

AIMA Newsletter N°13 January 2019 Part 1

Events and Project Reports



35th Annual Plowing Match
Howell Living History Farm 2018
Titusville, New Jersey, USA



Apis mellifera, Western honeybee by
Andreas Trepte <https://www.photo-natur.net/> 4 August 2009
Wikipedia Commons by kind permission of the author

Agriculture * Food * Environment * People

- ❖ Be sure to visit the **AIMA website** at <http://agriculturalmuseums.org/> for more information and frequent updates on subjects concerning museums of agriculture.
- ❖ ... and send this **Newsletter** on to your friends to encourage them to join us in the AIMA, in its networks of practice, for advice and exchange.

Thanks to all the contributors who help us make the Newsletter



Nantaise Cattle Festival, Photo Jean-Léo Dugast



***** Special Notice *****

There were so many valuable contributions, that this Newsletter will be sent out in two parts



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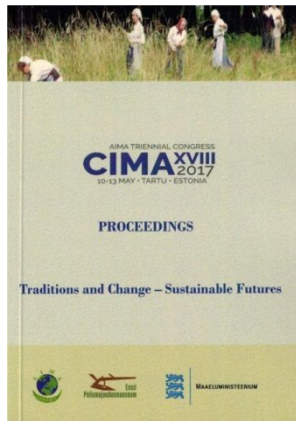


How to Join the AIMA



Proceedings from the AIMA 2017 Triennial Congress Now Available

“Traditions and Change - Sustainable Futures”



Proceedings from CIMA XVIII hosted by the **National Museum of Agriculture in Üllenürme, near Tartu, Estonia**, and supported by the Estonian Ministry of Rural Affairs is a 279-page, full colour publication addressing agricultural museums’ concerns, from using rural heritage to ensure food safety to the current, very hands-on issues affecting museums of various sizes, as well as resources and research/collection goals. Introduced by Director Merli Sild and Chancellor of Ministry of Rural Affairs Illar Lemetti, the volume is opened on a professional note full of humour and pragmatism by Ted (E.J.T.) Collins entitled “**The history of AIMA: a personal perspective**” emphasizing how many obstacles were originally overcome by the Czech and Hungarian agricultural museums to get the AIMA off the ground, keep it going through often rough seas over the years in European life and expand its hospitality to include – today – four continents. Ted sums up: “looking back, I am proud to have been part of what historians of the post-war period will show to have been a **unique contribution to international understanding**”.

This is indeed the case today and – we are sure – tomorrow, with contributions from the two **keynote speakers**, Pamela Warhurst from England and Krista Kulderknup from Estonia, followed by papers contributed by **36 museum specialists and researchers** from Australia, Belgium, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Japan, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia and the United States. There are summaries of each of the six specialist section workshops on sustainable agriculture, museum education and research, conservation-restoration-digital media, bread and traditional food, living animals in museums and agriculture and rural life in art, followed by the varied papers of the plenary session and concluded by the panel discussion on how museums contribute to addressing today’s agricultural and rural challenges.

The meeting was enhanced by an opportunity to discover many of the highlights in and around the museum and Tartu and by the warm welcome and hard work put in by all the museum staff and the dancers and musicians invited to provide a real taste of Estonia.

A full table of contents is available on pages 39-40 below. Limited paper copies may be requested from the organizers at merli.sild@maaelumuuseumid.ee and full-version PDF downloadable at https://www.agriculturalmuseums.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/CIMA2017Proceedings_digital.pdf



AIMA 2020 Triennial Congress CIMA MERL (Museum of English Rural Life) Reading, England



The Museum of English Rural Life is owned and managed by the University of Reading. We use our diverse and surprising collection to explore how the skills and experiences of farmers and craftspeople, past and present, can help shape our lives now and into the future. We work alongside rural people, local communities and specialist researchers to create displays and activities that engage with important debates about the future of food and the ongoing relevance of the countryside to all our lives.

We were established by academics in the Department of Agriculture in 1951 to capture and record the rapidly changing countryside following World War II. The Museum is based in a building originally designed by Sir Alfred Waterhouse in 1880 which then became St Andrews Hall of Residence in 1911, and in 2005, a modern extension was built onto the house for the Museum.

The Museum was awarded £1.8 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in 2014 for the redevelopment of the galleries, reopening in October 2016. The redevelopment strengthens and renews our links with agriculture as well as enhancing our position in supporting engagement opportunities for students and academics across a wide variety of disciplines, nationally and internationally. Visit us at <https://merl.reading.ac.uk/about-us/>

The Call for Papers and dates in 2019 will be arriving soon – watch this space!



AIMA 2018 Executive Committee Meeting in Delhi, India

Hosted by the Centre for Community Knowledge (CCK) and Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)

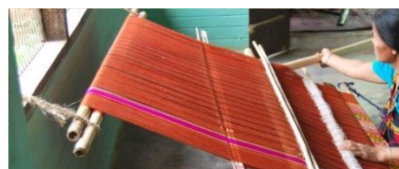
Professional Engagement Abroad by Debra Reid

On November 23, the day after Thanksgiving, yours truly, The Henry Ford's Curator of Agriculture and the Environment, flew off to participate in the board meeting of the *Association Internationale des Musées D'Agriculture* (AIMA), an organizational affiliate of the International Council of Museums (ICOM). AIMA began in 1966 at the height of the Cold War and built a bridge, as Ted Collins, an early AIMA board member recounted, "between the two Europes." It sustained communication among staff at agricultural museums (and at open air museums) on both sides of the Iron Curtain until the curtain fell in 1990. Then, after several years of cogitation, a new generation of board members reconstituted AIMA to respond to changing needs of agricultural museums.

I attended my first AIMA conference in 1998, have held various positions on the board since 2001 and have been webmaster since 2013 (<https://www.agriculturalmuseums.org/>). I have learned a lot from my AIMA colleagues over the years. The trip to India has reinforced my belief in the importance of professional engagement.



Left to right back: Debra Reid, Merli Sild, Mary Watson, Nerupama Modwel (INTACH), Pierre Del Porto, Surajit Sarkar, Tripta Singh (INTACH), Gunjan Joshi (INTACH), Harish Benzwal (INTACH) and front: Ritu Singh (INTACH), Isabel Hughes, Kerry-Leigh Burchill, Ollie Douglas, Pete Watson (Executive Committee Members attending "virtually" were Claus Kropp, Barbara Susic and Cozette Griffin-Kremer) Photo: Piret Emily Hion (special observer from Estonia), November 26, 2018.



Director of INTACH's Intangible Cultural Heritage Division, Nerupama Y. Modwel, explained that the mural (installed at the INTACH headquarters on Lodi Road in New Delhi, India), is a painting by an artist from the Gond tribal community, predominantly from the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh.

AIMA members exchange information and support each other across geo-political borders. By doing so, they gain a more nuanced understanding of agriculture as 1) a complex system of practices that occurs in one place but that has ripple effects far beyond that place, and 2) of exhibitions about agriculture that engage a public far removed from crops and livestock, but increasingly interested in food and alternative fuels and fibers. The future holds a lot of potential for interpreting agriculture, and AIMA helps promote that in museums around the world.

AIMA members face similar challenges regardless of their geographic location. Conversations among board members and meeting attendees often involve questions such as: How do we appeal to audiences with little knowledge of agriculture? How do we convey the importance of agriculture to their own survival? How do we engage them in the process of discovery? We learn more by wrestling with these challenges together. It takes time and money to engage with colleagues who share similar concerns. The journey warrants the effort. Sometimes everything is new, as here, on the left, and sometimes we find something familiar in far-away places – on the right, it looks like home to me!



Left: food vendors at the Indian War Memorial, New Delhi, Sunday, November 25, 2018. Right: Photograph of a New Holland 3630 tractor at the Nehru Park, New Delhi, India. November 27, 2018. Photograph by Ollie Douglas, Associate Curator, Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading, Reading, England.

In any case, sharing the process of discovery makes us more thoughtful, and it can lead to more compelling interpretations of agriculture and the environment.



Of course, the very special attraction of the meeting was getting to know more about the local situation on this vast sub-continent. Surajit Sarkar, AIMA member for India and our co-host, explained his position as professor in the Centre for Community Knowledge, the CCK (the first oral knowledge center in Indian universities), funded by the Delhi city government, as there is no city museum. We must recall that there is not even a good understanding of who lives in Delhi. It had some 500,000 inhabitants 70 years ago, and now has 26 million!

How can a university faculty in a megacity serve this need? First of all, they are providing a dynamic website with a section entitled DelhiMemories.in with photographs of Delhi from 1880 to the present and oral histories. Food security is a major concern of city-dwellers, many of whom say that, were there to be a catastrophe, many of them would return “home” to their villages of origin and family members who still live there. Consequently, we had a lively discussion of farming-land use-land ownership and learned that a lot of farming occurs on lease. During the 1970s and 1980s, there was a land redistribution to give tillers 1 or 1 ½ acres

each. Some pooled land, some gave up their lease, but farmers still equal 48% of the population with 85% of these farming less than 2 hectares. Some have representation in government, but some are in *pradeshes*, the large producers with a strong influence on government. Buying land poses a challenge to cultural tradition, so leasing is a more straightforward approach and leaseholders become the paid labor for corporate farmers. The question is: Is this system sustainable? Are the practices sustainable? During our stay in New Delhi, there were farmer rallies when small farmers demanded a special session in Parliament to discuss the agrarian crisis.

On the very positive side for future museum collections, agricultural universities in India have huge traditional knowledge digital databases documenting practices across the country, including audio recordings, audio-video recordings of farmers and tradesmen and their traditional practices done during the 1980s to early 2000s, for example, ICAR – research agency of the Ministry of Agriculture, which supported the research of Lotika Varadarajan, AIMA’s very first contact with India. We hope that some European databases may serve as a useful comparison for agricultural universities and ministries in India. An NGO documentation project resulted in the People’s Archive of Rural India and began as a crowd-sourcing effort. Of the 40 plus agricultural universities, only 5 or 10 have created an agricultural museum, but all of them have participated in digitization projects.

Surajit gave us some very specific examples of the CCK’s work, reminding us that there are nine climatic zones in India, and “The Museum of Memory,” Hoshangabad District, Madhya Pradesh, documents one of those zones. The project involved collecting and digitizing oral histories of rice farmers in the district who had gained their knowledge before the spread of education and other aspects of modernity, with over 300 hours of recordings collected, often concentrating on lower castes, for example, bamboo workers, or tribal farmers in unirrigated forested regions who still cultivate more than one variety of indigenous pre-Green-Revolution rice in the same plot. These rural communities are used to adapting to climate change. Farmers even recalled that, in 1921, the government collected high-yielding varieties in specific regions and distributed these to farmers. Some continued using these seeds post-Green Revolution. Furthermore, the grain once native to the dry prairies was extinguished there during the production revolution’s irrigation phase, but poorer farmers moved the grain into the foothills where they did not irrigate. Among the CCK’s efforts is the CantapultArtsCaravan, a travelling troop that created pop-ups in small towns to engage with rural folk and collect memories, and The Museum of Memory’s JatanTrust is “an endeavor to affirm histories and knowledge of rural Indian communities” (see <http://jatantrust.org/>).

Rice is a good crop to focus on because it is distinctly Asian. The seeds traveled through the Asian continent as seen in the “Asian ricescapes project” – 315 varieties continue in seasonal production. There is a cooperative effort with a university in Senegal to document how Asian rice was adopted there and a partner in Thailand is researching hill farming to document common ecologies, more intensive cultivation practices, high occurrence of varieties and adaptabilities.

Dr. Ritu Singh of the Natural Heritage Division documented traditional agricultural practices in central India and eastern Rajasthan for us. Their investigations have concluded that traditional agricultural practices are indeed based on sound ecological practices and maximize production through intensive cultivation, importantly affecting threatened water availability and enhancing highly eroded soil systems. In addition, traditional agricultural practices tend to be conservation-oriented and sustainable. They are not static, but dynamic, and especially involve using native seeds, local principles of land management contributing to soil fertility, diversification of farming practices and important cultural associations. INTACH pursues capacity-building to help farmers survive (for example, workshops to reduce input costs),

promotes seed conservation and treatment (examples: rubbing with cow dung; sun drying in preparation for planting; using traditional threshing practices to reduce damage to seeds) and encourages local food festivals that combine traditional foods and native grains and seeds. NB that the Indian government prohibits farmers from developing and marketing their own seeds, but does not prohibit saving and sharing traditional seeds, or even hybrid seeds they may develop.

AIMA Friend Lotika Varadarajan

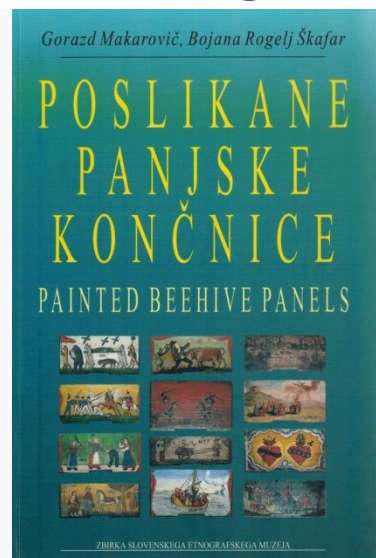


Photo: Laila Tyabji

The AIMA was first introduced to our co-host, Surajit Sarkar, when he was our special guest at the 2014 CIMA in Marseille, France. Surajit was recruited by the “grande dame” of Indian ethnology, Lotika Varadarajan, who passed away in 2017, leaving behind a rich legacy of research and a memory of an outspoken scholar passionate about traditional practices and artefacts. There is an excellent article of homage to her in *The Wire* at <https://thewire.in/188207/lotika-varadarajan-obit/> by Laila Tyabji “Lotika Varadarajan, a Flawless Blend of Tradition and Modernity” 17 October 2017.



Slovene Ethnographic Museum Ljubljana, Slovenia 2019 Executive Committee Meeting



Left: Creative Commons, Slovenia Ethnographic Museum, Ljubljana, 24 May 2007, Author Mark Iverson
Right: Painted Beehive Panels in the SEM

AIMA networking and membership goes round the world, so the Executive Committee's next destination for their 2019 meeting is Ljubljana, where the Slovene Ethnographic Museum holds treasures of both Slovene traditional collections and popular practices, as well as an outstanding collection of extra-European artefacts, due to a long internationalist tradition. At home, the remarkable work of Boris Orel and his disciples set the tone for in-depth ethnology and agriculture is a leading actor in this small, beautiful country, with its immense geographical diversity. Go to visit the website and we will keep you posted about the agenda - <https://www.etno-muzej.si/en/about-museum> While there, you might check out the **superb collection of painted beehive panels**, to go with the newsletter highlights on beeness.

The **Slovene Ethnographic Museum** is a museum "about people, for people", a museum of cultural identities, a link between the past and the present, between traditional and modern culture, between our own and other cultures, between the natural environment and civilisation. It is a museum of dialogue, open, active and hospitable, dedicated to serving the public. It presents and reports on traditional culture as well as mass and pop culture in Slovenia and the diaspora, on non-European cultures, and on the material and intangible cultural heritage of both everyday and festive life. (From the website above)



Special Guest Museums Australia “Social Media – a strategic tool for museums”



The **Invisible Farmer Project**,* an initiative of Museums Victoria (Australia), is the largest study of women on the land in Australia. A key goal of the project is to empower women to share their stories, and, by doing so, reframe the historical and contemporary narrative of rural Australia.

Social media is at the heart of the curatorial methodology in community engagement and storytelling. The curated use of digital media has significant benefits for museums and their connections to community. These tools place Museums Victoria in the centre of the national and international Rural Women's Movement, and actively demonstrate the power and relevance of museums in our contemporary society.

Invisible Farmer harnesses social media to enable access for anyone to participate in sharing a story and contribute to conversations about the historical and contemporary role of women on the land. At the project's beginning in early 2017, Curators Liza Dale-Hallett and Catherine Forge established a Digital Strategy for community engagement. Four digital platforms were selected in order to offer an active online 'exhibition' of curated stories, images and issues relating to women in agriculture:

- **Website and blog:** a website was developed to showcase the project and its' stories. Curators publish and edit feature stories, created through their own curatorial fieldwork (i.e. oral history, photography) or by guest contributors,
- **Facebook:** Short personal stories from farmers are published in first person narrative with editorial assistance from curators,
- **Instagram:** Curators select high-quality images and personal quotes to showcase the Blog and Facebook posts. Audiences are also invited to share their images by using the hashtag #invisfarmer
- **Twitter:** Curators build stakeholder connections by actively linking the project to key issues relating to women in agriculture; Twitter is also used to profile Facebook and Blog posts.

Digital stories and digital engagement have generated extraordinary and positive responses from across Australia and worldwide. Since early 2017 we have published over 400 community stories, and continue to attract over 100,000 interactions each week. Each story shared inspires other women to share their story – and the supportive responses they generate also helps to build the confidence for others to follow and participate.

There are many benefits for museums in using social media, and at Museums Victoria the impact has been unprecedented:

- It has allowed us to go beyond the walls of the museum and reach **wide and diverse audiences** across the breadth of Australia and internationally. We have gained many international followers, including the Australian Ambassador for Ireland, who published a Facebook post dedicated completely to the Invisible Farmer project.
- The social media exposure has **attracted many collaborators** and extended the reach of the project. Several American doctoral students have linked their research to the project. A Harvard medical student is using 12 months of her gap year to travel and work with Australian female farmers linked to the project. The project has also attracted the active interest of film-makers, artists and writers.
- It has provided an accessible and dynamic way to foster **community-generated content and participation** from diverse and far-reaching locations. The interest generated by the project has also enabled significant community capacity-building in the use of social media, especially for older women.
- Social media is a great way to **showcase our museum collections** to the world and to locate potential acquisitions and feature stories for the project.
- The profile created by social media has attracted a constant stream of national and international **media coverage** and invitations to conferences, events and community activities, both domestically and internationally. Through this media coverage and ongoing storytelling, Invisible Farmer is actively re-framing history, breaking down stereotypes about farming and giving women a greater voice and profile in the public arena. This visibility and growing profile also provides a great base through which museums can invite and secure corporate partnership opportunities that can extend our curatorial work and reach.
- Our leading social media profile **locates the museum in the centre** of this national and international movement to revalue women in agriculture and has opened up opportunities for the museum to participate in a number of relevant public discussions on contemporary issues such as food security, climate change and gender diversity.

- Social media has extended the **reach and impact of the museum** through online education programs and workshops, as well as interdisciplinary partnerships with our growing list of Supporting Organisations.
- The conversations that are generated by the social media stories allow the museum to observe **community discourse** on the language of empowerment and exclusion – and witness the shift in language from ‘farmer’s wife’ to ‘farmer’.



- LISA SHANNON with Facebook comments

Sharing a story can also be **personally transformative for participants**. Many of the women profiled by the Invisible Farmer Project have since gone on to become recognised leaders in their communities, to receive ongoing media attention, to win awards and accolades for their work and to inspire other women to share their stories. Lisa Shannon of Outback Queensland, for example, was tapped on the shoulder by a friend who suggested she write her story for the Invisible Farmer project. Like so many women, Lisa didn’t think her story was interesting, or worthy of attention. But she made the effort and put her life into words for the first time. She wrote about her life as a Head Stockman (Stockwoman) on the edge of the Strzelecki Desert, bull-catching in an outback station, being a sheep breeder and living with a young family in an isolated tin shack. Within 24 hours of Lisa’s story being published on the **Invisible Farmer Facebook page** it attracted almost 50,000 views and a plethora of commentary and supportive feedback. The public response and engagement was overwhelming. Lisa’s public profile went through the roof, and this was soon followed with an invitation to be a guest speaker at a Melbourne Cup luncheon - another first! This is just one of many extraordinary stories that have gone viral.

Social media is a strategic tool in creating museum content that is relevant and that has depth, diversity, breadth and impact. It is a great way to build community connections and capacity, and to profile and build our museum collections. It has also demonstrated the unique role of museums in contemporary society through a collective story-telling process – a process that continues to thrive through the voices and active participation of our extended national and international communities.

Liza Dale-Hallett, Senior Curator, Sustainable Futures / Lead Curator, Invisible Farmer Project Museums Victoria, Australia, and **Catherine Forge**, Curator, Invisible Farmer Project / Museums Victoria, Australia. Find out more at: <https://invisiblefarmer.net.au/> Follow Invisible Farmer at: @invisfarmer #invisfarmer

* See introduction to the Invisible Farmer project in AIMA Newsletter N°12



FINNISH MUSEUM OF AGRICULTURE SARKA



MOLD!

Massive Salvage Operations for the Finnish National Museum of Agriculture

Our new exhibition is all about agriculture, especially older agriculture. We are a part of a massive salvage project. The Viikki agricultural museum in Helsinki was damaged by serious damp caused by broken water pipes and frost. All of the museum and its items were covered by thick mold. The collections that could be saved, about 1500 items, were brought here to us. We have built a new exhibition hall for these items and are making the exhibition as we speak.



Left: The old museum at Viikki damaged by mold. Picture: Jenni Luonuankoski / Helsinki University Museum
Right: Heavy protection procedures were used because of the poisonous particles in the mold. Picture: Katariina Pehkonen / Helsinki University Museum



Left: Collections arrived with trucks to the new hall; Right: a lot of boxes



Left: some of the larger objects; and Right: moving them

Meet the Finnish National Museum of Agriculture

Sarka brings the versatile history of farming to you through moving image, sound, scale models and genuine objects. As an introduction to its collections, the Museum has an impressive scale model, which takes you through the development of the imaginary village of Sarkajoki from the Bronze Age up till the year 2000. The base exhibition The Age of Agriculture is a journey through the three-thousand-year history of farming in Finland. Agriculture and its environments have evolved over the millennia, and agriculture itself has created changes in its setting. The age of agriculture is one of labour, cultivated species, domesticated animals, arable fields, burn-cleared swidden plots and pastures; it is a landscape. The age of agriculture has a beginning, but no end. Visit us on the museum website https://museot.fi/searchmuseums/index.php?museo_id=22069 For more information, please contact Elsa Hietala elsa.hietala@sarka.fi

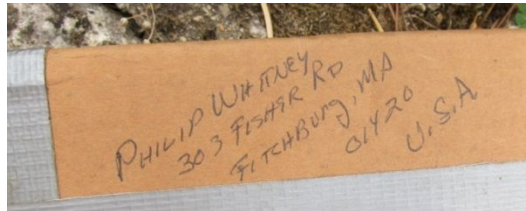


A mystery no more

Members easily identify an emblematic object

Jacques Holtz, now retired from the French IDELE (National Stockbreeding Institute), whom many AIMA members met in the 2014 Marseille congress, sent photographs of an object in his uncle François Sigaut's collection to sound members out on what it might be. Jacques knew it came from the U.S. and was labeled Philip Whitney in Fitchburg, MA (Massachusetts) with a note on one piece "from the Ray Note Farm on the Ristge (?) SW" ... From online information, it appears that Philip Whitney was president of a historical society and a tool specialist. He and François Sigaut might well have met during one of François' visits to ALHFAM meetings or on one of his other research assignments. Jacques noted that, as far as he had been able to ascertain, such tools were not known in France.

The picture rapidly made the rounds of several friends and members of AIMA and/or ALHFAM – Pete Watson, Bob Powell, Kerry-Leigh Burchill, Debra Reid, Barb Corson and Jeannette Beranger and the mystery was soon solved, not much of a mystery, to North Americans: **maple sap taps**, three minutes later from Debra, followed by a resounding “yep, I agree” [colloquial for “yes”] from Barb. Bob, who lives in Scotland and has attended many ALHFAM meetings, added that he has “used Canadian aluminum ones to tap birch trees over here” and Kerry-Leigh noted that the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum has a broad selection from wood to contemporary materials, all of which are a popular display during the CAFM's "Maple Month". On top of this, you can easily buy one for yourself on E-Bay, if you so desire – you just need to be able to put a name on it.



Photographs above from François Sigaut's collection / Jacques Holtz;
Last right, information photo sent by Jeannette Beranger



A small breed with a big impact: the Nantaise Cattle Festival

7-9 September 2018 in Dresny, Plessé, France



The “Fête de la Vache Nantaise” takes place every four years outside the small town of Le Dresny, not far from the city of Nantes, and it is important to recall that living *inside* the town, you can see the Milky Way on a clear night. The place is small, the crowds are enormous – this year, **60,000 visitors over three days** to explore the work of 1,500+ volunteers who create what is reputed to be the **largest meeting in Europe devoted to small breeds and working animals**.* The Festival is also a statement, if diplomatic: this is *not* TINA (citing the famous words “there is no alternative” about choices of economic model). The three objectives of the 2018 festival on 7-9 September were local production, social cohesion and territorial identity. The star of the show is the “Vache Nantaise”, a breed successfully rescued by the sort of die-hard stock-breeders who have always been the bane of the existence of the Ministry of Agriculture, all the more so, because their cause is popular with the public and has long been espoused by many of France’s star chefs, who want the best for their restaurants. It

is no accident that this year's special human guest was Carlo Petrini, the founder of the **SLOW FOOD** movement, flanked by several chefs of national renown.

Each time, there is also a special guest chosen among the small breeds that have been saved to become successful local drivers of development and employment. This year it was the **Basque "Kintoa" pig** and the Basques brought their chefs for the gastronomic occasion. This ran alongside the many stands selling food to those who had no reason to sit down too long, because they were attending the non-stop sessions of the Farmers' University or visiting the stands with other breeds of cattle, horses, donkeys, sheep and goats (in draft harness).



Left: Pierre Nabos with his team (Photo Jean-Léo Dugast) Right: Ploughing dust (Photo Jean-Léo Dugast)

Up at the top of the hill were the fields and lodgings for the **working animals**: horses and mules for demonstrations of precision logging, donkeys, mules, horses and cattle working with an array of the latest light equipment, and the crowning touch on the last day, when **five pairs of oxen** were hitched in line. There were four cattle breeds: Nantaise, Vosges, Bearnaise and Bretonne Pie Noir (Breton Black Udder), and a selection of the country's finest oxdrivers, including people who use animal draft exclusively in their daily work (hill farming), or in part, in vineyards and market gardening.



Left: Lionel Rouanet and the log to become a yoke (C. Griffin-Kremer) Right: Lionel and his yoke on the last day, getting down to the last chips (C. Griffin-Kremer)

These people need **equipment** and are ready to try anything that is fit for purpose, from the latest harness to the fitted Aveyron head yoke. The young master at making those began with a log and finished a **yoke** in two and a half days while fielding constant questions from onlookers. Beside him, an equally expert lady reproduced traditional woven sedge **forehead cushions and fly-chaser** face protectors, essential accoutrements for real work, once produced massively by prisoners in the French penal colonies.



Left: Véronique Nioulou and the not-yet-dry forehead cushion, NB razor-sharp sedge becomes harmless when dry (Jean-Léo Dugast) Right: and working on a face protector, called a *chasse-mouches* or *frontal*, among many other names (C. Griffin-Kremer)

Oxdrivers who have never given up on keeping a team for local events met youngsters who work in overseas development and one of the main purposes of the meeting was to discuss how to move forward effectively. They have already shown **there are alternatives** and concentrate on making sure young people who wish to use them have every available bit of information and all the experience needed before they dive in.

* 60,000 visitors according to the security force official report; 1,500 registered volunteers and over 100 unofficial helpers

Cozette Griffin-Kremer. With thanks for their help from Christine Arbeit, Michel Nioulou and Jean-Léo Dugast. Visit the Fête website at <https://www.vachenantaise.fr/> and check out Michel Nioulou's blog report at <http://attelagesbovinsdaujourn'hui.unblog.fr/> (Attelages Bovins Aujourd'hui / Cattle Teams Today)



The *grande attelée*, the “big team” - five ox teams hitched in line (Photo Michel Nioulou)



The 35th Annual Plowing Match at Howell Living History Farm, Titusville, New Jersey, USA



Using an Oliver 'E1' to plow behind 'Jim' and 'John' driven by Rob Flory.

I have been lucky enough to have been going to North America for over 40 years and to have many great friends there. On September 1st 2018, my good friend Pete Watson, Director of the Howell Living History Farm, Titusville, New Jersey, held his 35th Annual Plowing Match, at which I had the honour to be one of the judges.

I have been to the Howell Living History Farm several times, a beautiful site of nearly two hundred acres operated by the Mercer County Park Commission. My friend Pete has been Director for about 40 years and through him this wonderful facility has been continuously farmed using both horses and oxen. The many visitors have opportunities to not only see how traditional farming skills were utilized but also to learn about the role of draught animals in the present day, especially in helping to maintain the natural environment.

As the first picture shows, the day before the match, I was able to get my hands back on a 'plow' behind the Farm's oxen – an Oliver E1, first patented in 1895, which really ran well. At other times here, I used a Syracuse, but I preferred the Oliver.



Oliver "E1" plow, patented 1895.

Unfortunately, the day before in parts of adjacent Pennsylvania had been *really* wet and some of the competitors had to withdraw. This included one Amish ploughman, who I was later to visit, and whose priority was to gather in the last of his tobacco harvest. However, the day itself was fine, not too hot and, although there were only six competitors, a great show of skill was put on for the spectators. This included all competitors **driving their teams and ploughing totally without any assistance**. How often can we say that now? All the teams were well used to working and after the ploughing all the competitors continued to use their teams on the same four-wheel trolley and compete in a driving skills competition, for example, backing, driving up to a steam engine or driving while keeping a tennis ball balanced on top of a traffic cone.



The overall winner of the plowing was Pat Hlubik of New Egypt, NJ, with his Brabant horses ‘Ike’, ‘Jethro’ and ‘Kitty’ on a Wiard Plow.



Daniel Ruth of Telford, Pennsylvania with his Percherons ‘Ted’ and ‘Bud’.



Kelly Stewart of Mount Bethel, Pennsylvania with his mules ‘Pete’ and ‘Paul’

The team belonging to Kelly Stewart were mules that can be seen regularly at work on the Pennsylvanian Amish farms. In fact, when visiting Pete’s Amish farmer friend Benuel a couple of days later, he brought out the most bright-eyed and alert black Percheron mule I’ve ever seen. Unlike her Belgian mule companion, she was taking everything in. Benuel said, soon after he’d got her, he turned his back on her and she planted both her front feet on his shoulders! In spite of that, he said he’d never get rid of her and wished he had another like her! Perhaps it goes to show, if you really know what you are doing, then an intelligent albeit somewhat spirited animal may be a blessing? Maybe it was in Benuel’s family genes, too, for his two tiny daughters, oldest aged about four, were playing with a piebald miniature horse ~ Shetland-type stallion for which they above all others, including their mother, were the master!

For me and my pals in the photo below, it is always a pleasure to meet up with our friend and congenial host Pete (*in the photo front, second from right*). A great horseman himself, he is a true supporter and promoter of real working draught animals. More than that, Pete is genuinely enthusiastic about encouraging young people who will help our common interest endure.



The Plowing Match horse brass awarded to competitors and Bob Powell back row left with his pals.

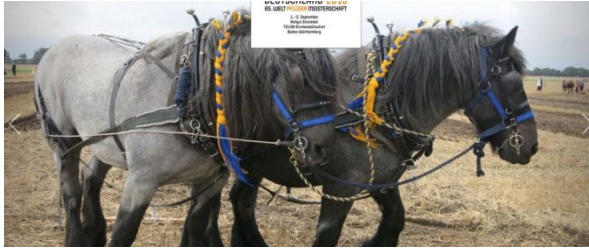
Bob Powell, Kingussie, October 2018 bob.powell53@btopenworld.com (NB a first version of this article was published by the Eastern Counties Heavy Horse Association, England)



AIMA Member and his ox open the 65th World Ploughing Match in Germany, 1-2 September 2018



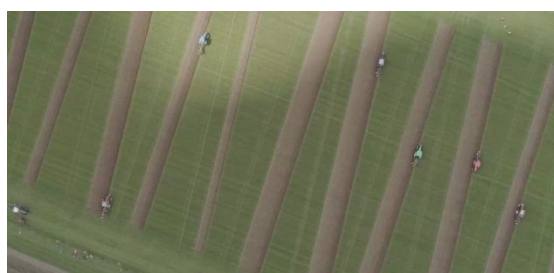
Claus Kropp leading one of the Lauresham Open Air Laboratory farm's Rhaetian Grey oxen as guest at the WPC. As you can see from just a glimpse of the outstanding – and exciting! – drone shots by Kamera Schnitt for the video to announce, and then follow up on the World Ploughing Match in Hofgut Einsiedel in Kirchentellinsfurt, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, 1-2 September 2018, the event involves intense participation and training. This organization effort and publicity are likewise impressive. In 2018, the Kuratorium Weltpflügen (World Ploughing Curatorium) hailed the event's return to Germany after twenty years of being hosted around the world, from Kenya to the Russian Federation. The first day opening highlighted tradition and continuity, with Claus' ox-ploughing and there was an open horse-ploughing competition for the Land of Baden-Württemberg, as well as parades of tractors from every decade in their history.



The motto of the World Ploughing Competition is “pax arva colat” that is, “**let peace cultivate the land**”, and the world match was founded in 1953 as part of a peace movement to strengthen the international farming community. The stated objective of the WPC is to combine a professional competition, nurture agricultural customs and create a positive image of agriculture. The German ploughing competitions were set up in the early 1950s to inspire young farmers about the future of improving agriculture in the aftermath of war, when much of the land was still tilled with horse or ox power and they are today a prelude to participating in the World Ploughing Match, since winning the nationals is an absolute requirement.



The 2018 location at Einsiedl belongs to the Herzog (Duke) von Württemberg estate near Stuttgart and, each year, the rules are formal and simple, but the workmanship required has driven many a contestant to tears of frustration, as every detail is judged by the highest standard in a list of criteria that would make any plough/wo/man’s heart beat faster: opening split, back pass, weed control, stratification and restabilization, uniformity of furrows, final furrows and still more.



All foregoing images are screen captures from the videos by Kamera.Schnitt, Welter Pfender Eventvideos.TV, Aerial Photos Stephan Zerwis/copterbrothers

Over thirty teams are cheered on by their own supporters and all the onlookers, since the affair is meant to share competence and a spirit of community. This year, as last, it was the Irish team who took top honours, with Eamonn Tracy in the conventional class driving a combination of a Valtra and Kverneland plough, Thomas Cochrane the top spot for the reversible ploughing with a McCormick tractor and a Kverneland, and John Whelan carried off second place in the same event with a New Holland and Kverneland. Of course, all this ploughing (or watching and cheering) makes you hungry and thirsty, as well as famished for local colour, all of which is on offer, from specialty dishes and drinks to rousing band music and plenty of time to dance away the night, for those not trimming their ploughshares for the next morning.

For more information on the 2019 WTC, rules book and briefing, see <https://lakeofthewoodsmn.com/2019-world-ploughing/> For details on the 2018 competition, see Sylvester Phelan "Irish ploughmen take top spots in world championships" 03-09-2018 <https://www.agriland.ie/farming-news/irish-ploughmen-take-top-spots-in-world-championships/>

30 August-1 September, 2019, Lake of the Woods, Minnesota, United States



A personal note on the World Ploughing Match from Claus Kropp and his team

Claus (AIMA Executive Committee) and his team were among the participants in the supporting program of the World Ploughing Match.



Competitors at the Baden-Württemberg Open Competition for Horse Ploughing



Ox-Ploughing at the Hohenheim Field Days presentations of "Soil Cultivation in Changing Times"



Oldtimer show at the World Ploughing Championship 2018. In foreground, a 1929 Hanomag WG



Steam Plough demonstration at the Hohenheim Field Days presentations of “Soil Cultivation in Changing Times”



World Honeybee Day at the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum (CAFM)



On August 18 the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum joined museums, beekeepers and concerned citizens around the world for a day to celebrate one the most prolific and productive farm workers – the honeybee. Almost 2000 visitors joined the dozens of staff, volunteers and local vendors to pay homage to the honeybee and the multitude of crops, products and art that these incredible creatures inspire.

Beekeeper demonstrations, hive health discussions, baking with honey demonstrations, honey ice cream-making and a honeybee-inspired farmers market, all reinforced the event’s key messages – that honeybees (in tandem with other pollinators) help cross-pollinate a staggering 1/3 of our crops and that everyone can play a role in protecting honeybees in their communities.

SPECIAL INVITATION

The team at the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum would like to invite AIMA members from around the world to participate in the 2019 World Honeybee Day by posting a favourite honeybee artifact, archival photograph or art piece to the AIMA Twitter account. Mark your calendars now for August 17, 2019, and start thinking about what you and your organization can do to celebrate the honeybee in your community – and our AIMA community! Please write to Kerry-Leigh Burchill at kburchill@ingeniumcanada.org



Photos by kind permission of the CAFM

Be sure to see the [Resources](#) section for more on honeybees and their cousins, bumblebees and in the [News](#) section, the article on Blueprint to save bees and enrich farmers.



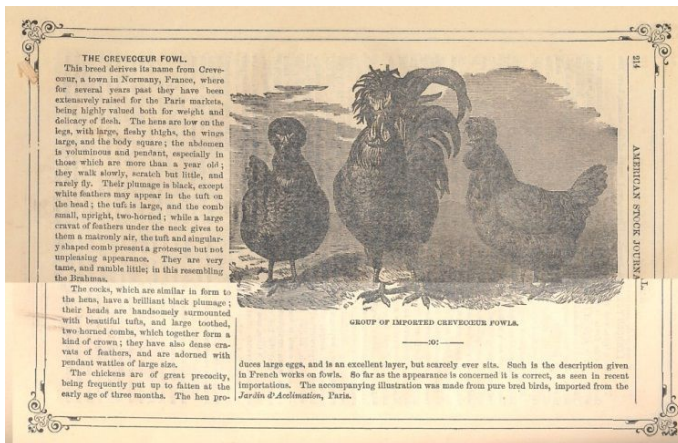
The Crèvecoeur Fowl – the most famous French chicken no one has heard of

Jeannette Beranger, Senior Program Manager, The Livestock Conservancy

It was about five years ago when my husband and I decided that we wanted a new conservation project for our heritage breeds farm. We were looking for a chicken that was in need of attention and help. After considering several potential breeds we stumbled upon the Crèvecoeur. In its heyday they were considered the finest fowl to grace the most elegant tables in all of France. Today, few outside of Normandy can recall their former fame as they have barely managed to cling to existence for the better part of the past century.

It took us nearly a year to find a source of Crèvecoeur chickens in the U.S. from a breeder that had non-hatchery stock. Finally, after months of searching we came across a breeder, in – of all places – Crevecoeur, Missouri. She had been raising them since the 1990's and thanks to her amazing generosity we got our start. We drove 10 hours in order to meet her half way in Nashville, Tennessee. One thing we have found with rare breeds is if you want them bad enough, the trek to get them is part of the price which we gladly paid in order to work with Crèvecoeurs.

In researching the breed I discovered that there were a lot of gaps in its history, so I've tried to piece together what little I've come across. I traveled down a very long road in search of the breed's story from historic texts both in English and French along with interviews with producers in the breed's place of origin, Normandy. I'm sure there's more to discover. In the meantime this is the story of the Crèvecoeur I've learned thus far.



Left: *American Stock Journal* 1870, Right: *Wright's Book of Poultry* 1912

The Crève-cœur chicken is among the oldest of the standard-bred fowls of France and the longest known French breed in the United Kingdom. The breed gets its name from the village of Crève-cœur-en-Auge in Normandy, France. “Crève Cœur” translates literally as “broken heart.” Local history sites the origin of the name as stemming from the land in this region being less fertile than was hoped by farmers moving into the area and thus breaking the hearts of the peasants. Little is known of the breed’s origins other than that they were developed in Normandy and existed there for a very long time. Local historians of the breed in France tell me that by the twelfth century the Crève-cœur was known as a source of pride for the Lord of Crève-cœur-en-Auge. Historic tenant contracts indicated that to pay their rent on their farm, farmers had to provide two finished Crève-cœur capons to the landowner each year. By the eighteenth century, Crève-cœur capon was a preferred meat of the upper middle class in Paris. More than 150,000 were produced for this market annually. French poultry author Charles Jacque wrote in his 1858 book, *Le Poulailler*, “This admirable race produces certainly the most excellent fowls that appear in the markets of France.”



The Crève-cœur had reached America by 1852 (*Livestock of the Farm*, 1916) at a time when French breeds were becoming the rage in the country. According to the *American Agriculturist* (October 1867) “The Crèvecoeurs Fifteen Years in This Country – We found, a few days since, with surprise and pleasure, a fine flock of fowls bearing an unmistakable likeness to the fashionable “Creves” on the farm of Mr. J.P. Swain, of Westchester Co.”

In 1867 imports were made by A.M. Halstead and Mr. Saunders of New York and by Benjamin Haines of Elizabeth, NJ. All got their stock from the Jardin d’Acclimation in Paris (*American Agriculturist* March 1867). Further imports occurred around the beginning of the 1870’s also from the Jardin d’Acclimation in Paris (*American Stock Journal* 1870). In France

they were still quite popular at the time. One notable distinction for the breed occurred in 1889 when there were two sets of awards offered for poultry at the first Exhibition Universelle (World's Fair) held in Paris. One was reserved for the Crèveœur and the other for all the other chicken breeds at the exposition!

The Crèveœur remained popular up until the early 20th century in France. In 1909 poultry author Willis Grant Johnson wrote "When staying in St. Servan, Dinan, and St. Malo a few years since, I noticed that the Crèveœur was the principal fowl offered for sale in the market, where they were mostly bought alive, and if unsold carried home, to possibly reappear on a future day." He also mentions in regards to capons that "In Paris the finest of the "Crèves" realize as much as from twenty to twenty-five francs each, while from three to five dollars is not an uncommon price in New York. The French capon, when really good, is in its way the perfection of poultry." (*The Poultry Book* 1909). To put things in perspective, in today's currency that price is equivalent to \$100-\$125 per bird!

I was lucky enough to travel to Normandy to meet with Crèveœur producers to learn more about the local history in the 20th century. They recounted that things changed dramatically for the breed in their region when in 1940 the German army reached Normandy during WWII. The soldiers wished to eat as the middle-class French did, so military bursars were tasked with collecting as many Crèveœur chickens as possible for their tables. Within two years, nearly all of the birds were eaten, leaving only a scant few hidden away by dedicated farmers. Today they are still critically endangered but new interest is emerging in France, the U.S., and Australia to bring this historic breed back to the culinary world.



The breed was developed principally for the quality of its flesh. Crèveœur chickens have small, fine bones and the proportion of meat to offal (edible internal organs) is high. Their skin is white and their legs are dark leaden blue. The breast meat is noted for being fine, short, and very white while the leg meat is very dark and almost duck-like in color. The breed fattens readily and was a French favorite to "gaver" or stuff – an old traditional practice of making birds eat more by inserting a tube into their mouths much like is done with geese and ducks to produce foie gras. This was done for one month prior to butchering the birds. Another historic fattening method involved confinement and intermittent light cycles throughout the day. They were fed a specially blended wet mash including whey and malted oats along with other items (still kept a local secret by Norman producers!) to develop a fine carcass for the table.

In the U.S. they are mostly found to be solid black in color but recently the blue and splash variety has been imported by Greenfire Farm directly from France where these colors plus a white variety exist. This import was quite significant and may be the first time in nearly 100 years for new genetics to be introduced for this breed in America.

The Crèveœur chicken was recognized by the American Poultry Association and admitted in 1874. Males should weigh 8 lbs [3.6 kg] and females weigh 6.5 lbs [2.7 kg] as adults, but

many in the U.S. have become much smaller over time. In our breeding program, our focus has been to return the breed to standard weight and conformation through selection. We have chosen to not outcross to other breeds. It has been a slow process but the fruits of the labor are finally being realized as the birds continue to become larger each year and are once again becoming fine table birds. The imported birds are also adding size and helping to diversify the genetics. Through careful planning we are managing three bloodlines so that the long sought out diversity in our flock will not disappear.

The other goal of our program was to develop a network of breeders who would commit to the breed and enable us to ensure that it will not slip away, as it came so close to doing not all that long ago. We also need to consider that should something happen to our flock, our genetics could be recovered from the others. Too many times we have heard of flocks being wiped out by natural disaster, disease, and even theft, leaving the years of work by owners lost and unrecoverable. We have now helped establish sizeable breeding flocks in six states along with smaller flocks in several others.

Traditional breeds such as the Crèvecoeur are cultural treasures. Their significance should not be underrated in the telling of the local history where they existed in the past. They are a living, breathing, part of earlier times that remind us that even a seemingly humble chicken had a great role to play for the countless people who raised or consumed them. Living history museums and farms have a great opportunity by incorporating these animals into programing as a captivating tool to reach visitors unlike any other. Each breed was designed for a specific purpose and anywhere there was agriculture, there are likely to be many forgotten stories of the breeds that helped sustain life on farms in every corner of the globe.



Visit the ALHFAM <https://alhfam.org/>

**Report on the 2018
Conference in
Oklahoma coming
soon**



June 1-5, 2018
Oklahoma Historical Society and Cherokee Nation
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

**2019 ALHFAM Annual Conference 8-12 June 2019
Sainte-Marie-among-the-Hurons, Ontario, Canada**

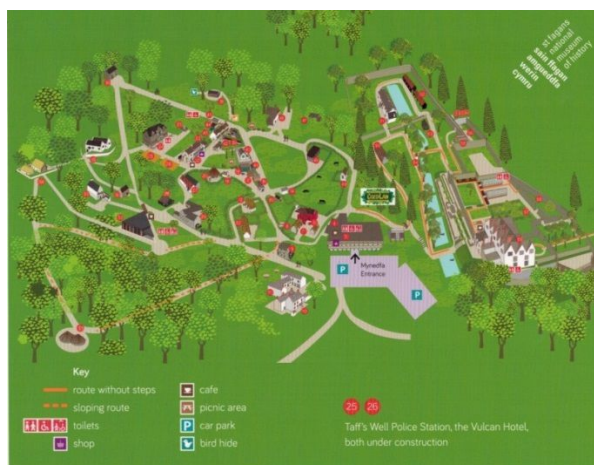
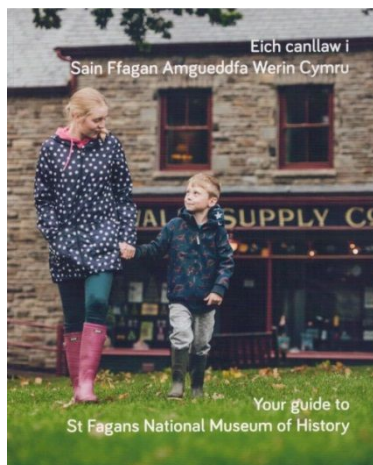
Ever think of sleeping in a Huron/Wendat longhouse? How about inside a seventeenth century French building? Here is your chance! <https://alhfam.org/event-3003252>



folk life

**Society for Folk Life Studies Annual Conference
13-16 September 2018 St. Fagans, Cardiff, Wales**

**The National Museum of History's 70th anniversary
Heritage, culture, sport and national identity
Urban identity and a view of three museums**



The new visitors' guide to St Fagans National Museum of History presents the museum's story, from its early concentration on rural life, agriculture, stock-breeding and crafts, to its subsequent, fully engaged inclusion of industrial life in Welsh cities and towns, then the recent espousal of archaeological assistance in reconstructing pre-historic dwellings and their

context. If the museum is to be a “mirror to the nation”, it must keep on changing. The guide introduces visitors to the extensive galleries and the individual buildings in the grounds, from corbeled pigsty to farmhouses, cottages, barns, boathouse, dovecote, mills, bakery, kiln, tannery, toll house, shops, war memorial, churches, workmen’s institute, post-WWI prefab and... urinal, among many others.



Left: a fraction of the museum’s fields, village, reconstructed houses and farm buildings

Middle: the Gweithdy (Workshop House) with new galleries

Right: and its fully-fitted workshop for public craft courses (woodworking, pottery, textiles, blacksmithing, stone masonry, and more)

St. Fagans, originally the Museum of Welsh Life, has recently been rebaptised the **National Museum of History**, recalling that each of the constituent countries of the United Kingdom has its own Parliament with varying powers, running from the legislative to the financial, and broad control over their in-country systems of education and cultural life. The venue this year of the SFLS Conference has undergone impressive architectural extension as well as a massive re-organization with far-reaching re-examination of the museum’s objectives, most especially how to present its collections to a highly diverse public within Wales, while taking into account all the intriguing questions that arise in a world of lively bilingualism. As SFLS President Dafydd Robert recalls, there are today more people in the world who are bilingual, if not trilingual, than there are monoglots. This is reflected in the totally **bilingual** galleries and their strategies of interpretation, opened in October 2018.



Left: the Millennium Centre with poetry in Welsh and English emblazoned on the façade

Middle: the Senedd (Welsh National Assembly) with Welsh slate

Right: a glimpse of Richard Rogers’ use of local materials such as Welsh oak and sustainable technologies in climate control

The Museum itself combines the grounds of a fine manor house with its gardens and the appurtenances of an open-air facility with fields, woods and village greens. All SFLS conferences are deeply and effectively **place-bound**, that is, they provide high-standard academic papers alongside presentations dedicated to getting to know the inner workings of the meeting places, so this meeting brought together country and city. **Cardiff** having been among the world’s leading ports, once the world centre of coal export, the port and shipping history was thoroughly covered in a detailed view of archival material, as well as during a get-acquainted slide show and a masterful walk around the town and the new port developments including architect Richard Rogers’ stunning “Senedd” (the Welsh Parliament), designed to inspire users and visitors with the notions of transparency and environmental awareness. Bilingualism and a dedication to the strong cultural traditions of the country are everywhere

to be seen, as in the new Millennium Centre with poetry emblazoned on the façade in Welsh and English, an “exception” that strikes every visitor to Wales, where the national “Eisteddfod”, the gigantic arts-music-creativity festival, occupies the last week of August every year. The “Field” that welcomes the festival has traditionally been in North and South Wales in alternate years, by definition in a rural location. This year, it was held for the very first time within a city, Cardiff, and proved to be an innovative, resolutely open undertaking reaching out to involve the multitude of communities whose diversity has characterized the city since the mid-19th century.



Left: all the new galleries proceed from hands-on inspiration – in the handcraft section, you try out the principles of basketwork and (below) all labeling (as well as QR codes) is bilingual

Middle: stealth visit to soon-to-be completed medieval King’s Court hall (Llys Llewelyn) and separate sleeping quarters house.

Right: reconstituted Iron Age double round house (Bryn Eryr)

So, things are on the move at the National Museum of History, founded in 1948, and “caught”, as are all institutions, in a **life-cycle curve** of youth, maturity and – some feared – stagnation, though this was the opposite of what the founder envisioned: a museum that would link past, present and construction of the future. Iorwerth Peate saw the museum in no way as a memorial to dead cultures, but as a “living community centre”, deeply oriented towards public education. This meant treating the public not as visitors, but as part of the story touching them all, in their diversity, from schoolchildren to visitors from abroad, who were to find intelligible signs of their own cultures in Welsh heritage and modernity, an experience that we are reminded is enthroned in Article 27 of the **1948 Declaration of Human Rights**: to participate in cultural life and share in scientific advancement and its benefits. It was time to take up the radical, old foundation ideas.

In a remarkable step for its ten-year development program, the staff decided **not to close** during the extensive works, so that visitors could watch their museum being transformed. Much of this was based on inspiration from the work of Elaine Gurian and the challenge for museums to be “**safe places for unsafe ideas**” (see Resources). This touches the heart of the new aims of the National Museum of History at St. Fagans – creating spaces for co-production with local groups, over 120, inviting them in, of course, but also sponsoring their own independent expressions and, consequently, a total rethinking of the museum. This often found curators and researchers confronted by the hard fact that users were interested in something entirely different from what they had expected, based on their own professional expertise. Faced with this **challenge**, what did the curators do? They changed the exhibits, and their ways of working and thinking. This includes the galleries, on which the paint was not yet quite dry in September, as well as the presentation of the remarkable open-air collection of buildings running from the double round houses of the Iron Age, reconstructed on the basis of archaeological testimony, to the reconstituted medieval Welsh King’s court building, the latter

not yet completed at conference time, its progress being carefully watched on **social media**, as the various details are revealed to the public. Most of the 60 some buildings are, in true open-air museum fashion, re-assembled, and offer a wide variety from housing in different periods to labour union meeting hall and churches, fighting-cock pit to manor house with Italian garden.

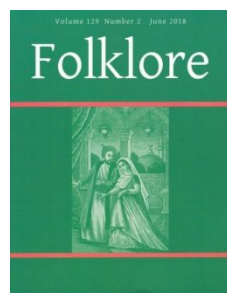


Left: welcome progress in kitchen appliances – the arrival of electrification was greeted with universal approval as the end to unending drudgery

Middle: characteristic Welsh handcrafts AND the lighting level label instructions sheet is still taped to the display case (“love spoons, butter prints 200 LUX; religious figures 100 LUX max.”)!

Right: visitors are requested to comment on any and all exhibits with post-its

Town, village and farm life stands out to all visitors, with displays of fieldwork, and **local breeds** abound on the museum grounds, from the occupants of the corbeled pigsty to Welsh Black cattle and Hill Radnor sheep, so the quality of their housing has always been a major concern for the museum. However, it was certainly the indoor museological issues that were emphasized during the conference, with contributions on the origins of folk-life collections (how did the chair in that photo get into our museum?) or how the original downtown Cardiff museum was expanded into the **National Museum of Wales** from 1862 to 1912, housing art, history and natural history collections, thus leaving the capitol of the country without its own city museum. This latter gap was very recently filled by creation of the **Cardiff Story Museum** in 2011, total collections = zero, and a mandate to invent, so that effort is also an on-going “co-production” with local contributors, again a “**community-driven**” museum. This is a challenge any museum curator will recognize from afar and there were many examples of how it is being taken up, as in the care to “erode the sanctity” of donors’ stories to open them onto multiple testimonies or to do far more, as the ICOM so strongly suggests, with the obviously “hard history” of an industrial port. The site itself is the former public library and general affection for the place has deepened the attachment of the population to their new “story house”, a distinct advantage in an age of ubiquitous budget cutting.



As usual, there was open space for contributions on subjects other than the major conference themes, so a talk about the functions of food in folk tales linked coherently to the extensive networking the SFLS does with other groups. For many years, the Society for Folk Life Studies has

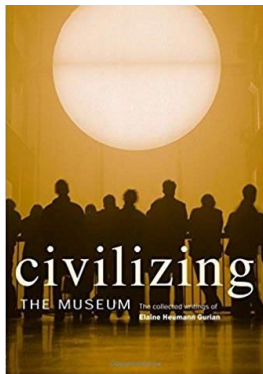
networked institutionally and personally with the **Folk Lore Society** (<https://folklore-society.com/>), founded in 1878, which publishes the peer-reviewed journal **Folk Lore**. The journal covers classic folk lore themes based on archival research, oral histories and present-day concerns, running from all aspects of storytelling, through life-cycle events such as birth and death, on to the most contemporary phenomena such as neo-paganism and Internet cures. Due to the broad approach to popular traditions, both for the British Isles and internationally, *Folk Lore* per force welcomes subjects

deeply associated with rural life and farming traditions such as fields and toponymy, pastimes and weather proverbs.

The **Society for Folk Life Studies** has networked with and for the **AIMA** for many years and welcomes communications about AIMA activities to its own Newsletter. Nota Bene: importantly for any society's future is the yearly offer of a student place (conference fees paid, travel expenses left to the attendee). For more information on that and for future annual meetings, contact the Conference Secretary, Steph Mastoris Steph.Mastoris@museumwales.ac.uk For information about publishing in the SFLS's peer-reviewed journal *Folk Life*, contact the Editor, Lillis O Laoire lillis.olaoire@oegaillimh.ie

Book Recommendations for Museums Looking to Break New Ground in Community Participation

The following books and their authors came highly recommended by Beth Thomas, St Fagans Development Coordinator, during her explanation of the extensive revitalization project for the National Museum of History at St. Fagans in Cardiff, Wales, to culminate in opening the newest galleries in October, 2018, These sources were used, among others, in conceiving the plan for the new St Fagans.



Elaine H. Gurian. *Civilizing the Museum, The Collected Writings of Elaine Heumann Gurian*. Routledge, 2006, 217 pp.

Elaine Gurian had a multi-coloured career in museum work, most especially pushing the boundaries of what museums are thought to be, in large part at the Smithsonian, developing the United States Holocaust Museum and the National Museum of the American Indian and projects worldwide as a consultant, usually concerning ethnic minority representation.

* Excerpted from a book review by Paulette Mcmanus, London University, Hertfordshire, England
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10645570701273742?journalCode=uvst20>

For further contacts, please write Dr. Caroline Oates caroline.oates@folklore-society.com



Cover: Amazon

Nina Simon. *The Participatory Museum*, 388pp, Museum 2.0, 2010. The book is also **available online** under a Creative Commons Attribution without the formatting of the paperback version, at <http://www.participatorymuseum.org/read/>

Visitor participation is a hot topic in the contemporary world of museums, art galleries, science centers, libraries and cultural organizations. How can your institution do it and do it well? The *Participatory Museum* is a practical guide to working with community members and visitors to make cultural institutions more dynamic, relevant, essential places. Museum consultant and exhibit designer Nina Simon weaves together innovative design techniques and case studies to make a powerful argument. More importantly, in describing the philosophy and rationale behind participatory activity, it makes clear that action does not always require new

technology or machinery. Museums need to change, are changing, and will change further in the future. This book is a helpful and thoughtful road map for speeding such transformation (Elaine Heumann Gurian).

Simon is also author of *The Art of Relevance* with applications extending from museums onto libraries, parks, theaters, churches and afterschool programs.



AHSR (Association d'Histoire des Sociétés Rurales)

In their Newsletter N°134 of September, 2018, our friends at the AHSR (Association d'Histoire des Sociétés Rurales) again mentioned the **AIMA** with a screen capture of the first page of Newsletter N° 12 and page 10 with announcement of the Festival of the Nantaise Cow in France and the First Day of Experimental Archaeology at Lauresham Open Air Laboratory in Lorsch, Germany.

Founded in 1993 to open up the world of rural history to a broad range of disciplines, the AHSR publishes a semi-annual journal, *Histoire et Sociétés Rurales*, as well as sending out a regular newsletter to its nearly 500 members that include researchers, independent scholars, and interested amateurs, in order to network with university libraries, salvage archaeology and other friends. The newsletters include announcements of colloquia and the Association has established a yearly **Marcel Lachiver Prize** for original work in the history of agriculture. It gives the latest updates on members' publications, for example, *State Forestry in Northern Europe* or *Peasants in their Fields* – NB both works in English – as well as offerings in French, such as on the history of regional wine-growing or mapping for legal settlements, among many, many other titles.

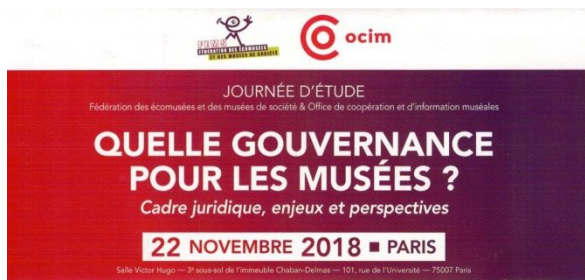
Check out the website at <http://www.histoire-et-societes-rurales.org/> and to request the newsletter, contact Benoît Musset at musset.fournel@orange.fr



FEMS Study Day on Museum Governance



The **Federation of Ecomuseums and Museums of Society*** is a mixed bag in the best sense – 119 members and 169 structures, an intriguing split explained by the fact that many of the members are in official networks linking museums within a region or even a French *département* (similar to a county in the UK) as well as linking museums concerned with similar collections from metropolitan France to Francophone Canada and the Caribbean. Nearly half its member museums have **rural life or agriculture collections**, often exclusively, and one of the specific goals of the federation is **promotion of activity and job creation in rural areas**. The entire *écomusée* phenomenon unites a great variety of institutions and associations under the broad definition: “an ecomuseum is a space for debate, it brings together women and men around projects held in common for the benefit of the territory and its inhabitants”. By casting the net broadly, the FEMS thus gathers the energies of local communities, elected and ministerial officials, artists and artisans, and the tourism economy, all oriented towards explicitly stated sustainable economic and social development through cultural and heritage action. To this end, the federation provides the network linkage, debate on best practices, rich documentation and professional training sessions. One of the major strengths of the FEMS is its partnership with the French State in designating the “Quality Tourism” brand through professional site evaluation.



FEMS special study day 2018 - what governance for museums?

The FEMS regularly holds special-topic study days, associated with or independent of its annual general meetings, this time partnered with the OCIM (Bureau for Museum Cooperation and Information). The 22 November 2018 study day, held in one of the French National Assembly buildings in Paris, brought together over 130 museum professionals, students, local

and national decision-makers, associated partners such as regional-national parks, and researchers, to examine today’s challenges to museum management, which can take on many legal forms in France. These include direct management, status as a public institution for cultural cooperation, association, public interest grouping or mixed forms. All sorts of governance including extensive shared decision-making with the public were, in fact, explored by the founders of the ecomuseum movement, who foresaw inevitable tension between local administration, intense engagement by local communities and more distant, often ministerial, management strategies. On a supra-national level, EU financial support for projects has often underwritten

transnational solidarity in face of local and national funding cuts and especially emphasizes the creative elements in heritage projects, as well as pointing out the unique situation of France with its institution of “heritage keeper” education (competitive entrance exam and keeper status as civil servant) and its “exceptionalism” in promoting **culture as a citizen’s right**.



As a prelude to the three round table presentations and following discussions, there was a presentation on the **legal context** in France compared to European and broader international patterns. The three round table sessions were highly dynamic with detailed case studies from a rich cross-section of actors, running from a large-scale, comfortably budgeted national museum of sport to non-profit museum friends associations or a for-profit EU coordination group and on to a city cultural affairs director, among the dozen speakers. Thanks to able debate leaders, each session closed with a summary discussion tightening up the connection with governance.

The first round table was devoted to “how to choose the **right kind of governance** for your museum”. The second session posed the question “does the choice of governance affect a **museum’s mission**?” including the choice between management by an administrator, a scientist or a museum professional or joint management forms. The third round table took up the question of “shared **governance and innovation**”, especially in the case of projects that include broader objectives than museum management and aim at conservation, exhibits, and mediation involving all the museum’s staff, with special emphasis on the human relations that underlie visitor allegiance to museums, as well as career development for professionals.

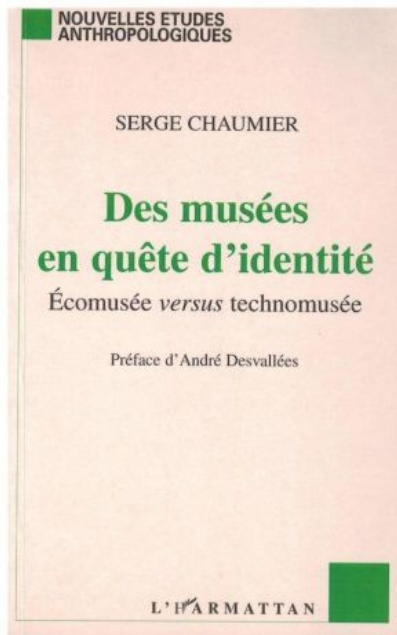
Interesting comparisons were made between how museums and theater groups functioned on the cultural scene, and how public services could take in hand “popular” events associated with local museums often founded by the people who once worked in their premises, such as dockers, miners, or textile workers. These particular “spaces” are often enormous and contain massive objects to conserve and interpret, in stark contrast with **rural museums** that must embed themselves in mainly summertime tourism. Outreach programs involving public-lent objects and their stories have been among the most successful strategies to engage non-museum-goers, part of a broad commitment to getting *out* of the comfort zone and to making museums far more representative of their community. Such long-term projects often bump up against the brevity of political mandates or the intriguing contrary of collaborating with a heritage site such as a monastery and its lifetime-mandate monks.

All three sessions emphasized effective **networking** among regional partners concerned with local development to increase attendance by appealing to local pride and originalities. On a local, regional or national level, the strong consensus on **democratizing museums** and their offerings is perhaps the most debated and challenging of the subjects discussed. Participants were frank about the problems they faced. The Ministry of Culture commissioned a report entitled “Museums for the 21st Century”, which has been criticized by both professionals and communities for its conventionally hierarchical premises, so that many museums are searching to enable community inspiration and innovation sources, as on the EU level, or the famed “third places”. NB it is worth recalling that the 2017 FEMS study day was entitled “the citizen museum”. In view of now-regular funding cuts, museums can network to counter fruitless competition and underwrite cooperation, which can often come through sharing

successful methodologies. One example cited was the exceptional role played by **libraries** in France that open their doors to people's projects and narratives, a way of engaging with "**the commons**". Museums are also exploring **innovative legal forms** that are self-sustaining, but non-profit, so are careful to distinguish problematic self-management from highly fruitful autonomy, even experimenting with museums run as cooperatives.

The day was rounded off by a comprehensive summary of the main threads taken up and the challenges for the future by Serge Chaumier, author of *Museums in search of identity*. The 2019 special study day will deal with effective networking.

* FEMS <http://fems.asso.fr/> and OCIM <https://ocim.fr/>



Serge Chaumier is a professor of museum studies at the Université d'Artois in Arras, France, and author of articles and books on cultural mediation. His 2003 book *Des musées en quête d'identité, écomusée versus technomusée* (Museums in search of identity, ecomuseum vs. technomuseum)*

continues to have an appreciable impact on museum debate. The ecomuseum movement and the many sites it had enabled were more than coming of age – they were literally **getting “old”**, because the founding generation, mainly from the communities whose heritage they were meant to represent, was disappearing. Many of these museums had negotiated the transition to less community and more professional management, with a variety of results, sometimes at odds with the communities they were set in. The book dealt with the great variety of *écomusées* and of the diverse natures of their collections, as well as the fundamental premises involved in creating them and the challenges they were now facing. Even in its publication year, it had already generated a colloquium held at the COMPA (Conservatoire de l'agriculture and the AIMA's home base).*

Serge Chaumier. *Des musées en quête d'identité, écomusée versus technomusée*, 272 pp, Paris, Harmattan, 2003, and the *colloquium proceedings, also entitled *Des musées en quête d'identité*, 91 pp, Chartres, Le Compa, 2004.





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<https://www.agriculturalmuseums.org/membership/application-forms/>



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Collection The Henry Ford



Photo Etienne Petitclerc



Victor Gomes Goa Chakra Museum



Etienne Petitclerc

CIMA 2017 - the AIMA 2017 Triennial Congress

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