of the Monterey Pine** Geographical Review 85/1 1995 p1

William L Baker, Peter J Weisberg **Landscape Analysis of the Forest Tundra Ecotone in Rocky Mountains National Park, Colorado** Professional Geographer 47/4 1995 pp361-375

Policy and future

D Harvey & D Haraway **Nature, politics, and possibilities: a debate and discussion with David Harvey and Donna Haraway** Environment and Planning D, Society & Space 13/5 1995 507

Physical landscape

JD Garcia Perez, C Charlton & P Martin Ruiz **Landscape changes as visible indicators in the social, economic and political process of soil erosion: a case study of the municipality of Puebla de Valles (Guadalahara Province) Spain** Land Degradation and Rehabilitation 6 1995 pp149-161

Art, literature, photography

Cheryl McEwan **Paradise or pandemonium? West African landscapes in the travel accounts of Victorian women** Journ. Historical Geography 22/1 1996 pp68-83

Joan M Schwartz ***The Geography Lesson*: photographs and the construction of imaginative geographies** Journ of Historical Geography 22/1 1996 p16-45

Cultural landscapes

Judith T Kenny **Climate, race, and imperial authority: the symbolic landscape of the British Hill Station in India** Annals of the Assoc of American Geographers 86/1 1996 p694

Phil Hubbard **Re-imaging the City: the transformation of Birmingham's urban landscape** Geography 81/1 pp26-36

Landscape history

CWJ Withers **Conceptions of cultural landscape change in upland North Wales: a case study of Llanbedr-y-Cennin and Caerhun parishes c1560-1891** Landscape History 17(1995) p35-48

C Hayfield & P Wagner **From Dolines to Dewponds: a study of water supplies on the Yorkshire Wolds** Landscape History 17(1995) p49-64

G Brown **Salisbury plain Training area: the management of an ancient landscape** Landscape History 17(1995) p65-76

Planning

R Lewis **Contaminated land: the new regime of the Environment Act 1995** Journal of Planning and Environment Law Dec 1995 p1087-1096

Minerals

R Mabey **Development of policy for aggregates** Minerals Planning 64(Sept1995) p11-15

T Burton **Minerals planning - where next?** Minerals Planning 64(Sept1995) p16-17

K Dunion **The Lingerbay [=Rodel, Isle of Harris] Superquarry Inquiry (Part 1)** Minerals Planning 64(Sept1995) p22-24

P Buckley & O Watts **Peatlands and Planning after MPG13** Minerals Planning 65(Dec1995) p4-6

K Dunion **The Lingerbay [=Rodel, Isle of Harris] Superquarry Inquiry (Part 2)** Minerals Planning 65(Dec1995) p24-27

Jacquie Burgess (LRG Chair) writes "Ecumene is a recent journal, edited by Denis Cosgrove (Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, London University); and Jim Duncan, (Geography, Syracuse University). It is published by Edward Arnold and described as "a journal of environment. culture. meaning" Some of the essays are really very good and

worth more than a glance" Though the papers starred have previously been listed here I have included them as part of her selection.

D Matlass 1994 **Moral geographies in Broadland** Ecumene 1(2), 127-156
G L Henderson 1994 **Romancing the sand: constructions of capital and nature in arid America** Ecumene 1(3) 235-256
J McCannon 1995 **To storm the Arctic: Soviet polar exploration and public visions of nature in the USSR 1932-1939** Ecumene 2(1) 15-32
* R Walker 1995 **Landscape and city life: four ecologies or residence in San Fransisco Bay Area** Ecumene 2(1) 33-64
R P Neumann 1995 **Ways of seeing Africa: colonial recasting of African society and landscape in Serengeti National Park** Ecumene 2(2) 129-148
D Ley 1995 **Between Europe and Asia: the case of the missing sequoias** Ecumene 2(2) 185-210
M Heffernan 1995 **For ever England: the Western Front and the politics of remembrance in Britain** Ecumene 2(3) 293-324
*P Foret 1995 **The Manchu landscape enterprise: political, geomantic and cosmological readings of the gardens of the Bishu shanzhuang imperial residence at Chengde** Ecumene 2(3) 325-334
P Gruffudd 1995 **Propaganda for seemliness: Clough Williams Ellis and Portmeirion, 1918-1950** Ecumene 2(4) 399-422
*D Matlass and G Revill 1995 **A solo ecology: the erratic art of Andy Goldsworthy** Ecumene 2(4) 423-448

HOAR FROST AT COSSICK CROSS

I get off at the high crossroads before the long descent to the village and my wife drives away.

January in Dartmoor starting at a thousand feet to see what it's like out of doors, I zip myself almost out of sight in my Gortex jacket and stir my office bound legs into a painful angular walk. They begin to find their own rhythm and I look down valley east towards Exeter. The snow lies dispiriting and thin on the ground but deeper along the hedges where it drifted a few days ago. A strong and penetrating wind from Exeter, East Anglia and the Urals crosses the lane and I wish that I were small enough to use the little soily highways and holes within the hedge where voles and perhaps fairies spend the night time hours. I make a note mentally that the visibility is poor and the hedge is white as white with hoar frost, that I could die out here, and that ice must be crystallising straight out of the wind. I feel for ice on my beard, none yet. Every twig of the mountain ash tree on my left is clear glazed and it has a stubbiness like a candelabra. A low growing oak to leeward, ice covered, is heaving and sinking in the wind like an overladen ship at sea and creaking as it moves, Visions of albatrosses and frozen shrouds.



I enter the open moor. A willow tree is standing in the full force of the wind and every twig has been encrusted with a centimetre of razor sharp ice built out eastward to meet the steady assailant. I turn west and am wind lifted by easy paces down the hill below the vortex of the ridge. My faculties return. Whole areas of Wales, I now recall, have been without electricity because of the weight of ice on the power lines. Here out of the wind there is no hoar frost; and the trees have no ice. In a grey green sloping pasture below the moor, a baby glacier three feet wide occupies the normal seepage line. The spring water from the moor freezes into lobes of frozen flow as it meets the deep winter frost.

One more mile to go: I would survive: life is always more exciting at the margin, don't you think?



RESERVOIR AESTHETICS: THE EVOLUTION OF TASTE

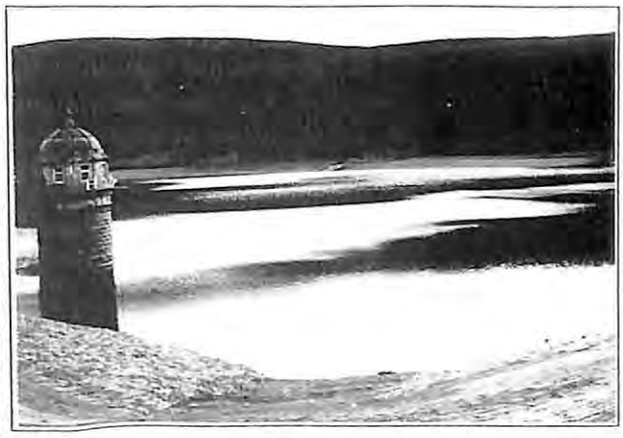
Changing attitudes towards the environment are graphically illustrated by the design of three reservoirs in adjacent valleys near Selkirk in the Scottish Borders. This is a wild almost treeless landscape of steep-sided hills and narrow valleys, gullies of wet moss, stark lines of stone walls and vast expanses of bracken, Yorkshire fog and heather forming interlocking abstract patterns below the clean outline of the hills.

Dams have been built across the valleys, large lakes have appeared, with buildings to house the controls, and of course the farming pattern has been totally changed with the removal of the fertile valley bottom fields and the farmsteads. Although their basic requirements



are the same, the physical appearance of each reservoir neatly records the attitude of each of its builders to nature.

The oldest of the reservoirs, at **Talla** was built between the wars and has therefore had several decades to settle into the landscape. The road through the valleys actually runs along the top of the dam: from its stone parapets delightful pastoral views open towards a substantial white painted tile-roofed house at the end of a long rhododendron-lined drive. It could be the mountain retreat of some wealthy industrialist but is actually the administration building for the reservoir. On the lake, reached by a bridge an ornate stone summer-house hides some essential controls, and the rocky roadside bank still flowers with alpines. The face of the dam is constructed in dressed stone and bears testimony to craftsmanship that is unlikely to even exist now, let alone have such large scale opportunities.



The whole of the area around the dam is surrounded by mature forest, mainly Scots pine which adds to the cosy feel and contrasts sharply with the rest of the landscape. The builders of this dam took delight in the mountain setting but had no doubts about their right to improve nature and make themselves comfortable in it. After all there must have been plenty more empty mountain scenery in Scotland!

The **Fruid reservoir** is at the end of a long narrow track, quite inaccessible except to the most determined fisherman, and magnificent in its wildness. It was built in the fifties and celebrates the art of brutalist construction.
The concrete dam sweeps across the valley and is topped by a small cubist building, naturally in grey concrete, simple and functional, rather like the first stronghold of some sinister foreign culture, which in a sense, it was. At the time aesthetic honesty was all important, the contrast between nature and up to date engineering which obeyed only the laws of physics had to be clearly visible, and both would gain by the juxtaposition. Who needed soft transitions and decoration! Nature looked after itself and modern man would view it with appreciation but also with some detachment.
Due to the inaccessibility of this reservoir it has kept its quality of perfect contrast intact. The only noise to break the silence is the twittering of yellow wagtails and rock pippits which find no quarrel with the uncompromising lines of the grey concrete.

In the next valley **at Megget an even bigger reservoir** was planned to be built in the late seventies and early eighties. This time the valley was perceived as a precious piece of wild landscape and a stated aim of the scheme's promoters, the Lothian Regional Council, was to achieve an equilibrium between the man-made and the natural. After an extensive environmental impact assessment, the engineers R H Cuthbertson & Partners and the architects and landscape architects WJ Cairns and Partners pooled their respective talents to produce a scheme which not only accommodates 64 million cubic metres of drinking water, but



does it with a self-effacing modesty. At the same time the scheme looks after the long-term viability of the

landscape. The lake settles well into the hollows of the hills whilst the dam in spite of its straightness and huge length and height, blends reasonably into the enclosing hillsides. The ground modelling and tree planting that seek to anchor it at either end are extensive, but still not quite enough for the scale of the project and of the landscape. The big surprise is that the control building, a three storey structure, is tucked in below the dam completely underground and is in fact a forerunner of many new buried buildings in sensitive locations. The other obviously new features are the circular white concrete water intake point in the lake and the beautiful round stilling-pond below the dam. These shapes echo the mysterious looking circular stone-built holding pounds which are such a characteristic feature of these hills. The only jarring note is struck by the self-conscious curves of the road and the parking area in front of the control building.



This time the project adopted a creative attitude towards non catchment land uses. It was important they felt, that the hills should not change even if the valley changed considerably, However the character of the hills was very much the product of centuries of sheep farming which was already becoming uneconomical, and, with the loss of the better land in the valley, was seriously threatened. The solution was very simple: the farms in the valley were lifted to natural hollows above the new water level, and, in addition to a new farm house and the usual outbuildings, each farmstead was given a gigantic barn to house a flock of 1,000 sheep in the winter months, enabling the farmers to modernize their stock rearing methods hand in hand with the construction of the reservoir.

Provision was also made for the recreational use of the new lake by the construction of simple but effective facilities for a fishing club and various picnic areas. However it seems a pity that access on foot to the hills and the lake edge is rather limited.

Driving from **Meggett towards Edinburgh one comes on St Mary's Loch,** a natural lake with wide shallow bays and banks that instantly show up the unnatural steepness of the previous reservoir landscapes. It suddenly becomes clear how difficult it is to reconcile the needs of our urban centres (which require the exploitation of more and more natural resources) with our growing awareness of the preciousness of wild places and natural scenery. We require sustainable development and the Meggett reservoir is a good early example of this. And yet, it would be better not to build many more such schemes. Maybe the turn of the Century is the time when we learn to harness our existing technology more effectively re-using water rather than collecting more and more of it.

We should also look again at the recreation potential of long established reservoirs (which often ban all boating and even pedestrian access), rather than allow the truly wild places to become excessively 'colonized' by leisure activities. The next stage in this conceptual evolution will have to be the knowledgeable protection not only of the best, but also of the majority of the wild scenery, and this should be coupled with a creative attitude towards existing feats of construction.

Pirkko Higson
Landscape Architect, Cosgrove
MK 19 7JJ

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

You will have heard that the Group's main publication, Landscape Research, is now being published by commercial publishers (Carfax) and that we retain the editorial control, via our Editor and Assistant Editor, Dr Paul Selman and Dr Caroline Mills, who are working hard to come up to strict publishing dates. One of the intentions of this move is to sell more Journals to more Universities and libraries and widen LRG's influence. We recognise that in the "publish lotsa papers race" that now besets University staff we have to provide a high profile journal so that the best landscape papers come to us rather than find their way to others.

An outcome of this is that LRExtra does not now go out to University subscribers, which I personally regret, but it still goes out to all personal members. This perhaps allows me to publish material of a rather more club-like nature. It also leaves the possibility of publishing rather more serious papers (such as that on Reservoirs) which do not aspire to refereed journals but are interesting intelligent and substantial contributions to the landscape debate. So please let me have your writings, and a range of other publishable materials. Its nice to see yourself in print!

Bud Young, Editor.

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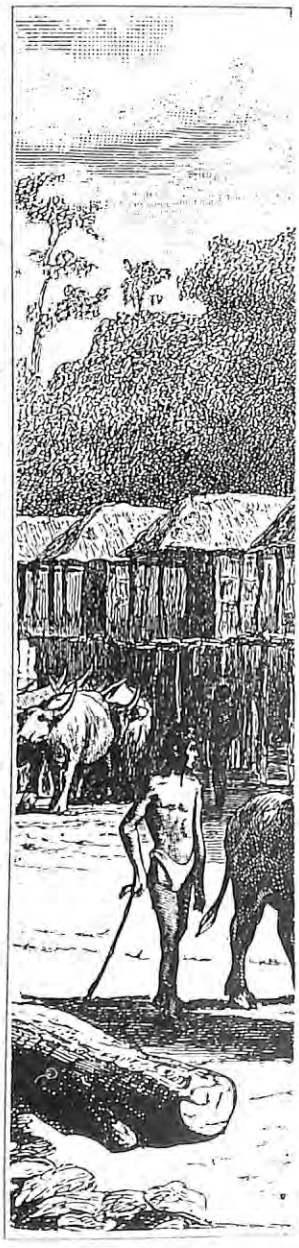
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VIEWING LANDSCAPE THROUGH CHINESE EYES

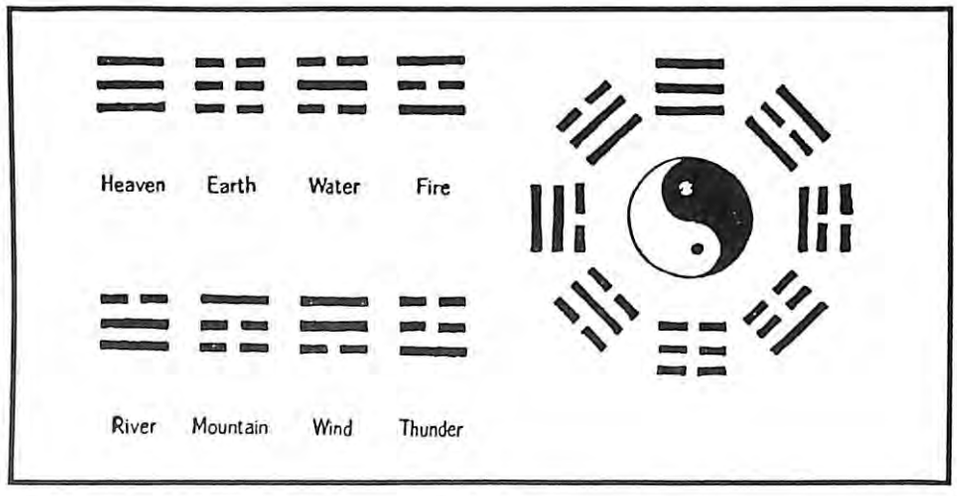
Dear Editor

I'm pleased you discovered Chiang Yee, the "Silent Traveller". I don't know his Yorkshire Dales book, or the other nine or so titles, but came across "The Silent Traveller in London" some years ago. More recently, I got (for 30p) his book "The Chinese Eye - an interpretation of Chinese painting "(Methuen 1935), discarded (!) from my college library.

Chiang, originally a chemist, taught in the School of Oriental Studies, London, after being a local administrator in China. He seems to have been a prolific writer and painter.

Writing in "The Chinese Eye" about the philosophy of painting, he quotes Khung Fu-tzu (Confucius to us):
The wise take pleasure in rivers and lakes, the virtuous in mountains. The wise are constantly active, the virtuous still. "Surely", says Chiang, "this pair of natural elements, complementing each other, represent the basic qualities of the Chinese mind; we love movement, and a mobile flowing rhythm is one of the chief characteristics of our brush-work in painting, while its atmosphere of stillness, quiet and serenity must strike the Western onlooker especially, accustomed as he is to scenes of strenuous action. However this may be, you will find that all our so-called landscapes represent mountains and water in some form: perhaps a waterfall pouring from a high peak into swirling clouds, for the Chinese artist often takes his imaginary stand on the mountain's crest rather than on the horizon's line, or on a small craft afloat under the shadow of a towering precipice. Many a time our artist's 'Shan-shui' will be a scene that the human eye has never looked upon - a simplification of natural form to embody some particular thought, or an imaginary world constructed out of the wise and still in Nature."

"*Landscape* as you understand it in the West, is a misleading term; with you it includes leafy lanes, moorland, ploughed fields, forests, and downs -every possible aspect of the 'land'. The Chinese term is 'Shan-shui', literally 'Mountain and Stream', and these two predominating elements of our well-loved country have long stood as symbol of all the aspects of Nature."



May I quote Chiang Yee further? "There seems", he explains - and we might want to debate with him on this point -, "to be no logical explanation for the choice" (of mountain and stream), "but one must believe that it was not fortuitous." In introducing his subject, Chiang discusses the origin of Chinese characters. Fu Hsi, the mythical first emperor, born divine in the 29th or 28th century BC, devised a scheme "to represent all the observed phenomena of heaven and earth". It is based on the representations of the universal principles Yang and Yin:

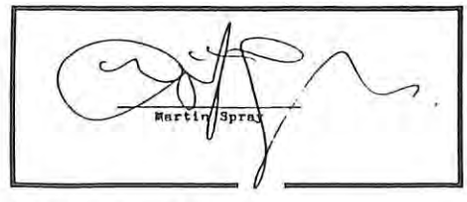
"From these two signs he developed eight different groups of lines, representing Heaven, Earth, Wind, Thunder, Water, Fire, Mountain, and Rivers."

"It is interesting to note that though rain, hail and snow are all included in water, river is separated from it, and mountain is separated from earth. Mountains and rivers had a high place in our hearts."



The Yi Ching or Book of Changes - which is a classic Chinese text used for divination, presents 64 hexagrams formed by pairing these basic eight trigrams.

But enough: I take the point of your 'old saying'....



Martin Spray
Senior lecturer in The Landscape School, Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Higher Education, and an Editor of Ecos

Like your signature Martin. Does it form the basis of a new artistic rule?--- Editor

CULTURAL VALUES IN NATURAL LANDSCAPES: TASMANIA'S WORLD HERITAGE AREA

The Tasmanian Wilderness,World Heritage Area (WHA) in the south west of the Island is 1.38 million hectares (one of the largest conservation reserves in Australia), and occupies 20% of the land area of this small Australian State. (Editor's note: or 13,800 sq kms nearly as large as Northern Ireland.)



According to the current management plan, it was placed on the World Heritage List in 1982 for 'extensively glaciated landscapes; undisturbed habitats of plants and animals that are endangered, rare and/or endemic, and that represent a rich testament to Aboriginal cultural sites that include Ice Age cave art in remote valleys'. In global terms, it can be compared with South West New Zealand and Los Glaciares (Argentina), also World Heritage temperate Southern Hemisphere wilderness areas. The land is mostly State owned, and includes many State protected areas, principally (in terms of size), the Cradle Mountain Lake, St Clair National Park, the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park, the Southwest National Park, and the Walls of Jerusalem National Park. It is highly valued within Tasmania 'for recreation and tourism based on its wilderness, natural and scenic qualities'.

When the management plan was being formulated in the late 1980s and early 90s, a major conflict emerged. A number of organisations under the umbrella of the Tasmanian Traditional and Recreational Land Users Federation argued that the management agenda had been hijacked by the environmental movement. In particular, they said, the management planning process had been principally steered by the "pro-wilderness" agenda of professional staff of the World Heritage Area planning team, located within the (then) State Parks, Wildlife and Heritage authority. The presumption for nature conservation expressed in 'management for wilderness values' meant that other users, for example horse riders and hunters, were denied their traditional forms of access.

As it happened, the Federation gained the political upper hand when a Liberal State Government replaced the (by then collapsed) Labor-Green coalition, and won some concessions before the plan was finalised. The issues have not gone away, however. They highlighted the fact that the original World Heritage Area nomination had also shown a presumption for natural values. Apart from the reference to Aboriginal archaeological sites, its architects had ignored the human history of the area. The nomination had emerged in the heat of Tasmanian debates over hydro-electric projects in South West Tasmania, particularly the Franklin River conflict, when the issue was defined as development versus wilderness.

It is now an important time for this World Heritage Area, with the first revision of the 1992 Management Plan scheduled for 1997. Since the Franklin days, positive aspects of the cultural values embedded in landscapes have gained respectability and claimed far more attention. This sea change in attitude amongst conservation professionals, together with the continued calls for recognition from

the traditional users, has led to a 12 month consultancy for a cultural anthropologist to investigate traditional practices in the WHA. The project is just beginning.



Furthermore, the author in collaboration with Simon Cubit, a Tasmanian historian who is also a leading proponent of the users cause, has obtained funds from the Australian Heritage Commission to assess the European cultural values of the Upper Mersey Valley. The wild and beautiful country of the Valley is largely within the WHA (near its northern borders), but has never been assessed for its historical, social, and aesthetic values. In Cubit's words, the Valley has been a focus of both Aboriginal and European use, with the latter including major historic themes of 'exploration, transhumant grazing, subsistence hunting, forestry, hydro-electric development, and recreation'. Mountain cattlemen's huts in some areas have been a highly contentious management issue. This study will be new research in the Tasmanian scene, focussed specifically on cultural values in a "natural" area.

Using the Upper Mersey Valley study we have high hopes of improving methods for the assessment of cultural values, at least in the Australian context. The project methods will in the first instance, be based substantially on those already developed and trialled by the Australian Heritage Commission in area cultural value assessments (particularly in rural, forested parts of Australia like central and eastern Victoria) The difference is that once the historical, social, and aesthetic values have been determined in the Upper Mersey, the study team will then compare the outcome and the method with the results of the WHA 'traditional practices' project, now under way, with a view to revising the Upper Mersey findings and suggesting methodological improvements.

It is anticipated that the new insights gained from relating the Upper Mersey Valley study to the anthropological perspective will have implications for cultural values assessments used by heritage professionals in general. The Valley study aims to report by mid-1997. Tasmania's WHA is thus set to become a laboratory for research into the cultural aspects of landscape. The results will be eagerly watched in Australia, not least by Tasmanian Aboriginal communities, who are initiating their own cultural studies of the WHA , with a focus on the potential for Aboriginal management.

Jim Russell
Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania.

Letter from Dr Richard Gulliver

The Schoolhouse
Isle of Colonsay
Argyll PA6 7YR

Dear Bud

Thanks for your friendly letter when I wrote about a reference of mine in the Arboricultural Journal. I am working on aspects of appraising, quantifying and recording sample landscapes on Colonsay and will produce something for Landscape Research in due course.. However I did want to write to say how much value and pleasure I get from Landscape Research Extra.

On the computing front (you mention your efforts) I too use Claris Works for Windows 3 and occasionally use it on the Mac at school. It is addictive. I've just discovered the calendar "Assistant" - relatives will be blasted with home made calendars this Christmas. I don't get off Colonsay much but we may meet up one day. At present I am not Internet connected but will be one day.

Regards
Richard Gulliver

VACATIONS IN CRETE

Sometime or other I was sent a little leaflet about holiday accomodation in Crete and as I believe it came from LRG members (though I have lost the covering letter) I thought I would bring it to your attention.

It is from David Lister and Juliet Green who are offering space for singles, one couple or a small family (2+1) at the **Old Olive Mill, Potamida 137, Kissamos Crete.** They have contact partners at 18 Crabtree Lane, Sheffield whose number is Sheffield 2425966. These contacts are Karen Graham and Paul Store.

Did you know that both Oxford and Cambridge Schools of Geography use Crete as a study area? How about 25 undergraduates!!! I joke. Kastelli, Kissamos is at the Western end of Crete and they underline the chance of study. The route is from London via Athens to Ghania and there is a daily service. Editor.

E-MAIL NETWORK

Landscape Research Group is slowly entering the modern world. Its first venture is to operate a network on Email for disseminating information. Currently the two operators, or owners, of the network are Peter Howard, the Vice-Chair, and Lyn Roberts, the Administrator, both at the University of Plymouth's campus in Exeter. Their Email numbers are:-
phoward@plymouth.ac.uk &
L1Roberts@plymouth.ac.uk
If you want information put out across the network, which already has about 100 members, please send a message to Lyn and we will publish it. This information might include conference announcements, requests for information, research reports etc.

To join the network send a message to mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk as follows:- add member landscape-research your Email number Firstname Lastname stop. For example:- add member landscape-research phoward@ plymouth.ac.uk Peter Howard stop. Mailbase will confirm your membership, then all information addressed to landscape-research@mailbase.ac.uk will reach you.

World wide web - Publishing students at the University of Plymouth are making a page for the World wide web which will advertise Landscape Research Group more widely, and which will probably include articles etc. More information later.

Help please! To some of you all this will appear very simple, and very small beer. If so, please get in touch and help us progress further and faster. We have never yet turned down an offer of help!

Peter Howard
Plymouth Universith, Exeter Campus

CONSULTATION EXERCISE: NAVIGATION ON THE RIVER WYE

The River Wye suffers a particular legal situation which means that recreation there cannot be controlled. The official Navigation Authority is a defunct 19th century private river haulage company which has not traded since the 1830s. Yet in law, this company remains the Navigation Authority for the stretch of the River Wye between its tidal limit and Hay on Wye. It is a somewhat ridiculous situation, but there the law stands and several generations of River Authority and other Agencies have not been willing to promote the Parliamentary Bill that would be required to revoke the authority of this law.

The National Rivers Authority in Wales is now beginning to take up this matter, and has initiated a consultation exercise designed to test the temperature of the water with regard to it taking over the Navigation Authority, through an official notice served under the Water Resources Act 1991. Some 300 replies have been received from the consultation exercise. The plan is for the NRA to take over the Navigation Authority and



thereby confer on itself the power to set by-laws, including the registration of craft.

This is likely to excite the opposition of canoeists, who use the Wye frequently for canoe training and long distance canoeing. Several thousand canoeists use the Wye every year in this way, including adventure holidays organised by private adventure holiday companies such as PGL.

On the other hand, those who will welcome this proposal number amongst them the fishermen of the Wye, particularly the salmon fishermen. These people feel that their sport has been interrupted by a whole series of navigation activities, including canoeing, raft racing and jet skiing. The by-laws would enable the National Rivers Authority to control the number of crafts, as well as control their behaviour.

Research at Middlesex has previously reported this situation (Penning-Rowsell 1994). Research is now beginning to investigate the process of consultation used

by the NRA, and the results. This will reveal the positions of various "actors" in this situation, some of which have been concealed in the past while the politics of the use of the river has remained relatively "underground".

This research is designed to investigate the use of consultation exercises in the control and planning of sustainable resource management policies. As such that planning and control needs to be within a regulatory framework supported by the rule of law, and the situation on the Wye is particularly interesting because the legal situation is so anomalous. That anomalous situation creates a unique set of circumstances which exacerbates conflict between users, and this the NRA is trying to alleviate.

Penning-Rowsell, EC 1994 A"Tragedy of the Commons"? Perceptions of Managing Recreation on the River Wye, UK Natural Resources Journal 34 pp635-661

Professor Edmund Penning Rowsell
Middlesex University

ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION GARDEN CONSERVATION NEWSLETTER NO 15

When I look back to 1990, our first Newsletter mentioned a new Brown plan found for Uppark, with proposals for the resoration work to the National Trust, progress at Painshill, management plans at Cannizaro Park and the likely results of compulsory competitive tendering were the topics. On the horizon, there were the remains of the storm damage grants and the potential gathering force of volunteer work in the county garden trusts, but on the whole, things were very slow, the recession was biting and there was a general downbeat air. Now, much more is happening in our garden conservation world.

[vide The Heritage Lottery Fund and the need to apply for grants].

This newsletter starts with an article from Mavis Batey on Regency Squares, there is news from the working party formed as the result of the London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust's Conference initiative last June and a report on the start of good things from Northern Ireland as a result of their Conference on Walled Gardens. There are the usual listings of lectures, events, cuttings and clippings, and new books together with letters and alumni news. All this is followed by a fascinating extract from a masterplan report from Second Year course work last year on the history of Primrose Hill and some encouraging news of publication of the results of work done for an AA dissertation.

Pamela Paterson, 25 Jermyn Street, London SW1Y 6HP

GHOSTS FROM TWO CHILDHOODS

A trip along the Old Dock Road in Liverpool which he had travelled with his father as a child brought a complex vision of the past. The historic scene was half remembered from visiting the busy docks in 1945, passing via a gate in the high Dock Wall (his father knew how to talk to policemen); at another time going to Seaforth on the Overhead Railway which ran alongside the Wall and the Dock Railway now gone.

It was not a landscape that he had watched disintegrate but rather one which he had happened on again after 50 years: part of his life. His Dublin Welsh Liverpudlian mother had told stories of following carts in the years of the Great War cutting sacks and lifting from them lumps of raw sugar. "Whip behind," called citizen bystanders. That was the scene in 1915.

As he drove the bare, unpeopled road in his Mercedes he was pleased to see that ships still used the docks and that there was still an Isle of Man Ferry. But in those days, and he combined the first half of the Century in a single sweep of recall, the place buzzed with cargoes from the Empire and emigrants to America and from Ireland. What an imprint on the memories of thousands, hundreds of thousands. Now along the swathes of ruinous dock and cityscape he was hit by the impression of a deserted place ("the winds blow across the ruins of Palmyra"). He was staggered at its one time importance, amazed at the scale of its old warehouses its capital ventures written off, at the soaring but historic ebullience of the Liver Building. "Analyse the ruins, reconstruct the history, photograph the shattered landscape, and look upon the corpse".

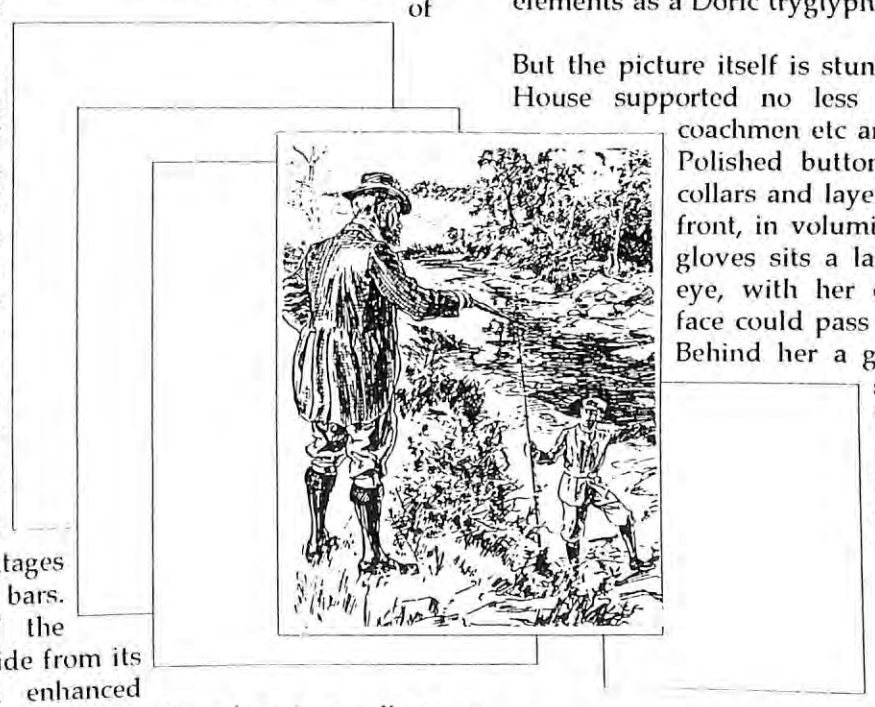
Through the Mersey Tunnel to Birkenhead, (he had had a book about it), and on across sunlit Cheshire landscapes towards the village in Shropshire, where he had lived during the war. Somewhere in the

heathlands of West Staffordshire he saw (in a wood darkly), the spooky remains, dead, motionless enmeshed in tree trunks, of a wartime army camp. At sixty miles an hour he glanced sideways to see it again and again, six glimpses into the past. In the modern idiom, a time capsule, uncleared, left to the Wood. Next day's TV film would show this busy with jeeps and handsome young soldiers training for war, living in heightened times. He remembered his mother talking about the RAF at Codsall Camp.

His journey had broken deep into ancient childhood memories. It had opened up animated visions of the past, of his origins. One-time dramatic places silent, humiliated in ruination, un-venerated, and all their transients, now ghosts - watched by a little boy.

ARGYLL: A LANDSCAPE OF DESIRE

The village of Tighnabruaich sits way down one of the long peninsulas of mainland Argyll, looking across the Kyles to the Isle of Bute. At the southern tip of the village is Kames and on the shore the Kames Hotel, a substantial three storey black and white double bay windowed house and two adjoining cottages that are now bars. The delight of the Kames Hotel, aside from its location, indeed enhanced by its location, is that the entire place is a gallery, or rather, a series of galleries, for every public room is festooned with elegantly framed photographs and paintings. And what is more, the layout of this eating-drinking-smoking-Saturday-night-revelling gallery has a meaning all of its own.



The moody lochscapes, the coy Highland maidens with elegant suitors, the stags at bay and - variation on the theme - a rather perplexed lamb at bay - are just where they ought to be, in the hotel entrance hall, up the wide staircase, and in the dining room. As you stand looking up the wide stair case these are the scenes that set the scene of the hotel which sets the scene for Scotland and for Argyll, the scene behind you, out of the window. The present is behind you: you face the past: you cannot put the past behind you in Argyll.

At the far end of the hotel in the two public bars are dozens upon dozens of finely framed old photographs of the days of sail: full-rigged tall ships, deck scenes, captains, crews, wrecks and old sea-dogs. For the Kames Hotel has free mooring and its wine-list features £16 a bottle Beaujolais. The yachting crowd wines and dines here, but mostly sleeps aboard. Those who come by land or by Caledonian MacBrayne - those who come to stay - may use the Residents' Lounge and it is here in the centre of the hotel and in the single-malt lounge bar adjoining it that the photographic display excels itself.

Where to begin? "Footmen, coachmen and indoor staff at Hopetown House, 1890" the title has been penned in white ink by the steady hand of a skilled calligrapher. It fits the mount surrounding the photograph perfectly. The polished hardwood frame has as many decorative elements as a Doric tryglyph.

But the picture itself is stunning. Evidently, Hopetown House supported no less than nine male footmen, coachmen etc and five female indoor staff. Polished buttons, fob watch chains, stiff collars and layered dresses abound. Centre front, in voluminous dark frock and white gloves sits a lady who, to this untutored eye, with her centre parting and plump face could pass for Queen Victoria herself. Behind her a gallant young chap with a stout beard and thumbs tucked into waistcoat pockets standing tall and confident over the rest of the group is just a little bit larger than life.

This is but one of forty three framed photographs in the Residents' Lounge. There are twenty eight more in the adjacent Lounge Bar. With the exception of two or three from St Kilda, every one is an intimate glimpse of the Highland scene. Every one invites you to step across the Romantic threshold into Scotland's mythic past. "John Brown at Balmoral, 1860" has John

with fulsome mouth, a rather fetching cap and very elaborate sporran; "Patience is a virtue, 1885" displays a seven year old Little Lord Fauntleroy in tweeds, kilt and sporran, dangling a fly line over a stream while his panama-hatted cotton-frocked elder sister waits upon him, salmon net akimbo; "Curling, 1860" is a rare action shot with a pair of Toulouse Lautrec figures in top hats launching a curling stone across polished ice. And so it goes on, but we will return to the Residents' lounge in a paragraph or two.

Viewed from the outside the Kames Hotel is a solid structure, probably not much more than a hundred years old and as yet, well-kept, showing no particular signs of wear. Is there any reason that it would not stand for another hundred? Two hundred? three? None whatsoever. The same can be probably said of most of the other Presbyterian-solid, stone-built houses of Kames, Tighnabruaich, Rothesay and every other small town in Argyll. But will these carefully framed, cared-for, dusted and polished photographs still be here in one, two, three hundred years time? Could anyone bring him or herself to throw them out? Could anyone *not* display them?

Following Edward Bellamy, 1888, *Looking Backward* from an imagined moment in the future, we can speculate on not only what will have happened to *these* pictures, *these* mementoes, but also on all those that have accumulated in this place in the intervening centuries. Will these icons have been discarded - like so many First World War memorials - in favour of later ones? Do these mementoes have a life? A half-life? Do they decay to nothing, to be replaced by those that succeed them? In general, perhaps so, but in this case I think not. Because the Residents' Lounge gallery is an archive of something unique.

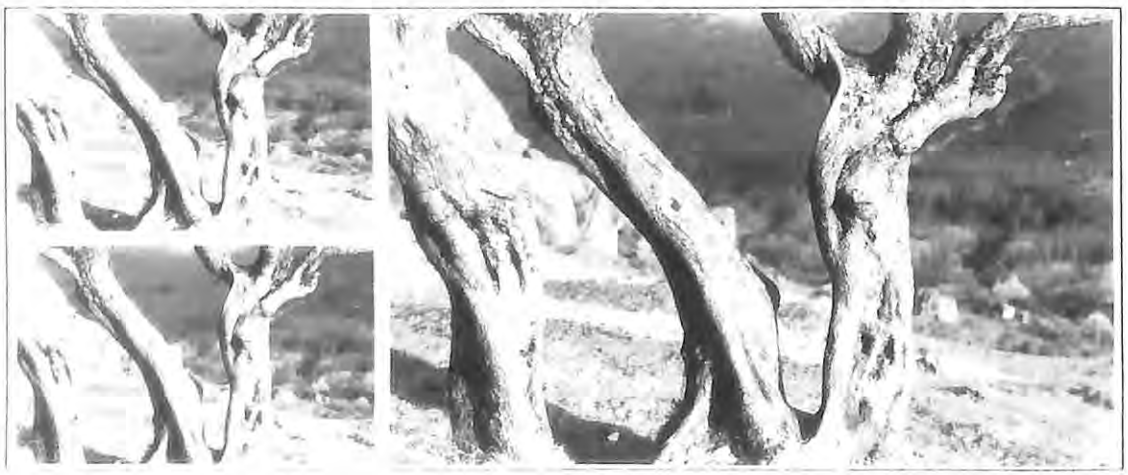
The latest photograph is "Returning the First Bird, 1924" in which a gent in plus fours cradling a shotgun, crouches to receive a grouse from a retriever, and together these photographs span the time of the creation of much of the Argyll scene as we see it today. These are pictures of the lifestyles of nobility and gentry plus their ghillies, maidservants and footmen, who created a unique landscape of desire.

They are pictures of the very authors, the first commissioners of the Scottish-Romantic scene. As you sail into Rothesay virtually every proud, upstanding house by the shore dates to this self-same mid-Victorian to Edwardian era. Especially if you are a first-time visitor, the town invites you to step off the ferry and cross the Romantic threshold into Scotland's mythic present. The landscape, like the pictures, belongs to a limited time-frame. And Rothesay is not unusual: much of the rural, village, small town and harbour Argyll landscape today is characterised, if not dominated by the buildings - the overbuilding - of this time.

And overbuilding - along with John Brown's exaggerated sporran, the excessive petticoats, the over elaborated doorways of Floors Castle, the oversized egos of the "swagger portraits" of the huntsmen is the key to the scene, the triumphalism of sign value over utility is nowhere more celebrated than on the Rothesay shore. Everything is just that little bit larger than life.

So in the pictures of the Residents' Lounge you step at once into the mythic past and a mythic present. These are not pictures of the people who actually built Rothesay, but of people who, through their play and display, sport and desport, style and styling set the scene, so to speak, for the burghers and bourgeois of Glasgow to emulate, and to build Rothesay. Today these archetypal double bay - windowed foursquare stone - built, high ceiling, slate roofed houses are not just a monument to bourgeois success but are icons and metonyms in sandstone and granite of a utopia realised a hundred years ago, and ever present.

Bob Webster
University of Central Lancashire



Gnarled Hawthorns at Hound Tor, Dartmoor
Photo by Editor

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