Eachtra Journal

Issue 3

July / September 2009

Eachtra Archaeological Projects

Introduction to the Journal

It is our intention to use this web-based Journal to "narrate our work".

As we complete research articles, lectures, posters and other documents we will publish them here. Miscellaneous items of interest will also be recorded along with upcoming events.

In this way we intend to marry the strong Irish tradition of publication in journals with modern web-based media.

In this printed version of the Journal some slide presentations and reports in pdf format are not reproduced and must be viewed online.

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Articles

Miscellany

Events

- Eachtra Journal - http://eachtra.ie/index.php/journal/ -

Archaeological GIS on infrastructural projects in Ireland

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Last September 2008 we presented a lecture to the annual conference of the Association of Archaeological Illustrators & Surveyors at the University College Cork. The focus was on the documentation system actually in use by Eachtra and the benefits it produced in data management and in project development.

[2] Archaeological GIS on Infrastructural Projects in Ireland

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A burnt mound, pits, furrows and ditches at Kiltotan Collinstown, Co. Westmeath (E2768)

Archaeological Excavation Report

Burnt mound, pits, furrows and ditches

Archaeological test excavations were carried out for the proposed N6 realignment between Kinnegad
and Tyrrellspass in counties Meath and Westmeath during 2004. A Bronze Age burnt
mound and adjacent pits were excavated at Kiltotan and Collinstown Site 12, near the western end
of the scheme. The sites were found at National Grid Reference 245084 238720, chainage 42500, in
Field 11 and excavated under ministerial order A001/007.
[2] <u>Ex., A001-07, N6 K2K, Kiltotan Collins Town 12, Co. Westmeath - EAP Journal</u>

[3] <u>Download</u> the report

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[2] Ex., A001-07, N6 K2K, Kiltotan Collins Town 12, Co. Westmeath - EAP Journal:
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[3] Download: **http://eachtra.ie/new_site/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/Ex-A001-07-N6-K2K-Kiltotan-Collinstown-12-Co-W
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A large Bronze Age pit and post-medieval ditches at Kiltotan Collinstown, Co. Westmeath (E2769)

This entry is part 5 of 11 in the Issue **[1]** 3

Archaeological Excavation Report

Large Bronze Age pit and post-medieval ditches

Archaeological test excavations were carried out for the proposed N6 realignment between Kinnegad
and Tyrrellspass in counties Meath and Westmeath. This site was discovered during archaeological testing carried out during the summer of 2004. Site 13 was uncovered within test trenches in Field 9 at National Grid Reference 245009 238675. Two main areas of archaeological potential were
uncovered; the first, Area A, consisted of a large pit filled with burnt clay and charcoal and a number
of ditches, probably post-medieval in origin. The second area, Area B, was defined by one irregular
disturbed pit with burning. It may be related to archaeological material located to the south, beyond
the limits of the roadtake.

[2] Ex., A001 08, K2 K, Kiltotan Collinstown 13, Co. Westmeath Eap Journal
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Early medieval furnaces and post-medieval ditches at Kiltotan Collinstown, Co. Westmeath (E2770)

This entry is part 6 of 11 in the Issue **[1]** 3

Archaeological Excavation Report

Early medieval furnaces and post-medieval ditches

Three archaeological excavations were carried out in the townlands of Kiltotan and Collinstown on the proposed N6 realignment between Kinnegad and Tyrrellspass in County Westmeath in early 2005. This report details the results of the excavation carried out at National Grid Reference 244773
238655, under ministerial order A001/009, on the site known as Kiltotan and Collinstown. This work
was carried out as part of the N6 realignment Kinnegad to Kilbeggan (Figures 1-3). The site included
two parallel ditches of relatively recent origin and two pits with evidence of burning. The burnt pits
were possibly medieval iron smelting furnaces, and were similar to features uncovered at the other end
of the road scheme in Monganstown 1.

[2] Ex., A001 09, K2 K, Kiltotan Collinstown 14, Co. Westmeath Eap Journal
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Metalworking site at Monganstown , Co. Westmeath (E2771)

This entry is part 7 of 11 in the Issue **[1]** 3

Archaeological Excavation Report

Metalworking site

This report details the results of archaeological excavations carried out at Monganstown townland, along the line of the N6 realignment between Kinnegad and Kilbeggan (Figure 1). Situated approximately
2 km west of Kinnegad, the site is one of fourteen new archaeological sites identified during test excavations carried out in 2004. Following the identification of archaeological remains in situ during
the testing phase, it was recommended that preservation by record would be required.
The main concentration of archaeological features was confined to an area of approximately 15 m2
and was excavated under ministerial order A001/001. Evidence was recovered showing the existence of
early medieval charcoal production pits, and Iron Age ironworking features, as well as other possible
smelting and smithing furnaces close by. Several other pits were excavated, and had been used for the
disposal of slag, although they may have originally had a different function.

[2] Ex., A001 01, N6 K2 K, Monganstown1, Co. Westmeath Eap Journal
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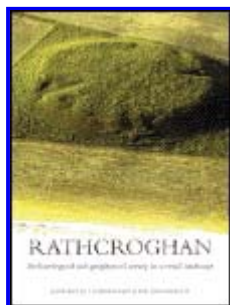P-Journal.pdf**

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Rathcroghan: archaeological and geophysical survey in a ritual landscape

This entry is part 1 of 11 in the Issue **[1]** 3

John Waddell, Joseph Fenwick and Kevin Barton

[2] The authors have completed a major programme of archaeological field research in the Rathcroghan area of Roscommon in the west of Ireland.

The project involved the use of a range of geophysical techniques to explore a number of extraordinary monuments in the Rathcroghan and Carnfree areas of Co. Roscommon.

Complete description and on-line orders [3] here.

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Antiquity Book Review: Near the bend in the river.

This entry is part 11 of 11 in the Issue **[1]** 3

In the *New Book Chronicle* of the last issue of the [2]
Antiquity Journal (Vol. 83 - No 321 - September 2009) there's a review of a recently published
Eachtra book: Near the bend in the river: the archaeology of
the N25 Kilmacthomas realignment.

[3]

and intellectual figures such as Joyce, Frazer, Freud and Graves into the mix. Much space is devoted here to the poetess Hilda Doolittle (H.D.), to my taste far too much. Finally in Chapter 7, on the later twentieth century, pacifism takes a blow, feminism is championed (yet again), pacifism comes back and by 1998 the ball was once again in the military court. A paean to human capacity for delusion, or 'retrospective prophecy', from which I would not entirely exclude the author herself.

from the 'rescue' scene, from community involvement and from contemporary archaeology are gathered here to show the enormous variety of things people calling themselves archaeologists might be up to.

PENNY JOHNSTON, JACINTA KIELY & JOHN TIERNEY. *Near the bend in the river: the archaeology of the N25 Kilmacthomas realignment* (NRA Scheme Monographs 3). xvi+202 pages, 58 b&w & colour illustrations, CD-ROM. 2008. Dublin: National Roads Authority; 978-0-9545955-8-6 paperback.

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Review

TONY BROWN. *The environment and aggregate-related archaeology.* x+220 pages, 94 b&w & colour illustrations, 14 tables. 2009. Great Dunham: Heritage Marketing & Publications & Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-905223-02-2 paperback £35.

SUZIE THOMAS & PETER G. STONE (ed.) *Metal detecting and archaeology.* x+224 pages, 75 illustrations. 2009. Woodbridge: Boydell; 978-1-84383-415-1 hardback £50.

LAURAJANE SMITH & EMMA WATERTON. *Heritage, communities and archaeology.* 174 pages, 4 illustrations. 2009. London: Duckworth; 978-0-7156-3681-7.

CORNELIUS HOLTORF & ANGELA PICCINI (ed.) *Contemporary archaeologies: excavating now.* 222 pages, 50 illustrations, 2 tables. 2009. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang; 978-3-631-57637-3 paperback £27.30.

Near the bend in the river is a report of the archaeological investigations carried out in advance of road development at *Kilmacthomas* in Co. Waterford, southern Ireland. The paper volume contains summaries and discussion, the accompanying CD the final reports. Thirty new sites were discovered between 1997 and 2000 over a stretch of *c*.8km of the N25, thanks, in part, to a programme of test-pitting and 'centre-line trenching' prior to soil stripping, an approach then novel in Irish road archaeology. The sites range from the Early Neolithic to the Middle Ages; particularly noteworthy are a Beaker settlement with a round house (7.60m in diameter), hearth and pits, nine burnt stone mounds (*fulachta fiadh*) and their troughs (many dated to the Early Bronze Age), and iron working sites mostly of the early medieval period. Thanks to this work the archaeological map of Co. Waterford, up to then fairly blank, has filled up substantially. The printed report is clear, with space generously allocated to each site. That is, however, a weakness: such a layout makes it difficult to visualise the relationship between 'sites', in particular in the 500m stretch in the townlands of Ahanaglogh and Graigueshoneen where 22 out of the 30 sites are located, some as close as 20–25m from each other. Our understanding of the landscape, particularly in the Early Bronze Age, would have been greatly enhanced had a feature map other than the basic site location map (Figure 7) been produced.

Hundreds of sites of archaeological import have been revealed over the centuries in the river valleys of England, their floodplains and gravel terraces, as well

as in upland quarries, but the rate of discovery and excavation accelerated with quarrying for aggregates (both 'soft', i.e. sands and gravels, and 'hard', i.e. crushed stone) used in the construction industry in the 1970s and again from 1990 onwards. TONY BROWN's survey, *The environment and aggregate-related archaeology*, funded by the Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund (ALSF) channelled through British Government agencies, is a statement of the knowledge acquired before 1990 and more systematically in the period 1991–2001, i.e. the first 10 years of the implementation of a guideline (PPG16 in British civil servant parlance) which made archaeological investigation and its funding integral to the planning process. The report, by regions of England, sandwiched between a couple of introductory chapters, and two short chapters of discussion and conclusions, is an authoritative statement which highlights considerable achievements in Palaeolithic archaeology, landscape archaeology and specific site-types (e.g. Bronze Age log boats, a Roman vineyard or medieval fish weirs on the river Trent floodplain) and recommends areas and topics for future work. It is supported by a comprehensive apparatus, for example a 40-page gazetteer of post-1990 interventions (Appendix 1) and a 20-page list of areas of future potential (Appendix 2). All the same, I cannot help feeling that this book will only be read by those who have to. Numbered paragraphs, forests of acronyms, indifferent style, editorial slips and a proof-reader asleep throughout, detract from rather than draw attention to this important component of British archaeology.

The two reports above (welcome because they are published rather than confined to grey literature) are written by archaeologists who are paid to exercise their profession. But archaeology is of course happening in the wider community, and the next three books serve to illustrate instances of, sometimes fraught, interaction between an institutionalised profession and other interested constituencies.

Metal detecting is a good place to start as it is a classic example of interaction, confrontation and integration and it involves thousands of people uncovering 'real' archaeology. To a very large degree it is a success story in England and Wales (where the Portable Antiquities Scheme or PAS had been in operation since 1996 after the passing of the Treasure Act) and it is true to say that the cooperation between 'good' metal detectorists and archaeologists and museum staff has completely changed the archaeological map. Yet an element

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[2] Antiquity Journal: **http://www.antiquity.ac.uk/journal.html**
[3] Image: **http://eachtra.ie/new_site/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/review-antiquity-near-bend-river.jpg**
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NRA Archaeology Seminar 27th August 2009

Creative Minds: production, manufacturing and invention in ancient Ireland

The [2] seminar will take place on Thursday 27 August at the Gresham Hotel, O'Connell Street, Dublin. Registration will begin at 9.30 am and the first presentation will be at 10.10 am. Admission is free but booking for this very popular event is essential.

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Wetland Archaeology in Ireland and Beyond February 2010

Wetland Archaeology in Ireland and Beyond

Conference 6th-7th February 2010, University College Dublin

Call for Papers

Wetlands are an intrinsic part of the Irish landscape, they have also been at the heart of numerous archaeological investigation, particularly over the last 25 years. Although a relatively recently coined term, Wetlands encapsulates a critical range of landscapes, locations and places — exploited, revered, feared, crossed or ignored in different measure by various groups of people across both time and space. Today in Ireland they are in many respects either marginal or exploited. However, both their environment and their archaeology create very special and important places, an importance and uniqueness recognised by World Wetlands Day and the designation of 45 [2] <u>Ramsar</u> sites from across Ireland.

This conference builds on a long tradition of archaeological examination of Irish wetlands. Papers are sought that introduce new research, or explore new approaches to previous research, with specific reference to peoples' interactions with wetlands. Papers can work at various scales from the wide to the site specific and across different themes from the sacred to the profane to the environmental.

Papers at the conference will be broadly grouped into sessions of archaeological and environmental studies at small and large scales. The first day will focus on site level studies mainly relating to individual sites or excavations and environmental studies at local scale. The second day will feature inter-site papers, surveys, regional level environmental studies and multidisciplinary projects. Individual projects wishing to present more than one paper are requested to submit proposals across the scales and themes of the conference.

	6th February	**7th February**
Morning	Session 1: Archaeological 1	Session 3: Archaeological 2
Lunch	Posters	Posters
Afternoon	Session 2: Environmental 1	Session 4: Environmental 2

One of the major objectives of the conference is to highlight the diversity of archaeologies and environments in Irish wetland archaeology and the range of methodological and theoretical approaches adopted. We are particularly keen to encourage papers that attempt to integrate these thematic areas either in a focused or in a wider synthetic fashion.

Recent years have seen many notable projects undertaken in Ireland either as part of existing wetland strategies or as individual projects in the context of infrastructure developments etc. This conference will present forum for a wide range of people undertaking archaeological and environmental studies to (re)engage in dialogue on the development of wetland archaeology in Ireland over the past 25 years and to consider themes, priorities and potentials for the future.

Potential contributors are requested to forward a paper title and 300 word abstract to [3] wetland.archaeology@ucd.ie before 30 of September 2009. Each speaker will be allotted 30 minutes for their presentation including 5 minutes for discussion. Speakers and attendees are also welcome to present posters which will be displayed throughout the conference.

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[3] wetland.archaeology@ucd.ie: **mailto:wetland.archaeology@ucd.ie**
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Tara Symposium: From the Past to the Future

23rd-26th October 2009, University College Dublin

This is to draw or re-draw your attention to an upcoming symposium dealing with the Hill of Tara, county Meath, Ireland. The event, to be held in UCD over the weekend of 23rd-26th October 2009, brings together an international group of invited speakers for a collaborative review of the archaeology and meaning of Tara. Further information is contained in the attachment and on the symposium web page. An up-to-date version of the symposium programme is now available. Please excuse any cross-posting that may occur and we would appreciate it if you would display and circulate this notice for those that may be interested.

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Tara Symposium: From the Past to the Future

23rd-26th October 2009

Following the publication by Wordwell of reports on Seán P. Ó Ríordáin's excavations at the *Mound of the Hostages* (Muiris O'Sullivan 2005) and *Rath of the Synods* (Eoin Grogan 2008), the UCD School of Archaeology, in association with the [2] UCD John Hume Institite for Global Irish Studies and the [3] UCD Humanities Institute of Ireland, is hosting a symposium entitled *Tara – From the Past to the Future*.

Featuring approximately forty papers by an international group of scholars, the symposium promises to be the most extensive review of the archaeology of Tara undertaken to date. It focuses on the data from the two excavation volumes but extends to a wider consideration of research undertaken at Tara over the past twenty years. Themes include:

The archaeology of Tara

Papers subjecting particular aspects of the archaeology of Tara to detailed scrutiny

Underlying question: What more can be mined from the archaeological data?

Tara in its local and regional setting

Contributions examining the locality around Tara and exploring how Tara interacted with its surroundings at various times in the past

Underlying question: What was the settlement history of the landscape around the Hill of Tara?

Comparative perspectives on Tara

A variety of speakers examining Tara from the perspective of other iconic places such as Stonehenge and Carnac

Underlying question: What is the international perspective on Tara?

The significance of Tara through time

Addressing the distinctive qualities that have set Tara apart from ancient times to the present

Underlying question: What dynamics have influenced the emergence of the Tara phenomenon?

The symposium, takes place during the October Bank Holiday weekend in the Clinton Auditorium, UCD, Belfield.

Professor Muiris O'Sullivan
[4] UCD School of Archaeology

Further information: [5] www.ucd.ie/archaeology/tarasymposium2009

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Google Earth, Open Source and other Emerging Spatial Technologies: Innovation and Application in Archaeology

Australian Archaeological Association
2009 Call for Papers

People are invited to submit abstracts for the AAA (Australian Archaeological Association) session this year on "Google Earth, Open Source and other Emerging Spatial Technologies: Innovation and Application in Archaeology". The session is being convened by Illya Santos and Stafford Smith at the University of Western Australia. If you would like to present then please forward an Abstract by September the 30th.

For further information on the conference please visit [2] http://www.flinders.edu.au/ehlt/conferences/archaeology/aaa2009/aaa2009_home.cfm

Google Earth, Open Source and other Emerging Spatial Technologies: Innovation and Application in Archaeology

In this session will be examined the ways in which emerging spatial technologies are being used in the study and practice of archaeology in Australia and abroad. Archaeologists have been using aerial photographs for over 70 years to study the ground and provide targets for excavation and survey. Since the 70s, often in tandem with aerial surveys, archaeologists have been using GIS programs to map and analyze sites. Recently however, there has been a proliferation of spatial technologies, from recording devices, to economically viable satellite imagery, to open source software.

Google Earth is probably the best known of these emerging spatial technologies. In addition to its repository of satellite imagery, it also offers an easily accessible platform to distribute spatial data, through Keyhole Markup Language. A number of open source geospatial technologies are also emerging as real alternatives to traditionally expensive options with everything from operating systems specific to archaeology to fully customizable GIS programs. These tools are being used in creative ways for viewing, displaying, analyzing and storing information by research, commercial and education organizations all over the world. How is this reflected in archaeology currently? What are Australian archaeologists doing with these technologies now and what would we like to do in the future?

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PHP, Wordpress customization, Design, CSS

by

Maurizio Toscano

and

Lidia Bocanegra