

News from the AHRC Landscape and Environment Research Programme



EVENTS

Event title: People and Place: Landscape and identity through time - Poster exhibition
Date: Now until April 2009
Venue: Fishbourne Roman

Event title: The Beat Goes On
Date: Now until 1 November 2009
Venue: World Museum Liverpool

Event title: Researching Environmental Change (by invitation only)
Date: 7 April 2009
Venue: RHS Conference Centre

Event title: The Early Modern Church interdisciplinary conference (larger grant project)
Date: 6 - 8 April 2009
Venue: Worcester College, Oxford

Event title: 2009 Programme Conference - Living Landscapes
Date: 18 to 21 June 2009
Venue: Aberystwyth University

Event title: EARTH - MOON - EARTH
Date: Saturday 20 June - Sunday 9 August
Venue: Djanogly Art Gallery, Lakeside Art Centre, University Park, Nottingham

Event title: Landscape, enclosure and rural society in post-medieval Britain and Europe
Date: 25 to 26 June 2009
Venue: De Havilland campus, University of Hertfordshire

Arts & Humanities Research Council



Programme Conference 2009

LIVING
LANDSCAPES

Aberystwyth University

18 - 21 June 2009

Registration is now open

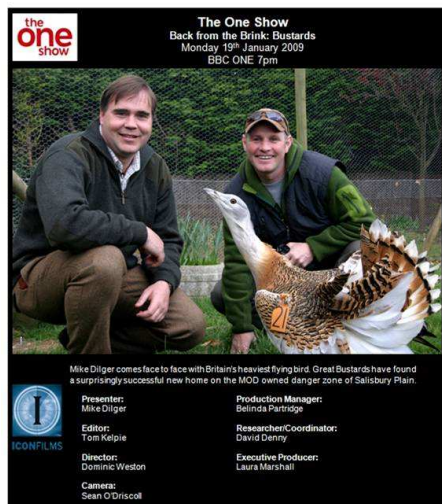
for the summer conference. The conference is being opened by George Monbiot and promises to be an exciting event including more than 140 presentations, performances and events. For registration details please see the conference website.

www.landscape.ac.uk/

NEW LOOK WEBSITE

The Programme launched its new look web site earlier this year. Using the same URL www.landscape.ac.uk the website has a sharper design and a more 'newsy' feel to it. It is hoped that the new design will appeal to the public as well as scholars and researchers within the field. All the projects are listed with their own page which will be updated with the latest research news. Go to the website for all information on forthcoming events or to download articles or publications generated by the Programme.

PRIME TIME TELEVISION



The larger grant project *Militarized landscapes in the 20th century*, PI Professor Peter Coates of Bristol University, collaborated with Icon Films to produce a short documentary that was aired on The One Show on 19th January at 7.00pm. The film, entitled 'Back from the brink: Bustards', told viewers how Britain's heaviest flying birds, The Great Bustards, have found a new home on the MOD owned land of Salisbury Plain. This is due to the reintroduction programme of the endangered species taking place on the militarised site, a subject area covered by Coates' project. The aim of the project is to undertake a comparative analysis of the emergence, meaning and management of militarised landscapes in Britain, France and the United States. One of the project teams particular interests is how military land functions as reservoirs of biodiversity, often superior in 'green' value to surrounding non-militarised landscapes. With a particular interest in the conversion of former military sites into wildlife refuges this research project is giving an insight into MOD landscapes, the biggest landowner in the UK.

NEW PENGUIN BOOK

A brand new Penguin book entitled "London. An illustrated history" has been published. This beautifully produced volume begins telling the history of London with a double paged spread on London's Palaeolithic Past which has been produced by Caroline Juby, the collaborative PhD student on the *London before London: Reconstructing a Palaeolithic Landscape* studentship award. This project is concerned with the Palaeolithic and wider Pleistocene environment of London which is an under researched area of the capital's history.

POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE

The Programme organised a successful two day conference for postgraduates within the area of landscape and environment. Most of the postgraduates on the Programme attended and gave presentations on their research. The conference aimed to ensure the Programme's commitment to early career researchers and to discuss innovative approaches to research in terms of theory sources and methods as well as to explore career paths for postgraduates working in a multidisciplinary field. Delegates from all over the country made the journey to The University of Nottingham to spend two engaging days involved in presentation and workshops sessions. Outside of the formal timetable a drinks reception and dinner were organised to encourage informal discussion and networking. As part of this a poster competition took place which was open to all delegates as an alternative method of presenting research findings. The winner was a Programme student, Carolyn Anderson, from the 'Constructing the Military Landscape' collaborative student award. Feedback from the delegates was very positive with comments such as "...very useful and engaging conference. Just the right length too".

THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE, USA



Professor Stephen Daniels, Programme Director, was invited to be the keynote speaker at The Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. The lecture was part of a three day workshop in February entitled 'Art History and Environment'. Professor Daniels opened the event with an hour long lecture entitled 'Landscape Stories' prior to the evening reception. It was a successful networking event for the Programme.

COLLABORATIVE STUDENT WINS NATIONAL POETRY COMPETITION



Dove Cottage, Grasmere © Polly Atkin

Polly Atkin, student on the collaborative studentship project called "A place re-imagined: the spatial, literary and cultural making of Dove Cottage, Grasmere" has won the Troubadour Coffee House poetry prize with a poem directly inspired by her Landscape and Environment research project.

The poem entitled 'Colony Collapse Disorder' talks about moving from the city to the country and how this affected the author. Before beginning her PhD Polly studied for an MA in Creative Writing (Poetry) at Royal Holloway, UCL. After completing the course she started to think about further research around the relationship between people and place, with poetry as a kind of mediator, and saw an advert for the Dove Cottage collaborative doctoral award. The post involved a move from London where Polly had spent 7 years to Grasmere in the Lake District. Polly says that "This move is basically what triggered the poem....Every visit from city-friends, and every visit I made back to the city, made it more and more clear how much the centre of my life had changed, and with it, inevitably, everything else. I cannot escape the fact that I would not have written this poem if I were not living in Grasmere, really living here, which I never would have been doing if it were not for my project bringing me here."

Colony Collapse Disorder

When I lived in the city I knew where I was,
what being there was. I knew I breathed
under a film of constant light,
that electricity was life. It moved
in my body, which I knew was an atom of the city,
and kept us twitching in unity. I felt
information bloom in my blood. It sang
in my cells as though it had always been there.
I knew without it I had no structure.

To leave the city was to leave one's memory.
Outside was a garden gone wild. Stars
were night-flowers in a mossy dome, opening
their dazzling mouths to amaze, spreading
exponentially the further from the city I went.
I knew nothing. What nothing meant. I feared
the dark and the space between things: space
needs filling. I'd cry for the city, its order.
To be let back in was to regain the future.

Now I live elsewhere the systems reversed.
The city is a picture from a book I once read
and nothing to do with me. Life is a movement
between dirt and sky. I see this clearly.
The stars are generators. Without them we'd fail.
Going back to the city is to speed myself up
to a drawn out buzz that I know is killing me.
Going anywhere other than elsewhere is rehearsing
this end: the shut-down of travelling energy.

All those years living inside weakened me.
Taken away from elsewhere I dim.
Friends visit and tell me that elsewhere is death
and the sky cannot feed me. Not indefinitely.
Their eyes are blown bulbs. They rattle. I smell
honey on their skin and know how it is.
When they move I hear humming like a swarm at a
distance.
When they speak I hear their voices, and under
the city quietly droning.

Polly Atkin