



ECOVAST REPORT 59

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Contents

Editorial

Report of the President

News from the Sections

ASSET project

The significance of Place

Living on the Rural Edge

Partner organisations

Details of events notified to the Editor

EDITORIAL

In this edition, Valerie Carter, re-elected as President at the Biennial Assembly, writes of that meeting and other events in the Czech Republic. The significance of place is the subject of an article by Royston Edge, new ECOVAST UK member, and place related to arts was the theme of the UK Europa Nostra Conference and visits in Cambridge in April.

Cultural Landscape is featured in a new project 'Living on the Rural Edge' which our contacts in the Czech republic have joined, and in several of the forthcoming events at the end of the newsletter concern landscapes.

A PDF of this newsletter can be accessed at:

<http://www.dorfwiki.org/upload/PhilTurner/ecovastnews59.pdf>

Please send copy for the next Newsletter to me, at p.turner@semantise.com by 1 October 2015

Phil TURNER

International Committee Member of ECOVAST

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I have already described much of what had happened involving ECOVAST in 2014 in earlier Newsletters.

ECOVAST EVENT IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Although few ECOVAST members attended our meetings in the Czech Republic in March, it was a successful event. It will probably be the only meeting we can call during 2015 – though I am making attempts to see if we could add a meeting to one or other of the events being attended by our ECOVAST members.

The small conference in the Spa Town of Františkovy Lázně, Czech Republic marked the end of our ASSET project (Action to Strengthen Small European Towns) which started in 2005 and led to research at European and local levels and to our November 2014 publication "The Importance of Small Towns".

We owe our thanks to our friends in the Czech Republic who made us very welcome and assisted our arrangements for the event, particularly Jana Smotkova who helped with the coach trips; Eva Elizeusová from the Three Lilies Hotel, who arranged the room and food for our event and Martin Hajek who acted as our host in the Spa Hotel Ida, where we had most of our meals.



Outside 3 Lilies cafe

Our Czech guests included the Mayor of Františkovy Lázně – Otakar Skala - who opened our event and took us on a tour of his spa town; Radim Sršeň of the Association of Local Government of the Czech Republic who was our key speaker, Karel Kuča (author, architect and town planner) his wife, Vera Kučová (Director General of the Czech National Heritage Institute) and Milan Hron from the Czech Republic Ministry of the Interior. I spoke about our work on small towns since 2005 which led to our international ECOVAST conclusions which have been sent around Europe and Tihana and Angus spoke about their work in Croatia and Germany.

The walking tour took place after lunch which gave us all a welcome break from sitting down and I hope that future ECOVAST events could adopt this approach.



Inspecting the source of the healing waters

We were invigorated for our post lunch discussions on the next steps for work on small towns. In summary we decided to look at creating a simple certificate 'Friends of ECOVAST' which could be sent out to those who had co-operated with our work on small towns and secondly to look at how the work could be used to influence the developing European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) – we are already involved in the process as Tihana is the lead on one of their working groups, the Danube Civil Society Forum.

I am now working on converting our publication to a sister sub-document called 'The Importance of Small Towns in the Danube Basin' using only examples from the countries making up the Basin area. **A report on the Danube Basin will soon be uploaded to the ECOVAST website**

The following days saw us take tours of small towns in the border area – the first day to

German towns which included Bad Brambach; Bad Elster; Hohenberg and Arzberg; and where we met three local Mayors (kindly arranged by Angus) and the second day to Czech border towns where we met an archaeologist of the National Heritage Institute of the Czech Republic, Filip Prekop, who took us on a tour of Loket.



Arzberg

I will be sending out a full report of the event to all our National Sections and other ECOVAST members soon.

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Our conference was followed by an Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting where we adopted alterations to our Statutes. We now have to get them to our place of registration in France – the work will be undertaken by Angus. Thank you to all who responded and voted.

BIENNIAL ASSEMBLY

After this we held our Biennial Assembly which had been held over from 2014. We began with a minutes silence to remember our members who had died during the last 12 months - Professor Dr Heinar Henkel; Rüdiger Maul; Edmund Neville-Rolfe; Ursula Stratenwerth, and Jane Wade. We miss them all particularly Rüdiger who had led our work on rural buildings for many years and attended nearly all our recent meetings.

At the meeting we voted in a new International Committee and officers. I would like to thank those who voted for me to become President once more and I welcome all the members of the new International Committee:

Angus Fowler (First Vice President and German Section); Dr. Arthur Spiegler (Vice President and Austrian Section); Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić (Vice President and Croatian Section); Magdalena Banu (Vice President and Romanian Section); Andrea Weigert (Treasurer and German Section); Olaf Linke (German Section); Gabor Rajnai (Hungarian Section); Victoria

Momeva Altiparmakovska (Macedonian Section); Halina Lapinska (Polish Section); Dr. Olga Sevan (Russian Section); Professor Eva Kralova (Slovakian Section) and Pam Moore (UK Section); and our co-opted members Dr. Enrico Capo from Italy; Calin Hoinarescu (Romanian Section) and Phil Turner from the UK Section.

I would also like to thank Ralf Bokermann who has stepped down from the Committee.

I know how difficult it is to attend meetings or attract new members but I would like to welcome two new members to ECOVAST – Katharina Rybnicek to the Austrian Section and Dr Royston Edge to the UK Section who writes in this newsletter.

You will find in other parts of this Newsletter more details of work I have carried out for ECOVAST: see under ASSET; PREPARE; APURE: and Natural Landscapes. Phil Turner is also providing a report on our joint EUROPA NOSTRA/ECOVAST event in Cambridge in which I was also involved.

Valerie Carter



Locket street and map



News from the Sections

Austria

Our General Assembly of ECOVAST Austria was held on March 16th 2015. The pleasant news is we have a new member. She is Ms. Katharina Rybnicek, an advanced student in Geography, who is particularly interested in landscape and other rural topics. Katharina was unable to attend the ECOVAST meeting in Františkovy Lázně to become introduced to the ECOVAST community.

There are two project options emerging, both concerning Small Historic Towns, one carried out in Hungary and Austria, the other in the Small Historic Town Hainburg (Austria) at the Danube near Bratislava. The latter is of special interest for us, as this town is situated in the Green Belt.

The work and commitment of ECOVAST was briefly illuminated in the publication "Geography active" 1/2015 of the Austrian Geographic Society, at the example of the Green Belt, its landscapes and Small Historic Towns. (Publication in German)

Arthur Spiegler & Brigitte Macaria

Croatia

In January 2015 the Croatian Section of ECOVAST had its Annual Meeting for 2014 in Zagreb at the ZgForum, where the year's work was presented and accepted by the Section's Assembly, including the paper (brochure) written on the past 20 years of ECOVAST in Croatia.

Also in January the Section's President Nikša Božić gave a presentation on the significance of ECOVAST work, especially of its Croatian Section, at the Philosophy Faculty of the University of Zagreb, organized by MobilnaEka - Platform for Mobility and Cooperation of Croatian social anthropologists and ethnologists.

Dr Jasenka Kranjčević gave this spring a number of lectures on historical hotel architecture, including participating exhibitions showing historical maps and projects of built and unbuilt creations planned for tourism on the Croatian Adriatic coast from Austro-Hungarian times onward.

Two members, Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Valerija Kelemen Pepeonik, participated at the ECOVAST Biennial General Assembly conference, from 27 - 31 March 2015, in Františkovy Lazne, the Czech Republic, where they presented the work of Croatian section.



Tihana and Valerija listen to Filip Prekop at Locket

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić gave a presentation in Cambridge at the Europa Nostra UK conference during the Annual General Assembly from 7 - 9 April 2015, where a number of ECOVAST members were present, some of whom gave another two presentations. The title of the Croatian presentation was: 'Traditional Art and its Significance for Built Heritage in Rural Croatia'.

The Croatian Network for Rural Development (HMRR), of which the Croatian Section of ECOVAST is an active founding member, participated in the organisation of the First Croatian Rural Parliament, held in Beli Manastir, Croatia, 16-18 April 2015. The event gathered more than 200 participants from Croatia and abroad and was directed to empowering organisations dealing with rural issues in Croatia and the South-East Region of Europe. Nikša Božić was actively involved in organization of this event and was an editor of the small booklet that was published on this occasion. A report on First CRP in English is available here:

<http://www.hmrr.hr/en/news/from-hmrr/first-croatian-rural-parliament-a-brief-report/>

A two-years cross-border project "Heritage-driver of development", in which Croatian Section of ECOVAST was an associate organisation, came to its end and was officially closed by two events: a presentation of the activities in Tivat (Montenegro) on 5 February 2015 and a final project conference held in Dubrovnik, on 6 February 2015. Among the

results of the project it is worth mentioning the publication of the valuable Manual on the Management of the Protected Heritage, dedicated to local landscape values and a translation (to Croatian and Montenegrin languages) of the European Charter on Spatial Planning. More info is available here: <http://www.bastina.eu/?p=1349&lang=en>

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić participated at the 4th Danube Financing Dialogue conference in Zagreb on April 23, 2015 organized by an initiative of the Priority Area 10 Coordinator of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). One result of this activity was creation of a bilateral project proposal of ECOVAST Croatia with the Austrian Technical University of Vienna, named 'Down to Earth - Earthen Architecture in Central Europe' (call for application for 2016/17). If this proposal is accepted, it could be a start of initial research on the archaic forms of traditional architecture in the Pannonian area (Danube region and further to the Near East).

An international event was held in Berlin on May 18, 2015 where Historical Gaslight and Gas Street Lamps were a theme celebrating the World Monument Watch Day and included lectures, a panel discussion and exhibition, where also participants from Croatia presented Historical Gas Lamps of Zagreb (some of them in the old part of the town still lit by hand). The organisation of this event, which aimed to highlight this important and rare heritage and promote its preservation and care, was partly helped by Angus Fowler, a member from German Section of ECOVAST, as well as members of the Croatian Section.

Following a proposal of the coordinator Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić of the Danube Civil Society Forum (DCSF) for the ECOVAST project of 'Small European Towns' to be extended into the programme of the EU Strategy of the Danube Region (EUSDR) it has been accepted that our international President Valerie Carter would make a presentation of the research done on this topic, including the Danube area, for the Participation Day of the EUSDR in October 2015 in Ulm, Germany, which may hopefully activate a number of ECOVAST national sections situated in this region of Europe, but also initiate further cooperation on this important issue.

It is also worth mentioning that, although it was not a strict ECOVAST activity, several members of our Section were actively involved in the preparation of the new Strategy of Spatial Development of Croatia. Jasenka Kranjčević

and Aleksandar Lukić were authors of a study that focused on regional development and system of settlements. Biserka Bilušić and Nikša Božić were in a landscape study group. Nikša was also involved in creating main cartographic material for this Strategy that goes on public display this June.

Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić and Nikša Božić

Germany

The winter season 2014/2015 has been relatively quiet after the busy year 2014 (AGM etc. in Görlitz, Denkmal in Leipzig). Irmelin Küttner, and to a less extent Angus Fowler, continue to be active in the working group for Living Villages within the Brandenburg21 group, at the moment trying to achieve a better organisation of the group and preparing for the Brandenburg Village Day in summer.

The financial position of the German section would be greatly improved, due to income expected from a project introduced by Olaf Linke. This was for project design work on an INTERREG IIIB Central Europe project on Low Carbon Energy for which 14,000 Euro would be paid to the Linke Consultancy Practice, a proportion of which would be paid to the German section. There was potential for involvement of the Croatian section.

Ivar Henckel is active in rural development and village renewal in Lower Saxony, Andrea Weigert working for the State Agency for Nature and Environment in Schleswig-Holstein.

The German Section of ECOVAST did not take part in the Green Week in Berlin in January 2015, however Ralf Bokermann with a group of farmers from the Schwalm-Eder district in Hessen took part in various events there.

The Committee of the German Section has held meetings at Denkmal in Leipzig in November and in Berlin in March, preparing for the ECOVAST International events in Františkovy Lázně and excursion at the end of March 2015, Angus Fowler helping Valerie Carter in mobilizing more speakers from the Czech Republic and especially to organise the successful excursion to Bad Elster, Hohenberg/Eger and Arzberg. Through his Czech contacts at the National Monuments Board we were able to have an excellent guide for our visit of the small Czech town Loket. We much hope that we can now renew and develop our contacts in the Czech Republic.

The Förderkreis Alte Kirchen Berlin-Brandenburg, member of the German Section, celebrated its 25th anniversary (founded in Berlin 4 May 1990) on 9 May 2015 in Potsdam and is preparing a "Festschrift". Angus Fowler has brought together his well-preserved working papers and correspondence on the foundation of the FAK BB and other similar organisations in eastern Germany 1990ff. Fowler contributed a talk on "Churches in the Landscape" to the conference of Europa Nostra UK in Cambridge at the beginning of April 2015. He is now also active as Committee Member of the "Verband der Kirchbauvereine in Sachsen-Anhalt" (Federation of Church Building Associations in Sachsen-Anhalt).

The campaign for preserving gas-powered street lighting in Berlin continues with a Berlin Watch Day on May 18 organised by the Berlin associations involved, including Denkmal Wacht Brandenburg-Berlin, together with World Monuments Fund/World Monuments Watch. Through our Croatian member, Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić, it has been possible to organise a high-powered delegation from Zagreb to the Watch Day event, with short talks and panel discussion, also including Peter Burman from the UK and a representative of WMF/WMW, Konstanze von zur Muhlen. In Zagreb all the original 224 gas lamps are preserved, still powered by gas and lit by hand every night. Zagreb is proud of its gas lamps and does its best to preserve and maintain them.

Angus Fowler

Hungary

The European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) is an instrument at the European Community level established for the creation of cooperative groups in Community territory, invested with legal personality, in order to overcome the obstacles hindering territorial cooperation. In May 2015, at a conference on 'A comparative analysis of the evolution of EGTCs at the Hungarian-Slovakian border', Gábor Rajnai, President of the ECOVAST Hungarian Section, gave a paper on EGTCs from a civil perspective, at Selye János University, Komárno, Slovakia.

Romania

Magdalena Banu shared an article with Tihana on LinkedIn,

"Coincidențe incredibile..."

(translated from Romanian. Article in România Curată - Clean Romania)

Incredible Coincidence or mafia threats to make game developed by RMGC? What happens at the Geological Institute of Romania

Sources within the Geological Institute of Romania (IGR) Clean Romania reported more serious incidents involving its members. These incidents come as the scientific director of IGR, Mircea Țicleanu (one of the public voices critical of fracking's) was changed overnight before Easter. In the fall of 2013, general manager Stephen Marincea was dismissed after formally charged that geological studies on the project in Rosia Montana RMGC were forged. In a letter to Romania's Alina Mungiu-Pippidi and Clean by a group of researchers from IGR ([the letter can be read here](#)) suggests that changes in the last period would aim appointment of persons 'convenience', providing documents mining project needed to obtain the environmental permit.

United Kingdom

There have been no formal meetings of the UK Section in 2013/2014.

Much of the time and effort of the UK members has been taken up with the publications that mark the end of the ASSET Project. The ASSET funding was from UK sources, notably through the now demised SEEDA with support from the also disbanded Commission for Rural Communities, with no specific requirements for monitoring. Despite attempts to seek INTERREG funding for cross border activities, no European Union funding was gained. Featuring small towns in several recent ECOVAST International conferences, linked to general assemblies, has allowed the ASSET funding to contribute to the costs of these events, reducing the contribution from ECOVAST international funds.

As ECOVAST is a member of Europa Nostra, ECOVAST UK has been active on the Europa Nostra UK Committee, with Phil Turner succeeding Pam Moore in 2013.

Through Europa Nostra and the Heritage Alliance at UK and European levels, the ECOVAST UK Section has participated in the "Creative Europe" activities, aimed at promoting the Cultural Heritage to the EU and European Parliament. This was reported in the Spring 2015 ECOVAST Newsletter 58. The initiative for this was based on the EU Lisbon Agenda paragraph 3.3 and launched in Amsterdam in 2011 at which ECOVAST was represented by the UK Section.

Following involvement in 2013 with UK government ministry (DEFRA) consultation events on CAP funding, in 2014 Phil Turner, for ECOVAST UK, participated in LEADER LAG stakeholder events in Hampshire and Sussex, aimed to influence their local development strategies.

He also contributed to "Critical Spaces" edited by Alexandru Calcatinge of ECOVAST Austria in an article related to landscape character assessment and community led local development (CLLD - a European Commission element of the 2014 - 2020 programme of integrated funding). With Valerie Carter, in 2013, he participated in the European Rural Parliament in Brussels. Following that he joined a discussion group on CLLD which has now ceased to be active.

Scotland, surviving at present in the UK, formed the first Scottish European Parliament in 2014. There is no other Rural Parliament in the UK as yet. The next European Parliament to be held in the town of Schärding in Upper Austria on 4 to 6 November 2015.

Phil Turner

ASSET

During 2014 we finalised our report on the findings of our work on small towns which had started in the Retz conference and the ECOVAST ASSET Project which led from it. We published our results in the document 'The Importance of Small Towns'. We had 1,000 copies printed and distributed more than 950 copies to our ECOVAST National Sections; PREPARE Members; DG Agri and DG Region; the Council of Europe; OECD; other pan-European Networks; all the National Rural

Networks; and the Associations of Local Authorities/Municipalities in 39 European Countries. In 2015 we drew together all our previously reports on the surveys we had carried out – both Opinion and Empirical Surveys; into one new document – called the Companion Document to the Importance of Small Towns.

Comments have been received from the Council of Europe; the European Network of Spatial Planners; the Royal Town Planning Institute UK. All expressed agreement with our findings.

Valerie Carter

The European Congress of Local Governments

As a result of our work on ASSET, I was invited to be part of the European Congress of Local Governments held in Krakow, Poland. It was a prestigious event attended by around 1,300 delegates with 34 countries sending representatives. As a speaker in one of the Workshops, I prepared a paper for the event and a short presentation on the importance of small towns to local authorities. There were 59 workshops in all but only 1 of them was a 'rural' one – demonstrating just how difficult it is to get the 'rural voice' heard. There was a display on the work of the European Green Belt Project demonstrating the importance given to that activity on the landscapes of the former Iron Curtain.

Valerie Carter

The significance of place

By significance, we mean what does a certain place signify of its human occupation? So I postulate a certain place, Dordogne in S.W France, and ask why it is so attractive to British people as a place of retirement? What is so significant about this place?

La Dordogne is one of the departments of France with the lowest density of population. It differs from neighbouring departments by being 45% forested with a bio-diversity of trees, the rest of its vast area being of undulating landscape, mostly given to small farms averaging 50 hectares. Having almost no manufacturing industry, it is thus a completely natural area with an equable climate, making outdoor life pleasant and practical. Dordogne has 5 main rivers, and in some places these flow along the base of high limestone cliffs, themselves a striking environmental feature.

This limestone has been traditionally quarried for building construction, and the total effect of the architecture is one of harmony and permanence, rooted in an abundant green environment.

In Dordogne, one experiences a continuity of human occupation in a natural environment, established over the last several thousand years. This is a cultural heritage for world-wide humanity, clearly demonstrated by the area in its south-east which has been designated by UNESCO as a site of world cultural heritage. The fact of long and continuous human habitation has thus determined the "esprit de lieu" of Dordogne, the department which calls itself "Le Pays de L'Homme", the Country of Man. In this designated south-east area, the National Museum of Pre-History has been established as a centre of research, and it is thought that there is still more of pre-history to be discovered there. Further north in Dordogne, there are the world-famous cave-paintings at Lascaux also.

Clearly, this continuity of human occupation in an unspoiled natural environment is the factor which attracts so many British to retire to Dordogne. Furthermore, with the area in its south-east designated as a world heritage site, and the large area in the north of a Regional Natural Park, together with the enthusiastic work of environmental protection societies and the local Councils, Dordogne will continue to be an area of careful conservation for the future. This contrasts sharply with the environmental culture of Britain as the country where the industrial revolution began, now a world-wide industrial era which is continually evolving.

Although the contemporary global economy determines where industry is to be established in order to gain maximum profits, and has resulted in the closure of the greater part of British manufacturing industry, the government continues to think of industrial innovations from science-led technology. The aim is to be in the vanguard of this in Europe, but it results in a mind-set of both government and the population that is reflected in the national culture, and in the environment. At the time of writing, experimentation has commenced in Britain in certain areas, with driverless cars on the roads, and with road-trains of large commercial vehicles with one active driver only. All are to be connected and controlled by electronic computer. Together with this, the British government intends to build a new network of mini-motorways. The French government, however has delayed by 5 years any such

experiments with driverless vehicles, for observation and evaluation of the scene in Britain.

England is already seriously over-populated, while the current rate of immigration is 300,000 persons annually – all contributing to a consumer-led culture in a mainly service economy. Not only has manufacturing greatly decreased in the last 50 years, but agricultural production has decreased also, resulting in an increasing trade deficit and a reliance on financial institutions for the national income. Together with the constant distribution of consumer-goods, and the mobility of labour to wherever employment is available, the total effect is of an environment which is no longer stable and harmonious with Nature – one where the significance of place is overshadowed by an environment of continual movement and change.

When it is possible to retire from this situation, British people go to Dordogne where they find an environment of permanence and tranquillity where Nature predominates, and the human-being has a true place in an ecological entity – that of Creation itself, harmoniously modified by careful human activities. This living ecological entity has been brought to notice in recent years by the author James Lovelock, who has named it “Gaia”. His books, such as “The Vanishing Face of Gaia” complement the recent films such as that produced by the American, Al Gore, illustrating the continuing environmental degradation seen from the air.

Undoubtedly, this degradation can be halted and reversed, by a humanity which gladly takes up the responsibility given to us by a loving Creator. Unfortunately, it is so little understood that the New Testament teaches us that Creation itself is alive in its own way, and is waiting expectantly for such a humanity. In Paul’s letter to the Romans, chapter 8 verse 19, we read, “For the Creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God”. This stage of humanity’s development is thus a reflection of the Gospel words, “The meek shall inherit the Earth”.

Eventually, humanity will find its way to its God-given destiny, inspired by the Gospel and the New Testament. However, the author believes that what is now urgently needed is a re-evaluation of the industrial revolution, and how it is producing a deep schism between Man and Nature. Geologists have named this period from the industrial revolution onwards as “the Anthropocene”. By this, they mean these last

few centuries of human industrial effect on the Creation, culminating in the tremendous damage which the hydrogen bomb could produce. If this Anthropocene Age really is a new geological age, it could be a very short lived one, if mankind is not very careful and let’s pride in power take the place of meekness, or humanity before the Creator. We forget that Einstein profoundly wished that he had never discovered nuclear fission.

Royston Edge

Living on the Rural Edge (LoRE):

The Emergence and Transmission of Europe’s Biocultural Heritage of Commons and Communal Livelihoods

Radim Sršeň of Association of Local Government of the Czech Republic, has been invited to be a member of the stakeholder advisory group (SAG) of an EU research project ‘Reflective societies: cultural heritage and European identities’. Radim suggests that ECOVAST should join the SAG.

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/2088-reflective-2-2015.html>

Co-ordinated by Karl-Johan Lindholm of Uppsala University Sweden, the LoRE project highlights **Europe’s Biocultural Heritage of the Commons**. The concept of **biocultural heritage** refers to an integrated view on heritage as elements of cultural memory, for example language, oral traditions, place names, and local traditional ecological knowledge systems. The biocultural heritage also includes tangible material elements of human practice, for example archaeology, built environments and heritage sites, which also comprise components of the environmental setting they appear in. At another level biocultural heritage refers to the shaped biophysical elements of the landscape, such as responses in vegetation and soils, species composition, fauna and biodiversity more broadly. In essence, the various elements of biocultural heritage are strongly linked through the landscape they are embedded in. Moreover, the biocultural heritage provides impressions and motivations for – and thereby actively shape – **human creativity and artistic expressions**.

The concept of **Commons** refer to the ways in which certain resources and landscapes were – or in certain areas still are – managed or owned jointly by groups of users. In pre-industrial Europe commons were crucial for managing resources, such as farm-fields, wetlands, pastures, hunting areas, or certain features, such as mills, dams, roads, bridges and markets. Commons were multi-functional dynamic resources with strong **adaptive and innovative capacities**. Foremost, commons were important in rural and agricultural settings, but commons have also existed in urban areas. Commons were **important drivers** for shaping social relations, cooperation, regional and interregional contact and interaction. The commons have shaped a rich biocultural heritage, which today is **unsatisfactorily mapped and understood from a wider European perspective**.

In addition **the European commons is a threatened heritage** as a result of social and economic processes that were initiated in the early industrial era. At this time communal livelihoods, and subsequently commons, were considered as obstacles for economic development and modern – more rigid – property rights were introduced. It is well known that the time-period catered a strong economic development all over Europe, but the presumed links between ‘modern property rights’ and economic growth has increasingly been questioned . In contrast current research following the 2009 Nobel Prize Winning **Common Pool Resource** theory of Elinor Ostrom , highlight that **commons are effective cooperative platforms** for shaping innovative strategies for **facing unforeseen futures and for meeting and shaping change**. In addition, it has recently been realised that the abandonment of small scale low intensive agricultural practices – which have a strong relationship to the biocultural heritage of the commons – explains degrading landscape values, in heritage, biodiversity and present habitat loss. **Long-term perspectives, commons and small scale practices are continuously undervalued in current policy and management of Europe’s landscape heritages** and this has bearing on current policies on heritage, rural development and sustainable management of natural resources.

In order to improve the understanding of this heritage and to safeguard it for future generations **LoRE** will undertake the first **large scale inventory** of Europe’s Biocultural Heritage of Commons. Our project is based on a **combined multi-scalar approach** to heritage research and innovation, **activating**

stakeholders at local, regional, national, European levels of the cultural heritage sector, granting a special place to the rural regions of Europe. An important methodological contribution of LoRE is the application of **integrative interdisciplinary research and comparative frames of reference** ranging from archaeological long-term perspectives, over anthropological engagement in present communities, to capacity of combining deductive lines of reasoning from the natural sciences and holistic critical perspectives of the humanities and the social sciences.

Valerie Carter

Partner organisations



Punting on the River Cam

EUROPA NOSTRA UK

Cambridge University, England, was the magnificent setting for the events of the Europa Nostra UK Annual Meeting, 7 - 9 April 2015, held in association with ECOVAST and the University’s Fitzwilliam Museum, and sponsored by the Headley Trust and the Leventis Foundation. The theme of the day-conference was appropriate for the venue, insofar as it concerned the effect of the arts on our understanding of ‘place’ and its identity.

There are many outstanding buildings in Cambridge, and in two walks there were visits to the most celebrated and others of great interest but not usually available to public view. Included were the world-famous Chapel of

King's College, the Wren Library of Trinity College, James Gibbs's Senate House and the Old Schools and University Combination Room.

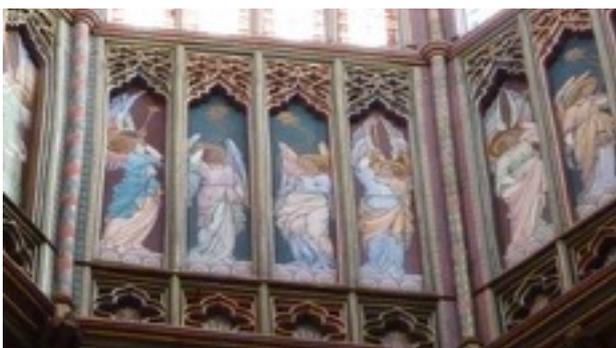


Kings College Chapel



We were accompanied by Lida Kindersley MBE whose renowned Cardozo Kindersley Workshop is dedicated to 'good lettering', be it in stone, glass, metal, wood, or straight on to buildings – using only hammer and chisel.

Other visits were made including St John's College and its Combination Room, and dinners were taken at Clare College and Queens' College. A day visit to the City of Ely focused on the Cathedral and associated buildings.



Pre-Raphaelite art on Ely Cathedral's Lantern

Europa Nostra UK's annual Duncan Sandys Memorial Lecture was given at the Fitzwilliam Museum by Lord Renfrew, formerly Master of Jesus College and Disney Professor and Director at the McDonald Institute for Archeological Research, Cambridge, where he is now Senior Fellow. Colin Renfrew spoke passionately, illustrating the threats to the standing archeology and collections: destruction by natural causes, urban redevelopment and renewal, treasure hunting, and, topically, war, looting and iconoclasm by faith fanatics.



Colin Renfrew

Clare College was the venue for the conference day on the theme of 'the contribution of the arts to the understanding and significant of place'. Speakers included:

- Ben Cowell of the National Trust, who explained the ways in which the Trust's properties in the East of England were 'releasing the spirit of the place';
- Tim Knox, Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, explored the significance of place, how to interpret that, how to decide what date is most significant and the importance of research;
- Valerie Carter, President of ECOVAST, who described the townscape of small towns in Europe;
- Angus Fowler, Senior Vice President of ECOVAST, spoke of Locket, in the recent visit to the Czech Republic, as 'a town which is a landscape work of art' described in the diary of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe as "landschaftliches Kunstwerk"; Halle, Germany, with towers and spires in the townscape, and the art and architecture of churches in continuity of place, reflecting the quality of the soil and vegetation;
- Tihana Stepinac Fabijanić, Vice President of ECOVAST, who spoke on traditional art and the built heritage of Croatia;

- Caro Howell, Director of the Foundling Museum, London, showed the involvement of the artist Hogarth and the composer Handel amongst the community of fundraisers of the home for children in the 18th Century;
- and an inspiring visual presentation by Victoria Crowe, an artist living in the Borders of Scotland, who evoked the resonance of place, time, layers of meaning, numinous, light and silence, seasons and time.

Phil Turner



John Sell, ECOVAST UK member and Executive Vice President of Europa Nostra International with Valerie and Tihana at Clare College, Cambridge



Europa Nostra International REFLECTION GROUP "EU AND CULTURAL HERITAGE" MEETS IN ROME

The Reflection Group on "EU and Cultural Heritage" composed of the representatives of EU Members States and also of European networks active in the field of cultural heritage, had its latest meeting on 5-6 May 2015 in Rome, under the chairmanship of the Italian Ministry of Culture and Tourism, to take stock of the recent policy developments taking place in Europe (mostly within the European Union, but also within the Council of Europe) with a view to contribute to the elaboration of a common European strategy on cultural heritage.

Europa Nostra's Board Member Piet Jaspaert attended this meeting, also representing the European Heritage Alliance 3.3. This was an excellent opportunity to further strengthen the dialogue between governmental and civil society bodies active in the wider field of cultural heritage, which was one of the key elements of the recent Ministerial meeting organised during the Belgian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe in Namur on 22-24 April 2015.

The intrinsic values of cultural heritage as well as its more specific contribution to society at large were widely discussed and in this respect the results of the Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe project, which will be presented on 12 June at a Conference organised in the framework of the European Heritage Congress in Oslo, are greatly anticipated. The policy priorities highlighted in the Namur Declaration were warmly welcomed and the call for intense collaboration between the Council of Europe and the European Union was put into practice. The proposal for having a European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 was also broadly supported and a work plan was established to prepare this year in the best possible way.

Upon his return from Rome, Piet Jaspaert said "I found the cooperation between the Council of Europe, the European Union and civil society very refreshing and inspiring and I am confident that the momentum begun in 2014 with the adoption of the EU Council conclusions on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe is already yielding tangible results".

The Reflection Group was set up as a follow-up of the Bruges Conference organised in December 2010 by the Belgian Presidency of the EU and is composed of representatives of Heritage Departments of a number of EU Member States. This Reflection Group and the European Heritage Alliance 3.3. share the same goal: to contribute to the gradual development of a specific and strategic approach to cultural heritage through adequate EU policy and funding measures. Therefore, Europa Nostra and some other members of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3. (e.g. NEMO, ENCATC, ICOMOS, ECTP) are regularly invited to attend and contribute to the meetings of this Reflection Group. The next meeting of this Group will take place in Autumn in Luxembourg, coinciding with the Luxembourg Presidency of the European Union.

<http://www.europanostra.org/news/590/>



PREPARE and EUROPEAN RURAL PARLIAMENT

I am the ECOVAST member who sits on the PREPARE Organising Group. We had a PREPARE Gathering in Finland and Estonia with a tour of rural projects in both countries. Whilst in Tallinn we had a special meeting with the European Rural Community Association (ERCA) to discuss the potential Second European Rural Parliament – the first inaugural meeting had been held in Brussels in 2013. Members of many different countries attended. We invited one of the countries present to act as a host country. Interest was expressed by both Austria and Romania. The town of Schärding, Upper Austria, has now agreed to host the ERP: 4 to 6 November 2015. I am hoping that Arthur and other members of the Austrian Section will be able to come to the event. I shall be attending. I hope that we will be able to join in the displays of partners work in the marquee that will be provided. We could take information on both our work on small towns and on the work Austria carried out on the Green Belt and possibly how we are involved in the Danube Strategy. This late spring and summer gives us time to develop how we could pursue this.

www.europeanruralparliament.com/

Valerie Carter

APURE

Although we are not formally a member of this network several ECOVAST members still belong to both NGO's. The organisation is being registered in Poland but it taking a long time to get through the Polish Courts. The intention is then to hold a University Event (it will be the 14th of its kind) – possible in Sicily. ECOVAST Members will be invited.

Valerie Carter

Natural Landscapes

I was invited by the Netherlands Government to take part in discussions on natural landscapes and the policies that could be developed to maintain or improve them and make them an essential part of any future development decisions. We have had two meetings already and a third is planned in June 2015. Our discussions which have been very lively have been a series of small workshops devoted to specific topics. A full report on this work will be produced and I will send it round to members in due course.

Valerie Carter

LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum 2015 Bucharest

The 4th LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum took place from 21st – 25th April 2015 in Bucharest, Romania.

110 participants from 21 countries joined the interactive and interdisciplinary Forum in Romania's capital and explored the Colentina chain of lakes under the theme '(Re)Discovering the Emerald Necklace'.

The event was opened by Sorin Cîmpeanu, the Romanian Minister of Education. International and local keynote speakers included Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons from the Council of Europe, Anca Ginavar from the Romanian Ministry for Regional Development and Milica Bajic-Brkovic, the current president of ISOCARP. Subject-specific inputs were given by Irina Tulbure-Moldovan on the modernist heritage of Bucharest, by Liisa Tyrväinen from the Finnish Forest Research Centre on the multiple benefits of peri-urban woodlands and by Giovanni Scudo, from the Milan Polytecnic on the productive rural fringe.

Participants split up in small workshop groups under the four Forum sub-themes:

- Urban growth and peri-urban sprawl: the landscape of the peripheries of contemporary cities
- Sustainable tourism and recreation: visions for landscape regeneration through tourism development
- Heritage and identities: permanence, patrimony, specificity and dynamics of landscape identities
- Rural fringe and productive landscapes: multifunctional rural landscapes and the economic dimension

Side events included a pre-Forum promenade, Phd and Teachers workshops, a poster session as well as the announcement of the winners of an international student competition.

<http://forum.ln-institute.org>

Events notified to the Editor



30 June 2015 in Luxembourg City 'The potential of small and medium cities in cross-border polycentric regions'

The contribution of the Luxembourgish Presidency to the Trio Presidency (Italy-Latvia-Luxembourg) theme of small and medium cities is to highlight the potential of small and medium cities in cross-border polycentric regions. The concept of cross-border polycentric regions refers to the structure of polycentric networks that allow small and medium cities across borders to reach the critical mass for unlocking their development potential. This potential often remains unlocked due to the traditionally less urbanised and compact settlement structure of border regions and diverging legal frameworks.

<http://www.dat.public.lu/eu-presidency/Events/Workshop-3/index.html>



26-27 June 2015 in Bonn, Germany. Under the aegis and with the coordination of the German NGO, "World Heritage Watch e.V.", an international NGO conference "**World Heritage and Civil Society**". The venue at Gustav Stresemann Institute is prepared for up to 200 participants. Three fora, each with several working groups, will discuss the following issues:

- An assessment of the situation at selected World Heritage sites;
- Civil Society, Member States and UNESCO;

- Meetings for the creation of civil society networks.

On the day following the conference, several tours will be offered to visit German World Heritage sites.

The date chosen for the conference offers participants an opportunity to subsequently attend the official Annual Meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee which will convene from 28 June - 8 July in Bonn.

<http://www.world-heritage-watch.org/index.php/en/activity/international-conference>



7 - 11

September

2015 Cambridge, UK.

The International National Trusts Organisation (INTO), working closely with our partners, the National Trust and the University of Cambridge, is delighted to announce that the 16th International Conference of National Trusts. The Cambridge ICNT will examine in depth the role of National Trusts in the 21st Century whilst reaffirming the founding principles of INTO set out at the Edinburgh ICNT in 2003 and measuring how far we have come over the past twelve years.

<http://www.internationaltrusts.org/2015-conference-in-england>



7 - 11 September 2015 The 1st European Conference on the **Open Air Heritage of Europe** in Stübing and Graz/Austria. This event brings together opinions, experiences and discussions on this extraordinarily broad aspect in the world of "cultural heritage", which deeply influences the general perception and lifestyle.

<http://www.openairheritage.net>



11-12 September 2015 BALTIC LANDSCAPE FORUM 2015 Riga, Latvia

The Baltic Landscape Forum will focus on the change processes of our marine and coastal landscapes around the Baltic Sea. Our coastal and marine landscapes are a shared resource and a shared responsibility where different values meet, i.e. cultural, ecological, aesthetic, social and economic. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is an instrument for ensuring a richer life environment, where landscape diversity is managed sustainably. In this context the sometimes different perceptions of local people, visitors and tourists are a key how these landscapes can be used in a sustainable way. In this way the Baltic Landscape Forum will be an important stakeholder event for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention on local and regional level.

<http://www.civilscape.eu/civilscape/public/en/events/pages/1430892994.xml>

29 September 2015 Barcelona, Spain

Civilscape's General Assembly will be held just the day before the Council of Europe Workshop on the Implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Andorra

(30 September - 2 October 2015).

<http://www.civilscape.eu/civilscape/public/en/events/pages/1430892994.xml>

4-8 October 2015

An international conference in Perth, Scotland '**Mountains of Our Future Earth**' The Centre for Mountain Studies, in collaboration with the Mountain Research Initiative (MRI) and the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment (GMBA), is organising a third conference – Perth III. This is a contribution to the global Future Earth programme, a 10-year international research initiative that will develop the knowledge for responding effectively to the risks and opportunities of global environmental change and supporting transformation towards global sustainability in the coming decades.

<http://www.arc2020.eu/events/perth-iii-mountains-of-our-future-earth/>

<http://www.perth.uhi.ac.uk/specialistcentres/cms/Conferences/Perth2015/Pages/About.aspx>



25-29 May 2016 Trier, Germany. 'Water Management during the Time of Frontinus

Buildings - Technique - Culture'. International Conference on the Occasion of the Anniversary of the Frontinus-Society with Archaeological Excursions to the Region Trier - Luxembourg - Metz.

An international archaeological conference at one of the most important places of the Roman time north the Alps. Many remnants of this prosperous period in which Sextus Iulius Frontinus acted as the Curator Aquarum of Rome along with his many other important duties in places throughout the Roman Empire still exist. Trier (Augusta Colonia Treverorum) with its important Roman buildings is the ideal background for this conference during which scholars as well as younger scientists will present actual research results to an international audience. We are especially pleased to be able to have the venue in the nicely restored Forum Bath at the Viehmarkt.

The conference programme is framed with visits and excursions to prominent archaeological sites and exhibitions of impressing finds. Besides places in Trier we will visit Metz (Divodurum Mediomatricum) with the remnants of its aqueduct and also some of the many places discovered in the densely populated hinterland, which was an important infrastructure for the supply of the capitals, especially in Luxembourg.

<http://www.frontinus.de>