



# The Current

NEWSLETTER OF THE ISLAND & COASTAL ARCHAEOLOGY  
INTEREST GROUP

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## Editor's Note

Dear Members;

While it has been barely a year since the Island and Coastal Archaeology Interest Group was first launched, in that short period we have seen a number of exciting developments as membership and enthusiasm for the organization grows. Membership now stands at more than 1100 individuals. At the annual ICA meeting in Austin in April, it was a standing room only crowd as members came together to discuss the mission and future agenda of the Interest Group. Particularly encouraging was the strong attendance by students and junior colleagues, marking the interest of a next generation of scholars in island and coastal archaeology. As reported on page 2, the lively discussion produced a list of action items for the coming year and led to the establishment of formal Executive and Meeting Committees.

This issue of *The Current* continues the regular features—Meetings, Announcements, and Calls for Papers; Research Highlights; Recent Publications—designed to promote the exchange of ideas and information between members. Simon Stoddart provides an update on the FRAGSUS project on Malta where remote sensing is being conducted to understand the dynamics of occupation during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C. As Sailors and Honda report on page 10, remote sensing and complimentary techniques were key in identifying a submerged alignment off the coast of Kualoa, Hawai'i, that represents a probable fish pond enclosure. Other highlighted research in this issue touches on persistent themes of island interconnectivity, long-term cultural resilience in changing landscapes, and the fragility of coastal sites to erosional processes (as well as the need to document these cultural resources before they disappear). I am also pleased to be able include an announcement for the John Evans Dissertation award (page 6), and would like to encourage members to submit announcements for our new Awards and Funding Section for future issues along with other news items and reports of potential interest to the membership.

Christina M. Giovas  
Editor, *The Current*



## ***Report on the Annual ICA Interest Group Meeting at the 79<sup>th</sup> SAA Meeting, Austin, Texas***

The annual ICA Interest Group meeting was held on Thursday, April 24, 5 – 6pm at the Hilton Austin during the 79<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SAA. Interest group founders, Scott Fitzpatrick (University of Oregon), Torbin Rick (Smithsonian), and Victor Thompson (University of Georgia) were present, along with approximately 50 – 60 members. The meeting focused on identifying the future direction, activities, and organization of the Interest Group. Members offered ideas and suggestions, and these were discussed in turn by those present. At the close of the meeting several action items were established:

- 1) Creation of an Executive Committee composed of a wide cross section of members that includes academic, cultural resource management, museum, and student representation
- 2) Creation of a Meeting Committee who will review proposals for SAA symposia or poster sessions that can be sponsored by the Interest Group.
- 3) Development of an interest group website that, among other functions, will host a message board for announcements (e.g., upcoming field schools) and archive *The Current*.
- 4) Possible development of interest group awards (e.g., “Best Book”, “Best Member Paper”, “Lifetime Achievement”) and student travel grants in the coming years
- 5) Submission of an article focused on the Interest Group for the SAA *Archaeological Record*
- 6) The need for a platform to increase interaction among interest group members (i.e., an email list and future lightning talks)

Following significant discussion and input during the meeting and subsequent conversations with interest group members, it was determined the initial **Executive Committee** will consist of Scott Fitzpatrick, Victor Thompson, Christina Giovas (University of Oregon), Todd Ahlman (Texas State University), and Kristina Guild Douglas (Yale, student member). This group will take the lead on establishing by-laws and goals for the interest group and ensuring that these are approved by and fulfill the needs of the broader membership. The Executive Committee will also provide a framework for how long people will serve on the committee and how others wishing to join the committee might do so.

A **Meeting Committee** was also established to review proposals for a SAA symposium and/or poster session that can be sponsored each year by the interest group. This committee includes: Victor Thompson, Catherine West (Boston University), Todd Braje (San Diego State University), and Jessica Watson (University of Albany, student member). This group will soon be contacting the membership with specific guidelines for submitting meeting proposals to obtain ICA sponsorship at the 2015 SAA meeting in San Francisco. The Committee anticipates a deadline of late July 2014, with decisions made in mid-August 2014.

As the Executive and Meeting Committees continue to work on the action items identified at the annual meeting, they are seeking input and feedback from the membership. Questions or comments may be directed to the Committee contacts below.

Executive Committee Contact – Scott Fitzpatrick: [smfitzpa@cas.uoregon.edu](mailto:smfitzpa@cas.uoregon.edu)

Meeting Committee Contact – Victor Thompson: [vdthom@uga.edu](mailto:vdthom@uga.edu)



## **MEETINGS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND CALLS FOR PAPERS**

**MedClivar Conference - Understanding Climate Evolution and Effects on Environment and Societies in the Old World - June 23-25, 2014.** Ankara, Turkey. For details see conference website: <http://www.medclivar2014conf.eu/>

**The Association for Environmental Archaeology Annual Conference - The Big Picture: Archaeology, Society and Environment - November 7-9, 2014.** Plymouth University, United Kingdom.

The organising committee invites oral and poster presentations that seek to integrate archaeological/environmental data at a variety of scales, from interdisciplinary site-based studies to regional syntheses. Dr Amy Bogaard (Oxford) and Stephen Shennan (Institute of Archaeology, UCL) will give keynote presentations.

Deadline for abstract submission in July 28, 2014. Details of the conference, including how to register, submit oral and poster abstracts and the venue can be found at the conference website: <http://www1.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ceres/AEA2014>

**The 20th European Association of Archaeologists Annual Meeting - September 10-14, 2014.** Istanbul, Turkey. For details see conference website: <http://www.eaa2014istanbul.org>

**12th International Conference of the International Council for Archaeozoology - September 22-27, 2014.** San Rafael, Mendoza, Argentina.

ICAZ promotes archaeozoology as a field of growing importance for archaeology and for understanding faunal paleodiversity. Meetings are held every four years with the goal of strengthening interactions between archaeozoologists on all continents and between archaeozoologists and other disciplines in order to advance understanding of the human-animal relationship. The 2014 ICAZ meeting will focus particularly on strengthening ties with Latin American archaeozoologists. For details see: <http://www.icaaz2014argentina.com>.

Thematic Sessions of Interest to ICA Members (session titles linked to abstracts):

*Ichthyoarchaeology In The Americas.* Organizers: Philippe Béarez and Francisco Zangrando; [panchozan@yahoo.com.ar](mailto:panchozan@yahoo.com.ar); [bearez@mnhn.fr](mailto:bearez@mnhn.fr)

*Global Patterns In The Exploitation Of Animal-Based Raw Materials: Technological And Socio-Cultural Issues.* Organizers: Natacha Buc, Annalisa Christie, Alice Choyke, and Vivian Scheinsohn; [scheinso@retina.ar](mailto:scheinso@retina.ar)

*Molluscs As A Record Of Human-Environment Relationships: Environmental Reconstructions, Impacts, And Management.* Organizers: Christina M. Giovas, Zhanna Antipushina and Catherine F. West; [cmgiovas@uw.edu](mailto:cmgiovas@uw.edu); [amwg.icaaz@gmail.com](mailto:amwg.icaaz@gmail.com); [cwest@bu.edu](mailto:cwest@bu.edu)



Zooarchaeology In Oceania. Organizers: Pam J. Crabtree and Kelila Jaffe; Pc4@nyu.edu; kelila.jaffe@nyu.edu

Climate Change, Marine Productivity, And Human-Based Ecosystems: Contrasting Sub-Arctic And Sub-Antarctic Historical Marinescapes. Organizers: Herbert Maschner, Luis Borrero, Matthew Betts and Nicole Misarti; maschner@isu.edu; laborrero2003@yahoo.com; Matthew.Betts@civilisations.ca; nmisarti@alaska.edu

Malacological And Isotopic Studies Along The Pacific Coast. Organizers: Carola Flores and Marcelo Rivadeneira; carolaflowers@gmail.com

Recent Approaches To Zooarchaeological And Ethnozoological Research At Caribbean Lowlands. Organizers: Diana Rocío Carvajal Contreras and Elizabeth Ramos Rocca; diacarco@hotmail.com; diana.carvajal@uexternado.edu.co; eramosroca@uniandes.edu.co

Trade And Migration: The Zooarchaeology Of Contact And Movement. Organizers: Richard Madgwick and Sarah Viner-Daniels; MadgwickRD3@cardiff.ac.uk

**First Meeting of the ICAZ Roman Period Working Group - Husbandry in the Western Roman Empire: A Zooarchaeological Perspective' – November 20-22, 2014.** Sheffield, United Kingdom

Call for Papers – Deadline September 15, 2014. The objective of this first meeting is to have an overview of the zooarchaeology of the Western Empire, in which parallels and differences between regions will be highlighted. The discussion will consider both geographic and cultural specificities, as well as shared characters, of different areas of the Empire. Both regional syntheses and case studies are welcomed. A perspective that looks at changes between the Iron Age and the Roman period is appreciated, as well as a consideration on the effects of the decline of Roman influence and/or presence. For more information see the meeting webpage:

<http://alexandriaarchive.org/bonecommons/exhibits/show/rpwg>

To participate, send an e-mail indicating the title and the abstract of your communication to [romanwg@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:romanwg@sheffield.ac.uk). Abstracts should be written in English and should not exceed 250 words. Please, indicate the affiliation of each author.

**The 48th Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology - January 6-11, 2015.** Seattle, United States

The SHA 2015 Conference will take place at the Sheraton Hotel in the heart of the city of Seattle. The conference venue is five blocks from the Pike Place Market and the rejuvenated piers of the Seattle waterfront with ships, waterfront dining, the Seattle Aquarium, and a new enclosed Ferris wheel. The conference theme, "Peripheries and Boundaries", reflects the unique circumstances of the region and addresses some of the issues that frame historical archaeology scholarship in the West. In some ways the theme echoes the historical circumstances of Seattle, a community that was geographically bounded and economically marginal, but whose history transcends those boundaries in the process of becoming one of the 21st century's economic and cultural centers of the world. The SHA expects



that the theme will foster many papers and symposia that explore the many manifestations of boundaries and peripheries in the past – and in the present.

Abstract submission deadline is July 10, 2014. For more information see the conference website:  
[http://www.sha.org/index.php/view/page/annual\\_meetings](http://www.sha.org/index.php/view/page/annual_meetings)

### ***Shima*: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures – Call for Papers**

This call is for contributions and expressions of interest in articles on archaeological issues that engage with the theme of: Almost Islands – locations and communities that have existed in ‘islanded’ contexts. Recent postings on the SICRI discussion list have expressed interest in various types of ‘almost islands’, i.e. locations that may effectively be regarded as islands due to aspects of their locations and/or due their social and/or political separation from proximate communities and/or political entities. The French term for peninsulas - presqu'iles (literally, ‘almost islands’) – concisely expresses the conditions of various peninsula locales and, in particular, areas connected by isthmuses (effectively ‘land bridges’) to adjacent coastlines. Paradigmatic presqu'iles of this kind include Gibraltar, to the south of Spain (where geography and the contemporary political situation converge to create the ‘almost’) and Jaffna, in northern Sri Lanka (which recently served as a stronghold of Tamil separatism). Echoing discussions of the Japanese concept of shima (which refers to both islands and discrete, bounded communities more generally); various (non-peninsular) locations may also have island-ish attributes (the many isolated communities of the Papua New Guinea highlands being the most obvious examples of geographical ‘islanding’ and Cold-War era West Berlin one of the most obvious recent examples of political isolation).

*Shima* invites contributions and expressions of interest in discussions of any aspects of ‘almost islands’. These may either be in the form of ‘Debates’ submissions (of 2000-4000 words length) or longer articles (to a maximum of 8000 words). Dependent on the nature and volume of submissions accepted, the journal may either run sections on the topic over a number of issues or may otherwise include them in a special themed issue. Submissions and EOIs should be sent to the Editor, Philip Hayward: [phayward2010@gmail.com](mailto:phayward2010@gmail.com)

### **The Northeast Environmental Archaeology Network – Call for New Members**

Announcement from the "**Northeast Environmental Archaeology Network**" (NEEAN): NEEAN had its first meeting on April 5 at Boston University, with strong attendance from environmental archaeologists around New England. We are looking for new members and other institutions to join, and while we focus broadly on environmental studies in archaeology, interest extends to island and coastal environments as well. We are trying to form a network in our region, but membership is not limited to the Northeast, nor to people who do research in the Northeast. Questions can be directed to John Marston (Boston University; [marston@bu.edu](mailto:marston@bu.edu)), Catherine West (Boston University; [cfwest@bu.edu](mailto:cfwest@bu.edu)), or Alexia Smith (University of Connecticut; [alexia.smith@uconn.edu](mailto:alexia.smith@uconn.edu)).



## **AWARD AND FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **John Evans Dissertation Prize 2014 Competition**

John Evans (1941-2005) was an inspirational environmental archaeologist, responsible for advancing the discipline and fostering many of today's top researchers in the field. His many books continue to make a contribution to practical and theoretical aspects of environmental archaeology. To honour the memory of John and his achievements within environmental archaeology, the Association for Environmental Archaeology (AEA) has an annual competition for the best undergraduate and Masters dissertations in any aspect of environmental archaeology.

Prizes of £75 will be awarded to the best undergraduate and Masters dissertation, which may be on any aspect of environmental archaeology worldwide. Abstracts from the winning dissertations will be published in the AEA newsletter (this is a condition of entry that all entrants will be agreeing to on submission of their dissertation). The John Evans Dissertation Prize winners will also be encouraged to submit an abridged version of their dissertation for publication in the Association's journal, *Environmental Archaeology*, subject to the usual review process.

We invite each Department of Archaeology (or other relevant department) to submit the dissertation of their best candidate by **31st July 2014**. Submissions from individual students are not accepted. English is the preferred technical language of submission although the committee will accept submissions in French, Spanish, German and Dutch, although these must be accompanied by an English summary (max. 2 pages) to conform to the submission rules. Departments wanting to submit in other languages should contact the prize administrator to determine whether the submission can be accommodated.

The result will be announced at the AEA autumn meeting in Plymouth, UK, 7-9 November 2014 (<http://www1.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ceres/AEA2014>). Bound copies or pdf versions should be sent to Dr. Robin Bendrey, who should also be contacted for further information: Robin Bendrey, Department of Archaeology, University of Reading, Whiteknights Box 226, Reading, RG6 6AB, UK; [r.bendrey@reading.ac.uk](mailto:r.bendrey@reading.ac.uk)





## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

### Coastal Erosion and Public Archaeology in Western France: News from the 'Alert' Project

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Since 2006, the ALeRT (*Archéologie, Littoral et Réchauffement Terrestre*) project, has brought together researchers involved in coastal archaeology aimed at establishing an interdisciplinary approach to coastal archaeological vulnerability, site monitoring and heritage management (Daire et al. 2012). The study area covers the West of France (Lower Normandy, Brittany and Pays de la Loire) and corresponds to 2,974 km of coastline. Resulting from various experiences in Western France (Shi et al. 2012), but also in NW Iberia, the need for an improved field data collection and data management procedures led us to develop a web and a mobile application for administering users and adding field data.

ALeRT Mobile is a web application accessible from a range of different devices and connected to a central online database. The app allows the user to type and transmit all the relevant information (including the vulnerability grid, which is the scientific core of the ALeRT project) for each site to a secure server. It reduces the time of data collection in the field and widens the perspectives of collaboration between researchers, heritage managers and the wider community. The app has been put to the test in 2014, when an exceptional run of winter storms have severely affected the coasts of Brittany and a number of sites have been damaged after a combination of heavy rains, strong winds, high waves and high tides. However, and thanks to the collaborative initiative, damages in archaeological sites were indicated by locals making it possible to photograph and analyse them.



Figure 1: Bronze Age Cist burial of Santec (Finistère), in the northern coast of Brittany, recently disappeared (right of the image), another burial has appeared due to winter storms in February 2014 (left of the image).



## Bibliography

Daire, Marie-Yvane, López-Romero, Elias, Proust, Jean-Noël, Regnaud, Hervé, Pian, Soazig, and Benheng Shi 2012 Coastal Changes and Cultural Heritage (1): Assessment of the Vulnerability of the Coastal Heritage in Western France. *The Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology* 7(2):168-182.

Shi, Benheng, Proust, Jean-Noël, Daire, Marie-Yvane, López-Romero, Elias, Regnaud, Hervé, and Soazig Pian 2012 Coastal Changes and Cultural Heritage (2): An Experiment in the Vilaine Estuary (Brittany, France). *The Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology* 7(2):183-199.



Figure 2: Fieldwork with locals and heritage managers in the Iron Age site of Locquirec (Finistère) damaged after the winter storms in 2014.

## Shell Midden Survey of the Coastal Sligo Town Region, Connacht, Ireland

Tatjana Kytmanow, Ph.D.  
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Tatjana Kytmanow, Ph.D., of Queen's University Belfast, and Katharine Napora, a doctoral student at the University of Georgia, will undertake a preliminary survey this summer of the coasts and tidal islands around Sligo Town in the west of Ireland. This project will document, photograph, and assess the future research potential of shell midden sites. Many of these sites were exposed by recent Atlantic storms and are located in high-risk erosional areas due to increasing sea level rise. This survey is a first step towards a subsequent international collaborative research project that will examine and compare long-term trends in human behavior related to midden formation in Ireland and pre-Columbian North America.



View from Conor's Island to Dernish Island, Co. Sligo, Ireland; these islands have several shell middens which have produced dates from the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Early Medieval, and Famine periods. Photo credit: T. Kytmanow (2014)



## People in a Changing Land: The Archaeology and History of the Ballona in Los Angeles, California – The Playa Vista Archaeological and Historical Project

Seetha N. Reddy, John G. Douglass, Richard, Ciolek-Torello and Donn R. Grenda  
Statistical Research, Inc.  
Contact Author: Seetha N. Reddy, sreddy@srcrm.com

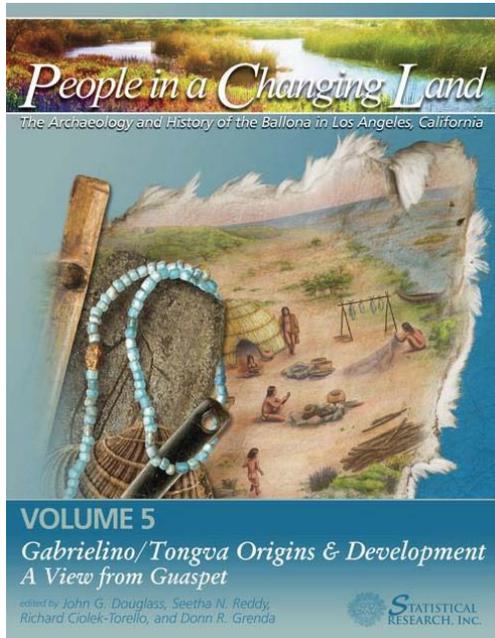


Figure 1: Artist's reconstruction of Mission period settlement of Guaspet, West Los Angeles, California

The Ballona Lagoon in west Los Angeles, California, has been an important area for human settlement for several millennia. More than two decades of research in these former wetlands has documented 8,000 years of human occupation beginning with aboriginal use from the Millingstone period (6500–1000 cal B.C.) through the Mission period (1771–1834 A.D.) and beyond. Large-scale excavations yielded ample data sets to address research questions related to subsistence, population movements, changes in settlement organization, and mortuary behavior among these hunter-gatherers in coastal southern California. One of the most significant findings is the largest and the most thoroughly excavated Mission period burial ground in southern California. The historical research highlights the emergence of new cultural identities during the Mission period—a time of extraordinary cultural and ecological changes in the region. This is the first systematic and in-depth research that provides insights into the prehistoric and historical-period adaptations of the Gabrieliño/Tongva Native Californians of Southern California.

The results are presented in a five-volume set, *People in a Changing Land: The Archaeology and History of the Ballona in Los Angeles, California*, by series editors Donn R. Grenda, Richard Ciolek-Torello and Jeffrey H. Altschul. Digital and hard copies of the volumes can be obtained from Statistical Research, Inc., by emailing [msoles@srcrm.com](mailto:msoles@srcrm.com). Volume 1, *Paleoenvironment and Culture History*, edited by Jeffrey A. Homburg, John G. Douglass, and Seetha N. Reddy is currently available, and the other volumes are forthcoming: Volume 2 (*Archaeological Sites and Chronology*), Volume 3 (*Material Culture and Subsistence Practices*), Volume 4 (*Bioarchaeology and Paleodemography*) and Volume 5 (*Gabrielino/Tongva Origins and Development: A View from Guaspet*).



## Remote Survey of a Near-Coastal Archaeological Alignment at Kualoa, Hawai'i Using Worldview 2 Satellite, LiDAR, & UAV Imagery

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During the 2013 NSF-REU G.R.A.M Field Program hosted by the California State University at Long Beach, along with the Kualoa Field School on the island of O'ahu in Hawai'i, students used World View 2 multispectral satellite imagery, LiDAR, and unmanned aerial vehicles to survey a large archaeological stone alignment submerged off the coast of Kualoa. This alignment is 550 meters long, approximately 3 meters wide, less than a meter tall, and is built with basalt pebbles, stones, and boulders and is likely part of an ancient Hawaiian fishpond system known as Pilihe'e that was traditionally used in the area. Principal component analysis, ratio indices, and LiDAR interpretation were utilized in a GIS to help detect this archaeological stone feature that is located in shallow coastal waters (Fig. 1). Because threats of modern development, sea-level fluctuations, and general complications inherent to coastal-maritime environments have challenged the survey of archaeological features located within the coastal strand, these methods holds promise for future spatial analyses by providing a non-invasive and cost efficient means of shoreline assessment. Further investigation into this alignment and its context within the larger Kualoa area will follow after continued summer field school seasons.

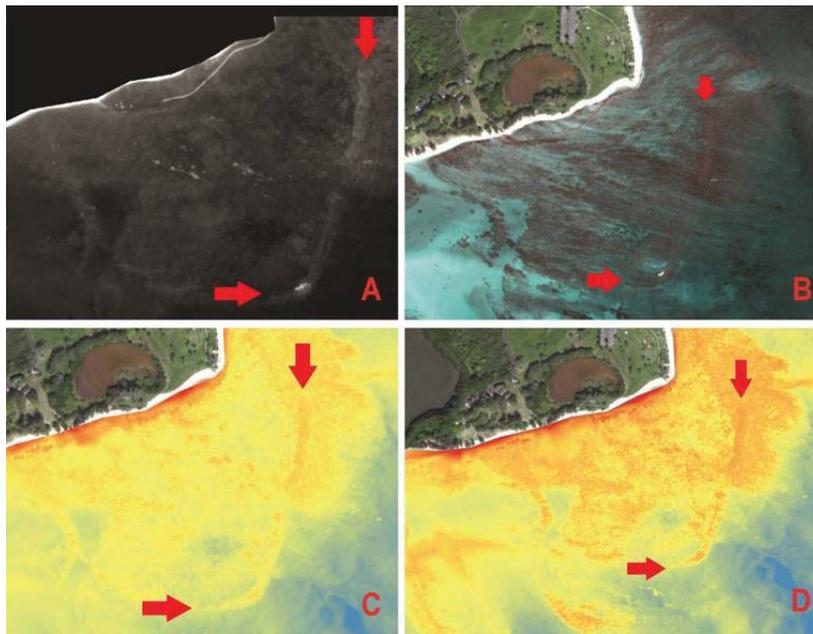


Figure 1: Imagery from the steps taken in two “process trees” used to discern the offshore alignment. Red arrows indicate the north and south ends of the alignment. A) Non-Homogenous Feature Difference (Red-Edge - Coastal) / (Red-Edge + Coastal), B) Principal Component Analysis (Symbolized as PC1: Green and Blue, PC2: Red), C) Inverse Distance Weighted interpolation of LiDAR point cloud, D) Natural



## Society and Writing in Ancient Cyprus: The Evans-Pritchard Lectures 2014 (7<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> May)

Dr Philippa M. Steele  
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The 2014 Evans-Pritchard Lectures, given by Philippa M. Steele in May 2014 in Oxford, focused on the theme of 'Society and Writing in Ancient Cyprus'. The series consisted of five lectures with the following titles:

- 1) The advent of literacy on Cyprus
- 2) Scripts and languages at Early Iron Age Palaepaphos
- 3) 'Understanding' undeciphered scripts and unidentified languages
- 4) Visible language and ancient Cypriot identities
- 5) Cypriot writing at home and abroad

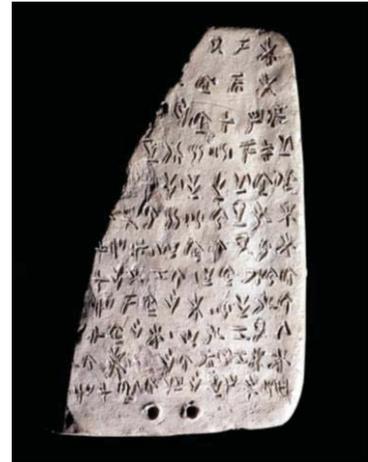


Figure 1: Clay tablet from Akanthou, Cyprus, 5th/4th century BC. © Trustees of the British Museum (1950.5-25.1)

The lecture series is dedicated to the memory of the anthropologist E.E. Evans-Pritchard, famous for his studies of the Azande and Nuer peoples in Africa and for establishing many of the methodological foundations of the field of Social Anthropology. The remit, however, allows the lectures to focus on any geographical area in which Evans-Pritchard had an interest (including the Mediterranean). Steele was asked to speak on the epigraphic record of ancient Cyprus, and the context of writing in Cypriot society.

The five lectures covered a broad chronological range, from the earliest attested writings on Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age (c. 16<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) to the disappearance of its distinctive writing systems when the Greek alphabet became predominant in the late 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C. There were several recurring themes, including the importance of understanding inscriptions as objects as well as texts, linguistic contact in an island setting, and the close relationship between writing and ancient Cypriot identity. Steele is currently working on the publication of the lectures as a monograph.

### FRAGSUS Project, Gozo, Malta

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A second field season of the FRAGSUS project on fragility and sustainability in the Maltese islands during the fourth and third millennia B.C. is currently in progress, supported by the European Research Council. One month of fieldwork in March/April 2014 has detected extensions to the



Ggantija ritual monument, begun excavation of a contemporary settlement, recorded terraces and soils, undertaken preliminary geophysical and topographical surveys at two further ritual monuments, and GPS survey of the Bronze Age mesa of In Nuffara. This season's work until July comprises different scales of remote sensing by employing LiDAR, aerial photography, magnetometer, resistivity, Georadar and GPS survey. Augering and limited excavation will be employed to recover environmental, economic and cultural samples of the lived practices of the prehistoric communities to understand how they sustained their presence on this fragile island for over a millennium, and why at about 2450 B.C. this practice changed radically. In parallel, samples of 220,000 fragments of human bone recovered in earlier excavations by the same research team are being re-analysed with modern scanning and isotopic techniques to record the evidence of life styles of the populations who built the prehistoric temples of Malta. The research is led by Prof. Caroline Malone at Queen's Belfast, and the current phase of research is coordinated by Prof. French (geoarchaeology), Dr. Pace, Dr. Stock (osteology), Dr. Stoddart (landscapes), Ms. Stroud and Dr. Vella from the Universities of Cambridge and Malta, Heritage Malta and the Superintendence of Malta. For further details: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/FRAGSUS/>



Figure 1: Geoarchaeology at Ggantija monument.



Figure 2: Resistivity survey at Ggantija monument.

### **Preliminary Investigation of a 'Worked' Wooden Plank, Submerged Forest and Intertidal Peats at Cummi Ness, Bay of Ireland, Orkney**

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An oak 'plank' c. 3.5m in length and 0.34m in width was sighted in the inter-tidal area at Cummi Ness, Bay of Ireland, Orkney at low tide in 2013 by Dr. Ted Pollard (Fig. 1). Preliminary investigation of the 'plank' has revealed it to be a potential product of human activity rather than

c. 3.5m in length and 0.34m in width was sighted in the inter-tidal area at Cummi Ness, Bay of Ireland, Orkney at low tide in 2013 by Dr. Ted Pollard (Fig. 1). Preliminary investigation of the 'plank' has revealed it to be a potential product of human activity rather than natural driftwood

and critically was found embedded in-situ within 0.4m of intertidal peat. The 'plank' was observed to have a rounded underside suggesting it represents a radially-split timber, which tapers at its northern end where there is a notch cut into it (Fig. 2).



Figure 1: 'Oak plank'

Remains of tree stumps of willow (Fig. 3) were also recorded in the inter-tidal peats around the 'plank'. Initial assessment of the peats reveal that the 'plank' was deposited (and possibly abandoned) within a willow-carr with a wet loving ground flora dominated by sedges. This suggests that the large oak tree which provided the 'plank' was unlikely to have been growing locally, suggesting it was deliberately brought to the site from elsewhere on Orkney.

A radiocarbon date from the top of the peat containing the oak 'plank' has provided a date of 4480-4356 cal B.C. indicating the plank itself is of Later Mesolithic age. This is extremely exciting as there are no known wooden artefacts of this date from Orkney, let alone this substantial! Further work will be taking place in the summer in order to date the 'plank' itself, together with recording its full exposure and the stratigraphic sequence.



Figure 2: North end of plank with notch



Figure 3: Stumps remains of willow



## Recent Publications

Alenius, T., Haggrén, G., Oinonen, M., Ojala, A., and R.-L. Pitkänen

2014 The history of settlement on the coastal mainland in Southern Finland. Palaeoecological, archaeological, and etymological evidence from Lohjansaari Island, Western Uusimaa, Finland. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 47:99–112.

Anzidei, M., Esposito, A., and A. Benini

2014 Evidence of active subsidence at Basiluzzo island (Aeolian islands, southern Italy) inferred from a Roman age wharf. *Quaternary International* 332:143–150.

Cherkinsky, A., Pluckhahn, T.J., and V.D. Thompson

2014 Variation in Radiocarbon Age Determinations from the Crystal River Archaeological Site, Florida. *Radiocarbon* 56(2): DOI: 10.2458/56.16960

Cochrane, E.E., Rieth, T.M., and W.R. Dickinson

2013 Plainware ceramics from Sāmoa: Insights into ceramic chronology, cultural transmission, and selection among colonizing populations. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 32:499-510.

Dawson, Helen

2014 *Mediterranean Voyages. The Archaeology of Island Colonisation and Abandonment*. UCL Institute of Archaeology Series 62. Left Coast Press Inc., Walnut Creek, CA.

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### **Submission Instructions: How to Contribute to The Current**

A variety of interest pieces and announcements are accepted for publication in the ICAIG newsletter. Generally, the deadline for submission for the Spring/Summer Issue is May 1<sup>st</sup> and for the Fall/Winter Issue, November 1<sup>st</sup>. Submissions and inquiries may be directed to *The Current* Editor, Christina M. Giovas ([cmgiovas@uw.edu](mailto:cmgiovas@uw.edu)). Contributions need not follow any specific format, with the exception of "Research Highlights" and "Recent Publications" (instructions below).

#### **Instructions for Submitting Recent Publications**

- Citations submitted for the "Recent Publications" section of the newsletter should follow the *American Antiquity* / *Latin American Antiquity* style guide. (<http://www.saa.org/AbouttheSociety/Publications/StyleGuide/tabid/984/Default.aspx>)
- "In press" citations should be accompanied by a digital object identifier (DOI).

#### **Instructions for Preparing "Research Highlights" Descriptions**

- Prepare a short description, written in the third person, that includes the purpose of the research, location, brief review of findings to date (if relevant), and other information of potential interest to the membership.
- Descriptions should be single spaced, using 12 pt, Times New Roman or Calibri font, and should be submitted as an MSWord file (.doc or .docx).
- Be sure to provide a title (project name or site name) and include the names and organization of the author(s)/principal investigator(s) submitting the description.
- Provide a valid email address for a single contact author/principle investigator.
- Proof read and spell check the research description, especially place names.
- **Word limit:** please keep the description to a maximum of about 250 words (i.e., abstract length).
- Only include literature citations if absolutely necessary. List these after the research description using the citation format for *American Antiquity*. Guidelines available at: <http://www.saa.org/StyleGuideText/tabid/985/Default.aspx>



- **Images:** One or two (maximum) JPEG or TIFF format photos/images/illustrations may be included with the research description. Image resolution should be 600 dpi. Please note that photos may be cropped to fit to the page if images are too large or include significant “empty” space. To avoid this, please format images prior to submission to include only necessary content.
- Include a caption for any images submitted.

Submit descriptions and images as separate files to the newsletter editor, Christina Giovas, at [cmgiovas@uw.edu](mailto:cmgiovas@uw.edu). Submissions that do not meet the above guidelines will be returned to the author for revision, which may delay publication in *The Current*. Due to space constraints not all submitted pieces may be included in a given issue of *The Current*. If this is the case, your contribution will receive priority listing for the next issue. Do not hesitate to contact the editor if you have any questions. We look forward to receiving your contributions.

