

EXARC year report 2008

Draft, to be presented at the AGM, March 28th, 2009

For an overview over EXARC's goals and history, we refer to the website www.exarc.eu. EXARC is the international organisation of Archaeological Open Air Museums and other facilities involved in Experimental Archaeology. In 2008, the number of members raised with 11 (2007: 9; 2006: 8; 2005: 3). With no members resigning, the total number of members by the end of the year was 59.

Board

The board of 2008 existed of 8 people: *Björn Jakobsen* (SE) Chair, *Gunter Schöbel* (DE) Vice Chair, *Roeland Paardekooper* (NL) Secretary, *Ulrike Braun* (DE) Treasurer and 4 members: *Ilaria Pulini* (IT), *Peter Vemming* (DK), *Geir Sør Reime* (NO), & *Arwo Pajusi* (SE). No new people entered the board in 2008, some of 2007 left. There have been 3 Board meetings: one at the AGM in Denmark (Feb '08); one at the *liveARCH* meeting in Latvia (Sep '08) and a telephone conference (Dec '08). The latter meeting went better than expected and at no costs – an encouragement for the future.

There have been 46 emails when the secretary informed the board or sent out a query (2007: 48; 2006: 30). This is too much. EXARC is growing and needs to adjust its communication, both inside the Board and with / between the members. There is no solution so far.

The secretariat spent 735 hours on EXARC. This is including direct contact with the members, keeping the website up to date as well as processing orders of EuroREA. It is more than a 40% job.

Constitution Committee

The committee preparing a new constitution – as decided at the AGM in Scotland ('06) had come to a conclusion a year later. The past year, the board has continued on that path – the results of which are planned to be put in place in 2009. A lot of the 2008 debate in the Board was about exactly this point.

EU

The Delphi Project – officially ended in June 2005 – continued with a website, hosted by EXARC. The project is run by Unteruhldingen, the web space and the such is paid by EXARC. The Delphi website had 75 visits per day in 2008 (2007: 75; 2006: 57; 2005: 30).

The *liveARCH* project had a good second year, with meetings in Norway and Latvia, unfortunately with hardly any outsider EXARC members joining in.

ICOM

The association EXARC intends to associate the open-air museums with archaeological profile as a committee in the World Museum Association ICOM as, up to now, neither the European network of rural open-air museums nor the national museum associations could establish an unlimited acceptance within the existing organisations. After discussions with members of the executive board of ICOM and the World President Alessandra Cummins there are now possibilities, especially in the field of the presentation of the "intangible cultural heritage resources" to create a binding status for the tasks of archaeological open-air museums along a corresponding certification. The UNESCO convention of Paris of the year 2003 grants a special priority to the protection of immaterial cultural heritage, its documentation and mediation within "education and culture".

First flyer of EXARC

In the beginning of January EXARC developed a flyer and sent it to its members. It contains information about the association, the journal EuroREA and this website. EXARC members can order extra copies.

Also over 200 archaeological open air museums across Europe were contacted asking them to consider membership. Together with the letter a questionnaire was sent to collect data about the museums and their recent development. EXARC has a reasonably good overview of what is happening with archaeological open air museums across Europe, but would like to get a more detailed understanding. Only that way, we will be able to better represent these museums and to foster the contacts between them.

13th EXARC meeting

From 8th to 10th February, representatives of the archaeological open air museums in Europe met in the Danish Middelaldercentret, south of Copenhagen for their 13th meeting since 2001. The agenda involved, besides of the introduction of open-air museums that recently joined the association, the discussion of quality standards for this category of museums and the presentation of certification processes already effected in Germany.

Living History and nationalism

May 2008, EXARC entered the discussion in Germany about political ideas being introduced in living history. In EXARC's opinion, acting out living history should not involve propagating of or flirting with political ideas, especially if these ideas refer to National Socialistic philosophy. EXARC is worried about examples like the German living history group Ulfhednar, who are internationally active. Already for a long time, they have stood out for their heavy use of symbols, which are else known from the Nazi Era of the 3rd Reich.

During a show of the group at a large museum celebration in Paderborn (Germany), 2008.04.26, one member of the group presented himself carrying a tattoo with the phrase: "Meine Ehre heißt Treue" (My honour is loyalty) – the motto of Hitler's SS. The use of this phrase in Germany is forbidden by law, for obvious reasons. For the same obvious reasons, EXARC is greatly worried and calls for a discussion within the international living history scene about such themes – what should be allowed and what not.

Surveys 2001 – 2007

Over the years 2001 – 2007, quite a bit of information is gathered about most of the members. Unfortunately it has not been possible in 2008 to produce an overview of this in a nice layout.

liveARCH has developed and executed a standard visitor survey. Several EXARC members have used it as well. A onetime only intensive processing of the 2008 is being executed at this moment in the light of Roeland Paardekooper's PhD research. Probably for 2009, something new will be designed for use in both *liveARCH* and EXARC again.

Contacts with EXAR

2008 there were no many contacts with the board of our sister organisation, EXAR, mainly because most board members in EXAR were renewed in 2008. The EXAR Board members are on the EXARC mailing list and vice versa. A point of attention for 2009 are the double subscriptions. There was not much contact on the 2009 Autumn conference near Budapest yet except for a meeting in Hungary in Summer 2008.

Communication

Our most important channels of communication are the website and our journal EuroREA. Main target groups are our colleague archaeological open air museums and their fans / professionals.

Internal communication – News mails

EXARC communicates with its members and affiliates by email, 16 times in 2008 (2007: 23). Thanks to the help of Karola Müller and later Marlise Wunderli, all these mails have been bilingual (English & German). English remains the official language within EXARC.

The website

With the new website brought on line by the end of 2007, we are happy with Magdalena Zielinska having continued to maintain the website. The EXARC website had about as much visits as in 2007 (2008: 106; 2007: 102; 2006: 57; 2005: 46). Especially after May, the amount of visits declined – we do not yet know why. The most popular pages on the EXARC website are shown in the table below.

	2008	2007	2006	2005	
1. (3)(4) Members' presentation	4.321	2.368	1.808	1.631	82%
2. (..)(..) About us	3.526				
3. (2)(2) EU projects	3.445	3.201	2.208	2.741	8%
4. (4)(5) EuroREA	2.653	2.103	1.536	668	26%
5. (5)(6) Meeting	1.949	1.955	1.404	1.482	0%
total hits for top 5 pages:	15.894	9.627	6.956	6.522	65%

Every members should link to EXARC homepage www.exarc.eu. Although attempts have been made to persuade members, this does not work.

EuroREA

As reported by *J.K. Dvorakova*, Editor in Chief

Year 2008 saw preparation of the 5th volume of the Journal 'EuroREA'. It was published in the beginning of September bringing together 25 articles from authors from 13 different countries. For the first time we have to reject one of the offered articles because of its quality. Even after this we had more material than we could publish and in agreement with the author postponed one article. The 6th volume of 'EuroREA' was brought forward to be ready for the EXARC conference in Modena in March 2009. Despite the short time for collecting contributions and preparations the rough shape of the volume was ready by the end of 2008 with 17 articles, these including a questionnaire on the topic of the relation between craftsmanship and experimental archaeology answered by five contributors and a block containing brief reports from various conferences concerning experimental archaeology. The authors come from 12 countries including presentation of the first project of experimental archaeology from Moldova.

Overall, in 2008 we have sold 746 copies, 115 directly and 631 for resale of which 200 in one single order (2007: 546 total, 174 directly, 390 resale). At present, both volume 1 and 2 are sold out and we are considering the possibility of selling single articles.

Sales actually have not grown, but remained the same. We failed to spread the work of gaining adverts and wholesale within the group of editors, these tasks now being back in the hands of the EXARC secretariat.

In 2008, we had 4 pages with adverts to raise money (3 in 2007). For 2009, again 3 pages are foreseen, mainly due to the early production of the issue, to be published in March 2009. Discussions have been started with a publisher in order to see if they would be willing to publish EuroREA together with EXARC which would allow us to eventually switching to two numbers a year.