

Conference world

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West Stow experimental archaeology workshop

West Stow, Suffolk, UK 22nd July 2009

■ Martin BELL (UK)

Dept. of Archaeology, University of Reading

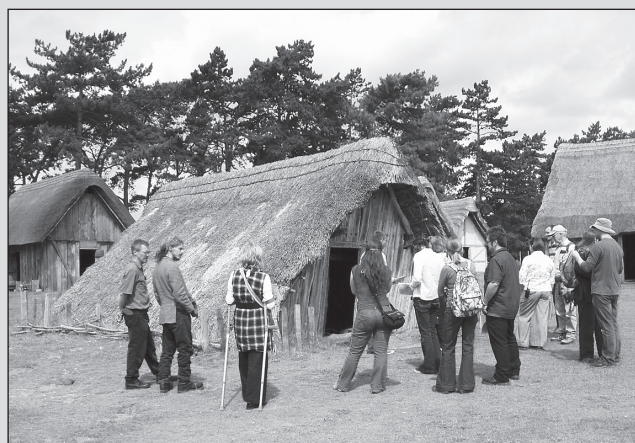
A workshop was held at West Stow, which is an experimental Anglo-Saxon village constructed since the 1970s on the site of an excavated settlement (<http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/weststow>; **fig. 1**). The workshop followed a previous meeting, held 18th June 2008, at Butser Ancient Farm experimental site in Hampshire, UK (<http://www.butser.org.uk>). Both meetings were part of the *Developing Experimental Approaches in Archaeology* project (2007–9) funded by Reading University (Bell *et al.* 2008).

This project has also involved Reading University students in the small-scale excavation and recording of octagonal experimental earthworks constructed by Peter Reynolds, and in the excavations of Iron Age experimental roundhouses (Bell 2009). The overall objective of the project and of both workshops was to contribute to raising the profile of scientific research at experimental archaeology sites by encouraging increased engagement and collaboration between universities, heritage agencies and experimental sites. Key project aims were to encourage more explicit and documented research on experimental sites, and to help provide guidelines for experimental project design and the development of research projects by students from undergraduate to PhD level, as well as by university researchers.

The two workshops had similar formats: in-the-field discussions of specific issues and opportunities raised by the individual experimental sites, followed by a brainstorming session, covering issues of best practice and the provision of guidelines to encourage further work. At West Stow a discussion tour was led by Jess Tipper (**Figure 2**), with contributions by John Letts, on the experimental research opportunities presented by the growing knowledge of past thatching techniques (Letts 2000). The workshop also revisited the long-standing debate about the nature of Anglo-Saxon sunken feature buildings or grubenhaus, and whether they were pit dwellings/workshops of roofed cellars as in the West Stow constructions (**Figure 1**). Of particular interest was the discussion of recent work on the Farmer's House, which had been burnt down by arson in 2005; the remains were recorded by Jess Tipper and his team and are fascinating to compare with the original burnt Anglo-Saxon buildings on the site (analysis and publication of this work has been funded by English Heritage). Short talks were also given by Richard Macphail on pig pen experiments at West Stow and by Martin Bell on the excavation of the Moel-y-Gaer roundhouse at St Fagans, National Museum of Wales.

The meeting also discussed ways of taking forward the best practice documents and guidelines that had arisen from the Butser meeting in 2008. These best practice guidelines and a summary of the Buster workshop discussions are available at: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/archaeology/research/Projects/arch-experimental.aspx>

A longer report of the West Stow workshop discussions will be posted on the above webpage from Easter 2010. Also available on that webpage is a 1st draft of an experimental archaeology database (documenting experiments, experimental sites, and bibliographies) developed in-house at Reading as part of the recent project. Feedback on all of these documents is very welcome, and should be sent to either Martin Bell (m.g.bell@reading.ac.uk) or Rob Hosfield (r.hosfield@reading.ac.uk). Finally we would like to thank all the staff at both West Stow and Butser Ancient Farm for providing two excellent venues and for all their hard work in hosting the two workshops.



■ Discussing the Sunken House, West Stow Experimental Archaeology Workshop, July 2009

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Experimental archaeology: problems, technique and modeling

Ukraine, scientifically-practical seminar, 6-9 August 2009

■ Anna PETRAUSKIENE
Andrey PETRAUSKAS (UA)

Iskorosten in the Ukraine (Zhytomyr region) was the capital of the Drevlyan tribes in the 8th century A.D. The centre of ancient Iskorosten consists of three fortified settlements situated on granite rocks, located in present Korosten city. Thanks to its location, unlike other eastern Slavic centers (Kyiv, Tchernihiv and other) it avoided permanent nomads pressure, kept most

archaic forms of tangible culture and at the same time kept economic relations with the Arabic countries as well as with Eastern Europe.

The economic and political power of the Drevlyan tribes made them the main opponent to the Polans in their attempt to subordinate independent tribes. Many historians consider the history the Iskorosten elimination and conquest of Drevlyans by Kiev Princess Olga in 946 as the starting point of the Kiev Rus.

The undisturbed archaeological layers are unique – two fortified settlements without any habitation later than the middle of the 10th century.

Archaeological research began in the 19th century with excavations of local burial mounds followed by excavations in the first half of 20th century of fortified settlements of Iskorosten. The results were partly published, but the research and artefacts behind this were unfortunately lost. Since 2001 new excavations were executed by the Institute of Archaeology, first supervised by B. Zvizdecky, and after his tragic death in October in 2006 by A. Petrauskas.

In August 2009 a workshop “Experimental archeology: problems, technique and modelling” was held in Korosten. The workshop was organised as an archaeological camp, allowing participants to combine the theoretical presentations with practical demonstrations.

The functional possibilities of stone stoves were demonstrated. It confirmed the earlier expressed supposition about the possibility of firing pottery tableware in domestic stoves. Seminar participants were able to compare ceramic vessels fired in a stove and a kiln. The participants had the possibility of tracing all stages of pottery production – from the preparation of pottery clay to the finished products and subsequent use.

Except pottery reconstruction participants were shown metallurgical production, forest-chemical manufacture, treatment of black metals and smelting of copper and ancient bee-farming.

As Ancient Iskorosten is a unique complex of the 10th century in Eastern Europe, the continuation of archaeological excavations was approved unanimously by the participants. Also to avoid its complete destruction the seminar members approved the decision to create an archaeological open air museum on its territory.

15th annual meeting of the European association of archaeologists (EAA)

Riva del Garda, Trento, Italy 5-20 September 2009

■ Jodi Reeves FLORES (US)

This year the EAA held their fifteenth annual meeting in Riva del Garda, Trento, Italy. The conference hosted a wide range of sessions and, while there were none that focused exclusively on experimental archaeology, the method was present in a variety of different sessions. In addition, there was also a session specifically dedicated to the situation of open air museums.

While a session originally dedicated to looking introspectively at experiment in archaeology was withdrawn, several other sessions hosted papers that involved experimental archaeology:

- **New Approaches on Studying Weaponry of the European Bronze Age** organised by Marion Uckelman (Germany)
- **Rural Land Use and the Management of the Archaeological Historical Landscape: A European Perspective** organised by Stephen Trow (UK)
- **Social Aspects of the Prehistoric Past: Archaeological Models and Interpretations** which was organised by Anna Maria Sestieri (Italy)
- **Archaeologies and Soundscapes: From the Prehistoric Sonorous Experiences to the Music of the Ancient World**, organised by Giorgio Dimitiadis (Italy)
- **The Chaîné Opérateur Approach to Ceramics Studies** organised by Simona Scarcella (France).

Due to time constraints, I was only able to attend the two sessions Archaeologies and Soundscapes and The Chaîné Opérateur Approach to Ceramics Studies.

The goal of **Archaeologies and Soundscapes** was to promote discussion of archaeological soundscapes, present current research and evaluate how ethnography and experiment aid the interpretation of possible musical artefacts. While the session abstract explicitly mentioned using experimental archaeology to explore soundscapes, and a number of other methods were also employed such as ethnoarchaeology and analysis of archaeological finds, there appeared to be a heavy dependence on iconography in gathering evidence regarding ancient musical instruments and sound (D'Eugenio, Italy; Marretta, Italy; Simini, Italy; Castaldo, Italy; and Tonon, Italy). Despite this emphasis, several papers employed experiment in exploring either artefacts or soundscapes. Tinaig Clodoré-Tissot (France) explored the possible uses of Bronze Age ceramic artefacts by experimenting with a variety of reconstructions. Two other papers experimented with archaeological soundscapes associated with rock art (Garcia and López, Spain) and a cave (Panagiotis and Zafranias, Greece) in order to analyse how these places may have been perceived by, and affected, ancient inhabitants.

The session **The Chaîné Opérateur Approach to Ceramics Studies** also incorporated a wide range of methodologies used in studying the production processes of ceramics. Several of the nine papers presented used replicative experimental methods in studying the technologies in question. Marta Bazzanella and Anna Mayr (Italy) took a different approach and used local clays to construct spindle whorls and loom weights similar to those found at the Bronze Age pile dwelling of Molina di Ledro (Trentino, Italy). They then used them to experimentally produce textiles. The reference to, or inclusion of experiments in other papers (Laneri, Italy; Berg, UK) indicates that experimental archaeology has a stable and ever increasing role in archaeological research.

Despite the fact that several participants and one of the organizers were unable to attend, the session **Building the Past for the Future: Open Air Museums: What Chance in the 21st Century?** proved popular and fostered interesting discussion and debate. First Roeland Paardekooper (UK) presented an **Introduction: the Future of Archaeological Open Air Museums** in which he presented the work of EXARC and *liveARCH*, and discussed a definition for archaeological open air museums as well as the difficulties, and opportunities, which such facilities face. Jacqui Wood (UK) then presented on the importance of

presenting archaeological parks in an authentic manner – which often means they may be far from clean or tidy (see paper in this volume). Two other papers presented specific case studies, one being the newest archaeological open air museum in Poland, the Archaeopark of Kalisz-Zaodzie (Baranowski, Żukowski, and Ziąbka, Poland) and the other being the open air portion of the Ledro Museum (Vannini, Italy). Both highlighted the importance of engaging with the local community and taking their interests and needs into consideration. The papers were followed by a short discussion which focused both on the definition of archaeological open air museums vs. archaeoparks (and other incarnations) and on the role archaeological open air museums and archaeoparks play in creating identities.

Maria Giuseppa Gradoli (Italy) who was unable to attend instead submitted a film of recent activities in Sardinia, and Roeland Paardekooper presented a second film which acted as a foil for the first. Gradoli's film documented the experience of work undertaken in May 2009 in Sardinia, while Paardekooper's was an introduction to *liveARCH* and the concepts of archaeological open air museums and related activities on a general level. The first film was based much more on experience and emotion, as opposed to describing the experiment or the actions taking place. It also concluded with a 'procession' of costumed participants which had spiritual connotations and which – not surprisingly – provoked responses from the session audience. The second video shared similar elements – such as people dressed in period costume and emotive scenes and music – but also focused on discussing and defining archaeological open air museums and archaeoparks, as well as the educational value of experience and experiment. Over all, the session and discussion that followed highlighted the importance of archaeological open air museums within the heritage sector, as well as how they contribute towards archaeological research as well as education.

Despite the fact that there were no sessions dedicated to experimental archaeology, as a method it was widely integrated into the different areas of research presented at the conference this year. This inclusion of experimental archaeology, and the presence of the well attended **Building the Past for the Future**, indicates that many archaeologists are actively interested in how replicative experiments and constructs can aid in research – as well as help to present research to the wider public.

Report of the 6th SKAM flint technology workshop

Małkocin, Poland, 27-30 October 2009

■ Natalie UOMINI (UK)

Organised by SKAM the Flintreaders Society and the Dept of Archaeology at Szczecin University. (<http://www.archo.univ.szczecin.pl/conference/index.php?s=0&ln=1>)

What do you get when you lock up 50 lithic specialists in a countryside castle for 3 days with full room and board, PowerPoint presentations and flint? You get the excellent 6th annual conference of the Polish Flintreaders Society, which, I am told, followed the usual format, where experimenters, students and professors mingle freely to share theories, stories, ideas, and excavated lithic material. This year's topic being "Tricky Stones" focused on difficult assemblages. Experimental archaeology is thriving in Poland. One recurring theme was how to identify

true artefacts, as illustrated by Mikołaj Urbanowski's elegant experiments on geofacts created by high-energy beach processes. Mateusz Migal brilliantly drove home the problem of over-interpretation by presenting an "assemblage" consisting entirely of natural flint pieces from a French car park!

A wide range of experiments was presented, including on breakage, use-wear and SEM, laser scanning, replication, and taphonomy. Katarzyna Pyżewicz and Piotr Domochowski presented the First Magdalenian Replicatory Meeting, held in August 2009, which was fully devoted to flint knapping. However, the core of the conference was the animated debates which flew around the room with every talk. Being the only "foreigner" present (i.e. not speaking Czech or Polish), I was treated like royalty and given a personal translator (Katarzyna Orzyłowska) for the entire conference. The final day we were treated to a field trip to Wolin Island, where the knappers could indulge in the unique raw materials while admiring the beautiful autumn views. Next year's conference, in Poznań on 21-23 June 2010, is not to be missed!

8th *liveARCH* conference

Hungary, October 2009

■ Katrin KANIA (DE)

The last of the *liveARCH* meetings, this conference was focused both on analysing and evaluating the *liveARCH* project from the viewpoint of the eight participating archaeological open air museums (AOAMs) and on using these experiences for new projects and possibilities for AOAMs in the future.

The first conference day was mostly featuring the personal and professional experiences and conclusions of the *liveARCH* partners from Historisch OpenluchtMuseum Eindhoven (NL), Lofotr Viking Museum (NO), Fotevikens Museum (SE), Scottish Crannog Centre (UK), Āraišu arheoloģiskais Muzejparks (LV), Parco archeologico e Museo all'aperto della Terramara di Montale (IT) and "Matrica" Múzeum és Régészeti Park (HU). Each of the partner museums had a task in the network – like Marketing and Communication, Skills training, Dialogue with Visitors etcetera – and the results of the individual museum's tasks were used by each of the partners to improve their museum. This framework aimed at spreading the load for each of the partners.

A common topic in the reports was the importance of good communication between partners from different parts of Europe, with an emphasis on the importance of awareness of linguistic and cultural differences that might prove to be pitfalls for the common cause. On the other hand, these differences can add to the experience of working together, and knowing different ways to do things from other countries can help to find new ways and approaches in museum work as well.

While not every aspect worked out to its full potential for every single museum, the consensus was that *liveARCH* was a very demanding but also very rewarding project, and that communication is the key in any large or any international project. The *liveARCH* staff exchange was reviewed especially favourably, since the participating staff members were highly motivated after visiting another partner museum for exchange of skills and knowledge.

The second and third day of the conference were mostly focusing on possibilities for archaeological open-air museums and the problems and options for archaeological experiments in

the museum. While it is not always possible to admit the public to actual archaeological experiments, it became very clear that AOAMs are frequently the venue for experiments, offering the possibilities to build structures like kilns or glass ovens, and those structures and the knowledge gained in the experiments in turn benefit the public.

Throughout the whole conference, the importance of communication and of the “dialogue of knowledge” was one of the main recurring topics – and this awareness is surely the best groundwork for a new, European project led by Clara Masriera Esquerera and Roeland Paardekooper to continue the work begun by liveARCH by the name of OpenArch.

The Danish historical workshops – seminar on present and future challenges

Denmark, 29 – 30 October 2009

■ Hans-Ole HANSEN (DK)

In the days 29 – 30 October 2009, employees of the historical workshops of Denmark met to exchange points of view on their present situation bearing on future challenges and to find out how cooperation between the historical workshops and with others could be developed. About 40 participants from 31 different sites took part, an interestingly large appearance.

To stimulate and inspire the discussions, a series of presentations were given. Hans-Ole Hansen, who founded the Historical Archaeological Experimental Centre of Lejre, now named Land of Legends Lejre, and previous leader of the Historiecenter Dybbøl Banke presented a short, intense introduction into the history of historical workshops, their development, possibilities and difficulties. The paper was prepared as 12 points or views and will later be published in line at www.historiskevaerksteder.dk. It was clear for him that it is hard to identify one selves in Denmark with the definition of archaeological open air museums as most workshops feel far from being museums.

Five different types of historical workshops were presented in short papers with the description of backgrounds, way of working, finances, the present situation and plans for the future. These were Hjerl Hedes Frilandsmuseum, Historiecenter Dybbøl Banke, Skoletjenesten (School service) i Esbjerg, Ribe Vikingecenter and Land of Legends Lejre (a page on almost each of these in English: www.publicarchaeology.eu, ed.).

This was followed by three longer presentations on the reasons of existence for historical workshops and their needs:

- The present day developments in the education system for children and youth in Denmark with experience from Esbjerg in Southwest Jutland;
- Besides that the developments inside the dissemination of the museums in Denmark;
- And as conclusion the developments into tourism, the experience economy in Denmark.

A long and interesting day ended with the participants preparing themes and problems and prepared groups for the next day's

discussions. Obviously the themes school service, education and the targets for history education set by the Danish Government got the most participants.

The following day, the groups started with themed discussions and the seminar was concluded with a series of findings and recommendations. The differences between the Danish historical workshops are very clear, from purely governmental run sites to sites linked to museums and private smaller or larger organisations. From this, the following main points are selected to cover the Danish historical workshops in their full varieties:

- 1) Making visible the historical workshops and their work and ways of working, for example by means of intensified cooperation and shaping of a network both with the education world, the museum- and the tourism worlds;
- 2) Enhancing skills of new and present employees in the historical spirit of the historical workshops;
- 3) Collecting knowledge and dissemination of knowledge as bridges between sciences and the public;
- 4) Reduction of the uniformity which the monetary support from society increasingly creates / development of the identity of historical workshops and their values;
- 5) Recruitment, training and keeping of volunteer workers;
- 6) Continuation of the development of the nationwide cooperation between historical workshops;
- 7) A description of the history of the historic workshops and / or description of the historical techniques developed over time there;
- 8) A follow up seminar in 2010 with a heavy focus on the competences which the management in historical workshops should master.

And as such, the 2nd seminar, focussed on the future in the 30 years history of the historical workshops ended in an informal get together which led to many inspirations and will influence the means of the small, medium and large meetings of the network. The first large meeting will be themed with “War and Peace” and is taking place 3 – 5 February 2010 in North and South Schleswig.

EXAR-Tagung 2009

Unteruhldingen, Deutschland, 8.-11. Oktober 2009

■ Kathrin SCHÄPPI und Stefanie OSIMITZ (CH)

In einem der ältesten Freilichtmuseen Europas, dem Pfahlbaumuseum in Unteruhldingen am Bodensee, fand vom 8. bis 11. Oktober die 17. EXAR-Tagung statt. Die perfekt organisierte Veranstaltung stand zum ersten Mal unter der Leitung von Dr. Gunter Schöbel. Schwerpunktthema war dieses Jahr „Experimentelle Archäologie – Traditionen und Herausforderungen 2009“. Dementsprechend zogen mehrere Referenten nach jahrelanger, intensiver Auseinandersetzung in verschiedenen Bereichen der experimentellen Archäologie Bilanz (M. Rösch: Forchtenberg – Ein archäologisches Langzeitexperiment; G. Schöbel: Das Hornstaadhaus – Ein archäologisches Langzeitexperiment 1996-?; S. Rühling: Musikarchäologie – Klänge und Musik durch die Zeiten; W. Fasnacht: 20 Jahre Experimente in der Kupfer- und Bronzezeit – Ein kritischer Rückblick; T. Gam-Aschenbrenner: Experimente zur wikingzeitlichen Glasperlenherstellung in Südschweden).

Des Weiteren wurden neue Forschungen präsentiert (H. Junker: Autsch! Aussagemöglichkeiten zu Tätowierungen aus vor- und

frühgeschichtlicher Zeit; T. Lessig-Weller: Versuche zur Simulation von Pfeilschüssen; D. Modl: Zerhackt, verbogen und gebrochen – Zur Herstellung und Weiterverarbeitung von plankonvexen Gusskuchen und verwandten Rohmetallformen in der spätbronzezeitlichen Steiermark; D. Pillonel: Eine eisenzeitliche Brückenrekonstruktion bei La Tène). Die Arbeiten zeichneten sich durch eindeutige Fragestellungen, Aufarbeitung des Forschungsstandes, sauber protokollierte Experimente und klare Schlussfolgerungen aus.

Weiter thematisiert wurde der Einsatz von Geräten im musealen Bereich, deren Rekonstruktion ursprünglich auf Experimenten beruht. Wie am Beispiel der weit verbreiteten steinzeitlichen Bohrmaschine von P. Walter sehr bildhaft aufgezeigt wurde (Bohren im Museum: Forschungsgeschichte, Didaktik, Mathematik) können Rekonstruktionen, auch wenn sie heute nicht mehr über jeden Zweifel erhaben sind, aus didaktischer Sicht ihren Zweck, die Vermittlung herstellungstechnischer Prinzipien, durchaus noch erfüllen. Einen neuen Rekonstruktionsvorschlag für die Ovalbohrung neolithischer Steinäxte lieferte J.-L. Ringot (Experimentelle Ovalbohrung von neolithischen Steinäxten).

Den Blick auf ein aktuelles Thema, das in Zukunft immer wichtiger werden wird, richteten Beiträge über das Verhältnis der Experimentellen Archäologie zur Living History (A. Willmy: Experimentelle Archäologie und Living History – aus Sicht eines Darstellers und Archäologen; U. Brand-Schwarz: „Living History“ als Beitrag zur musealen Vermittlung – Möglichkeiten, Grenzen und Risiken; U. Mehler: Das Nibelungenlied in Wissenschaft und Praxis – 20 Jahre experimentelle Geschichte, Living History oder Klamauf): Wo sind Abgrenzungen nötig, was soll vermittelt werden, worauf beruhen die bei Vorführungen verwendeten Gegenstände und welchen Beitrag kann ihr langjähriger praktischer Einsatz für die Archäologie liefern?

Allgemeines Fazit dieser Tagung war, dass sich die Experimentelle Archäologie zwar mittlerweile etabliert, jedoch an Universitäten und in Forschungsstellen ihren Platz als archäologische Forschungsmethode noch nicht gefunden hat. Um dies zu ändern, müssen die EXAR und ihre Mitglieder in Zukunft vermehrt an diese Fachstellen herantreten und ihre Dienste anbieten. Für ein glaubwürdiges Auftreten, braucht es eine klare Begriffsdefinition und Trennung der Bereiche Archäotechnik, Experimentelle Archäologie und Living History, die sie durch vermehrte Zusammenarbeit in Zukunft noch mehr voneinander profitieren könnten, wobei die ersten beiden sogar unmittelbar voneinander abhängig sind.

So hätte diese erfolgreiche Tagung denn auch unter dem Titel „Selbstkritische Rückblicke - selbstbewusste Ausblicke“ stehen können.

Experimental archaeology conference

Aberdeen, Scotland, UK, 14-15 November 2009

■ Jodi Reeves FLORES (US)

Following previous conferences in London, Exeter and Edinburgh, the Experimental Archaeology Conference took place at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. A wide variety of papers were presented, including several case studies of recent

experiments, works discussing the nature of experiment, and ways of making archaeological experiments available to a wider audience.

Roger C P Doonan (Sheffield) discussed the issues that arise when academic archaeologists go to craftspeople, or skilled practitioners, for information on traditional or primitive technologies (**Does Familiarity breed contempt? Exploring the relationships between skilled practitioners and thoughtful scholars**). Doonan highlighted how interactions between craftsperson and 'thoughtful scholars' can potentially have negative results on the experimental and learning process. While it is important to be critical of how we apply our, or other's craft skills to the study of archaeology, it is important to remember that many relationships are fruitful. Frances Liardet (Cardiff) took a different approach in presenting her study of apprenticeship and the formation of clay core glass bottles (**I'm Still Learning: apprenticeship, archaeology, and the making of glass bottles**). Liardet analysed the different ways in which knowledge and skill are developed between an apprentice and teacher. Liardet adopted an analytical, anthropological view of her time spent learning to make glass bottles.

Claire Marshall (Manchester) and Dana Millson (Durham) presented current research regarding reconstructions of soundscapes of the Neolithic and studying the taphonomy of Neolithic ceramics and the application of residue analysis, respectively. Millson also presented information on ongoing taphonomic experiments. The presentation served as a good example of how to integrate experiments in wider research schemes, and how to use the method to answer archaeological questions.

Klaus Staubermann (Nation Museums Scotland), a historian, presented reconstruction of an astronomical photometer often found in observatories during the mid-nineteenth century (**Case Studies in Reconstructing 19th Century Science and Technology**). The aim was to explore how material culture affects scientific thought and knowledge acquisition. This was followed by a more general discussion from Stephanie Koerner (Manchester) about the historical contexts and different assumptions that influence experiments and how they are perceived. Farina Sternke (Glasgow) then introduced the beginning of a project that aims to create an online database of experimental results, currently called the Database for Experimental Archaeology, or DEXAR. Sternke opened the project to comments and suggestions, many of which were made during the presentation and during the formal discussion time that took place at the end of the conference.

Next John Barber (AOC Archaeology Group) and David Strachan (Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust) each presented projects that incorporated public participation. Barber's group conducted experiments on the construction, collapse and excavation of a constructed Neolithic chamber cairn. Barber also presented experiments on the construction and destruction of Iron Age brochs, as well as a discussion of the different social aspects involved (**The Construction, Stability and Destruction of Dry Stone Built Structures**). Strachan's presentation of the Loch Tay Longboat Project highlighted how important community based projects can be for introducing the public to past materials and artefacts, and educating them about the processes involved (**The Loch Tay Logboat Project**). These two presentations served as a reminder of the important impact that replicative projects can have in terms of public in-

teraction and education, even if they may not necessarily be defined as 'experimental'.

The morning discussion focused on relationships between academic archaeologists and skilled practitioners. The possible ways of improving the relations discussed included changing the relationship dynamic by developing relationships slowly, with communication about expectations being kept clear. The afternoon discussion discussed the technical aspects of each experiment; as well as what such practices can tell us about social and cultural issues.

A positive aspect of the conference was that people not closely related to experimental archaeology came to present papers. This is a good indication that experimental archaeology is a method that is being applied in a variety of fields, even if we may not be overly aware of it. This year discussion focused primarily on technical and other aspects of each presentation, instead of wider issues regarding the role of replicative experiments in archaeology.

Bradford, Archaeometallurgy conference

Bradford, UK, 10 - 12 November 2009

■ Arne ESPELUND (NO)

Department of Materials Science and Engineering,
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

As Dr. Gerry McDonnell in the University of Bradford is about to retire, his colleagues as a tribute to him invited scholars from around the world to a conference on archaeometallurgy. It took place from Nov. 10th to 12th in the premises of the university and was attended by some 70 persons.

As a senior in the field of archaeometallurgy, I noticed that many of the oldtimers no longer were attending. Instead the role as lecturers had been taken by younger students and scholars, a majority from the UK although 8 foreign countries were represented.

Out of some 36 lectures and 14 poster presentations the majority dealt with ancient iron.

The high quality of McDonnell's guiding of his students was reflected in presentations by Samantha Rubinson and Eleanor Blakelock, as well as in numerous references. I personally enjoyed the enthusiastic lecture by Peter Halkon on ironmaking in East Yorkshire. Several papers dealt with the refuse from smithing (Tim Young), the organization and the processes in the smithy (Arne Jouttijärvi) and ideas on the blacksmithing landscape (several authors, including G. McDonnell). Other papers described sites and special finds. I was pleased to have a chance to present ironmaking in Roman age Norway in furnaces operated by induced draft and the direct use of wood, in addition to a discussion of the carbon control in the early processes.

The organisation of the conference was excellent, for which it seems justified to thank in particular Eleanor Blakelock. Because of the limited number of attendants one did not have to rush from one session to another. For me personally the conference gave me an excellent opportunity to present my many questions and suggestions to people with a great deal of insight. Thank you!

TAG

Durham, UK, 17 - 19 December 2009

■ Jodi Reeves FLORES (US)

The 31st Theoretical Archaeology Conference (TAG) was held at Durham University. Building on a session on the use of experimental archaeology from last year's TAG, this year Frank Foulds (Durham) and Dana Millson (Durham) coordinated the session **Experimentation in Archaeology: Combining Practical and Philosophical Methods in the Pursuit of Past Culture**. The aim of this session was to both look at the application of experiment in archaeological research, and discuss how it can be used to test and develop archaeological theories. The presentation portions of the session were complemented by experimental demonstrations by some of the presenters in the university's botanical gardens.

Many of the papers used experimental archaeology in addressing questions or perceptions about specific types of materials and technologies. Foulds presented an experimental method for identifying individual knappers in the production of Paleolithic handaxes, while another paper looked at the results of residue analysis of experimentally constructed and used pottery. The results shed light on why pottery use became popular in the Neolithic (Millson). In the afternoon session, Sally Herriett (Exeter) discussed two processes for making rawhide and the implications of these two processes. Merryn Dineley (Orkney) discussed her experiments with using grain to produce malt, and the possible relations between malt production and agriculture.

Attendees of the session also got a glimpse of a large scale project taking place at the Cella Vinaria Archaeological Park in Spain that includes the design and construction of different possible modules of a Roman wine production centre (Antoni Martin Oliveras, Spain).

Two other papers explored the more experiential side of experimental archaeology. Simon Clarke (Shetland) and Esther Renwick (UHI Millennium Institute) discussed their previous and planned experiments in experiencing a late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age building, which aim to develop a more objective phenomenological approach through the application of methods associated with experimental archaeology. Another paper presented attempts at better understanding the experiences of, and social interactions associated with, cave painting by engaging different groups of people in painting on large areas with a variety of materials (Tania-Morgan Alcantarilla, Southampton; Richard Hoyle, Chesham Museum; Natalie Uomini, Liverpool). An attempt was also made to place experimental archaeology in a wider theoretical context by identifying and addressing assumptions made by both objectivist and relativist lines of thought (Stephanie Koerner, Manchester).

This session helped to continue to develop how experimental archaeology can be used in a practical manner to address and shape archaeological theories. Many of the papers presented in this session tried to achieve this by using experimental archaeology to address current thoughts and theories about archaeological materials, or by using it to develop new theoretical frameworks.