Public Participation in Archaeological Research: Opportunities and Limitations

Programme

Monday, 07 June 2021 / 14:00 - 18:00 h

14:00-14:15 Welcome
Ilka Parchmann and Andrea Ricci

14:15-15:00 Keynote: Carenza Lewis
Participatory public archaeology CAN simultaneously benefit heritage and people: Evidence, insights and models from recent projects in the UK and Europe

15:00-15:45 Keynote: Monica Smith
Creating a Philosophy of Being and Doing: What is a Citizen and What is Science?

15:45-16:00 Break

16:00-16:20 Antonia Davidovic
Boundary making in hybrid zones. Analysing the differences and similarities between professionals and volunteers

16:20-16:40 Katharina Möller
Public participation in archaeology in Germany and the UK

16:40-17:00 Kerstin Kowarik
Experimental and sustainable: New approaches to public participation in archaeological research

17:00-17:20 Eva Kaptijn
Heritage Quest: Citizen scientists in search of archaeological heritage in the Netherlands

17:20-18:00 Discussion

19:30-ca. 21:00 Spatial Chat with Dinner
**Tuesday, 08 June 2021 / 09:00-13:00 h**

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The ROOTS Communication Platform  
Ilka Rau / ilka.rau@zbsa.eu

**Link to Homepage:**
Participatory public archaeology CAN simultaneously benefit heritage and people: Evidence, insights and models from recent projects in the UK and Europe

Professor Carenza Lewis, University of Lincoln, UK

Involving members of the public more closely in heritage is the key aim of the 2005 Council of Europe ‘Faro Convention’ on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, while one of the seven key principles of the EU ‘Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda 2020’ for Cultural Heritage and Global Change is that “public and community engagement as well as participatory approaches should be at the core of activities and thought should be given to who creates knowledge, narrative and the role of communities in identifying, understanding and caring for heritage”. One of the most engaging and impactful means of enabling people to participate in heritage is through archaeological investigations, but allowing people to take part in the discovery process remains controversial in many countries due to concerns over heritage protection and limited awareness of the potential public benefit. For participation to be more widely acceptable, evidence is needed that public participation can be achieved safely to the benefit of both heritage and people.

This paper will review a range of recent projects and current research in the UK, the Netherlands, Poland and the Czech Republic which have involved members of the public in archaeological investigations intended to advance knowledge of the past or protect heritage and explored the social impacts. I will show how members of the public were involved, the outcomes for heritage, the methods used to capture the social impact, and what the latter revealed about the benefits of participation; and will offer a series of principles for best practice in public participatory archaeology which can ensure the activity benefits both heritage and people.

The paper will conclude by proposing that if we can see that archaeological investigation benefits both heritage and people, we must surely be morally obliged as heritage professionals to do what we can to make such opportunities more widely available.

References:


Creating a Philosophy of Being and Doing: What is a Citizen and What is Science?

Monica L. Smith, University of California, Los Angeles, USA

Natural and cultural phenomena are widespread and complex. Over the past hundreds of thousands of years, our global ancestors engaged with increasingly sophisticated tools and forms of communication. Yet each one of the changes that we interpret as an aggregate of “cultures” and “phases” was perceived and enacted by people acting one at a time in the world of objects and landscapes with which they lived.

The discovery of the past is similarly an activity that occurs as people act individually to learn about archaeology and history. As people read books, listen to newscasts, and watch documentary programs, they create a distinct perspective on heritage and their own role in it. Some people augment their understanding of the past through a direct engagement with archaeological data through surveys, excavations, archival research, or the conservation of artifacts. These people may be professionals who have trained for a career in archaeology, but they also include the far greater number of people for whom history and archaeology are a hobby or a weekend engagement with friends.

The concept of “citizen science” bridges the worlds of these different participants, but the passion and knowledge base of the two groups is not mutually exclusive and is indeed mutually dependent: a local farmer will know local landscapes better than a visiting faculty member; an enthusiast of coin histories will have a ready memory of variants that a professional archaeologist would only know through looking at a database. Beyond the knowledge of objects and landscapes, the tactile, physical aspects of archaeology thus bring together a diversity of the “owners” of knowledge about the past.

The concept of citizen science provides a way to characterize the mutual integrations of knowledge, energy, and results among the various groups of people who engage with tangible heritage. Yet the term itself still requires some critical examination: What is “science”? What is a “citizen”? How can we best honor the passions of these diverse groups in the creation of teams and projects to capture the archaeological heritage that lies buried all around us, and that is fast-disappearing in a world of population-driven land development and accelerating natural effects such as coastal erosion? This talk will consider how we can potentially move beyond the hybrid term “citizen science” as we move further towards an integration of knowledge, resources, and protection in order to deepen an understanding of the past, hear the diversity of voices in the present, and provide capacity-building for the future.
Boundary making in hybrid zones. Analysing the differences and similarities between professionals and volunteers

Antonia Davidovic, Heidelberg University, Germany

The presentation aims to look at the boundary between the public and the professional, based on approaches from science studies to the definition of scientific/academic knowledge production. The boundary between professional and volunteer knowledge production aims to construct a higher plausibility of academic knowledge, mainly by establishing a difference in motivation or habitus. Based on research of two projects of public participation in archaeology in Germany, using ethnographic fieldwork and questionnaires, I will argue that motivation and habitus of at least part of the volunteers show many similarities with professionals. The boundary seems to be more fluid, rather a hybrid zone, and could be better analysed as an area of translation.

Public participation in archaeology in Germany and the UK

Katharina Möller, Bangor University, UK

Before it became an academic discipline, archaeology was a popular pastime for the powerful and the wealthy. Learned archaeological societies like the Society of Antiquaries of London, were founded as early as the beginning of 18th century, over a century before the first university chair in archaeology was created in either Germany or the UK. As a result, for much of the 19th and 20th century, archaeological research was shaped largely by amateurs. This changed in the second half of the 20th century, when archaeology was professionalised more and more, which led to most work being carried out by archaeology graduates instead. However, despite this, there are still ways for interested members of the public to participate in archaeological research. The German heritage agencies, for example, have a long tradition of working with volunteers and while specifically designed public participation projects are still somewhat rare in Germany, they are very common in the UK where ‘community archaeology’ is well-established in various different archaeological sectors.

This paper looks at the development of archaeology in Germany and the UK as well as the legal situation in both countries to establish how both tradition and heritage laws influence public participation. Furthermore, based on a survey carried out amongst British and German archaeologists in 2018 and 2019 respectively, an attempt will be made to analyse similarities and differences when it comes to conducting public participation and the mindset of professional archaeologists in regard to this topic.
Experimental and sustainable: Old and new approaches to public participation in archaeological research?

Kerstin Kowarik, Hans Reschreiter, Natural History Museum Vienna, Austria

The Natural History Museum, in general, and the Hallstatt research cluster, in particular, have a longstanding and rich tradition in volunteer work, ranging from crowd sourcing approaches to oral history projects and the integration of highly specialized expertise. We propose to revisit these approaches within the newer perspective of citizen research and discuss to what extent fundamental issues discussed in the Roots workshop are already addressed through classical volunteer work and to what extent a reframing of existing structures might contribute to innovations in the field of citizen science research in archaeology.

In addition, we propose to discuss the potential of integrating citizen science into archaeological research through experimental archaeology by considering the specific needs of this research approach and potential expert sources to lobby and integrate. Finally, we would like to discuss ideas on how to bring together archaeological research, citizen science and volunteer work in order to contribute to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

Heritage Quest: Citizen scientists in search of archaeological heritage in the Netherlands

Eva Kaptijn¹ (presenting), Quentin Bourgeois², Karsten Lambers², Wouter Verschoof-van der Vaart²,³

¹ Erfgoed Gelderland, Arnhem & Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht, De Bilt, The Netherlands
² Leiden University, Faculty of Archaeology, The Netherlands
³ Data Science Research Programme (Leiden Centre of Data Science), Leiden University, The Netherlands

In the ‘Heritage Quest’ project, citizen scientists investigate LiDAR maps for traces of archaeological heritage. The high resolution and open access LiDAR data developed by Current Dutch Elevation (Actueel Hoogtebestand Nederlands) allows the identification of archaeological structures on elevation maps. Engaging the public in the inspection of this LiDAR model makes it possible to investigate large areas and increase the reliability via the ‘wisdom of the crowd’ principle. In 2019, the project started on the forested Veluwe region and continued on the Utrechtse Heuvelrug, both located in the central Netherlands. In total, over 6500 people have now participated and over 2000 km² have been inspected focusing on burial mounds, Celtic fields, charcoal kilns and cart tracks. Several thousands of potential new burial mounds have been discovered, while the area of Celtic fields has increased by tens of hectares. In the coming months, the newly discovered barrows and charcoal kilns will be validated in the field in a joint effort of citizen scientists, professional archaeologists and archaeology students. By joining the strengths of diverse groups and stakeholders, Heritage Quest is able to enlarge scientific knowledge on Dutch (pre)history and engage public interest through participation, creating greater awareness and the protection of archaeological heritage. Furthermore, the results are used by local/regional governments, landowners and nature conservation organisations in order to safeguard these remains from the past.
This presentation will discuss the design and goals of the project, the first results of the online investigation of LiDAR maps, data quality as well as the upcoming validation in the field. Additionally, attention will be given to participant evaluation and steps taken towards open science and co-creation.

For more information on the project see: www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/erfgoed-gezocht

200 years of citizen science: Archaeological databases as an interface between different research interests

Ulf Ickerodt, Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein (ALSH), Germany

Archaeological research has been driven by increasing citizen science since its inception around the middle of the 19th century. This generates a broad public interest, which led to today's framework of preservation laws. Then as now, amateurs and interested laymen have been engaged alongside full-time professionals. The question that had to be answered earlier, which remains to be answered today, is the quality of participation. In the meantime, the field of citizen science has become increasingly pluralized. Today, databases and other digital media offer solutions for effective cooperation and participation. In the context of this contribution, the efforts of the ALSH are to be presented, using the example of detector archaeology to build up an interactive communication and interaction framework. This framework has to meet both the professional archaeological self-demand for scientificity and the individual goals and possibilities of each actor. In the course of digitization, databases and their various interfaces are becoming increasingly important as supra-individual solutions for balancing interests, qualities and demands, on the one hand, and communication needs on the other.

Metal prospecting in Corona times: What has changed?

Jochim Weise, Arbeitsgruppe Detektorgänger, Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein, Germany

Although detectorists are often solitary people, they also look forward to joint meetings and prospecting, exchanging ideas with each other and sharing the excitement of beautiful finds. The plenary meetings of the detector group with the office, e.g. at the “Tag der Archäologie”, are eagerly awaited by many.

All this was largely cancelled during the pandemic, and only small meetings and the worldwide web remained. The training courses of the ALSH for the new detectorists had to be reconsidered and conducted differently.

Nevertheless, contacts are still present, joint lectures have been held online on the part of the detectorists, and exchange between the ALSH and the group spokespersons of the detector group continues.
Private metal detecting as citizen science in Denmark

Andres Dobat (Minos), Aarhus University & Honorary Curator at Moesgaard Museum, Denmark

Amateur archaeology and private metal detecting has a long and proud history in Denmark. Passionate detector users have rewritten the history of Denmark many times since the early beginnings of the hobby in the late 1970s. Private metal detecting has already challenged the classic division of roles in archaeology, with amateur finders producing finds but otherwise being more or less passive recipients of professional expert knowledge. A hallmark of Danish metal detecting is the well-functioning cooperation between detectorists and professional archaeologists at museums and universities. With the new recording APP DIME (www.metaldetektorfund.dk/), this cooperation model has now been elevated to the next level. Today, detectorists do not only deliver finds to the responsible institutions, they are also citizen scientists who contribute with data and knowledge.

Citizens create knowledge:
Citizen science as a research approach

Silke Voigt-Heucke, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin & Leibniz-Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity Research, Berlin, Germany

Citizen science has a long tradition and has enriched our scientific landscape for many years. In the wake of the digital revolution, collaboration between scientific institutions and citizens has reached a new dimension in recent years. In Europe, Germany is perceived as a leader in the field of citizen science - especially due to the political and strategic positioning of the national platform for citizen science Bürger schaffen Wissen, the Green Paper on the Citizen Science Strategy 2020 for Germany as well as two funding schemes for citizen science projects of the Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). Many new projects are currently emerging. Expectations of the concept are correspondingly high, ranging from "strengthening trust in science" to "promoting scientific literacy" and "contributing to the solution of major societal challenges". At the same time, there is still often a lack of acceptance and appreciation within the science system, both for the citizens and researchers involved. The talk will give a brief overview of the possibilities, limits, current state and networks of citizen science in Europe and in particular in Germany.