EXARC JOURNAL 2012/1
34 Articles | Open Access

The content is published under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0).

Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Grundtvig, Life Long Learning in Archaeological Open-Air Museums

Persistent Identifier: https://exarc.net/ark:/88735/10004

EXARC Journal Issue 2012/1 | **Publication Date:** 2012-01-15

Author(s): Roeland Paardekooper [1] ✉

[1] EXARC, Frambozenweg 161, 2312 KA Leiden, the Netherlands.

In November 2009, the idea for launching a network on adult education in EXARC was picked up. The first step was a preparation meeting in Oerlinghausen, Germany where we met with about 20 EXARC members from almost all corners of Europe. By mid 2010, 15 organisations, including EXARC itself joined in two so called Grundtvig Learning Partnerships, funded by the European Union.

The EU Grundtvig programme has two key objectives:

“ For the Learning Partnerships we organise about ten meetings to which any EXARC members are welcome.

- To respond to the challenges of an aging population in Europe;
- To help provide adults with pathways to improve their knowledge and competences.

The two Learning Partnerships EXARC runs from mid 2010 to mid 2012. Our work is about non-formal learning in different aspects in archaeological open-air museums. A special tool we have in our education is based on experimental archaeology showing ancient crafts and letting people try it out themselves by engaging them in a very direct manner. This way, history reaches all senses – the ideal starting point for non-formal learning. Our method is anchored in using staff to tell the stories of our items, more so than with written signs and machines. This is a very labour intensive approach, but it is highly appreciated and offers good quality.
We have two challenges; visitor surveys tell us that we have a higher percentage of return visitors (25-30%) and people generally spend more time in our museums (two to three hours) compared with other kinds of museums. Both these challenges offer opportunities for archaeological open-air museums which so far are little used. Recurrent visitors have specific requirements which we need to explore, allowing us to develop appropriate formats of interpretative activities involving staff and, for example, innovative cross media as well as the seemingly omni present social media or smartt phones and other new tools. For the Learning Partnerships we organise about ten meetings to which any EXARC members are welcome. Dates and details are on line (see below for websites). In 24 months, the 15 partners will travel about 175 times between one another - an intensive way of contact and cooperation!

We divided the group into two smaller groups for practical reasons. See Table 1 for what partner is in what group. In general, the ideas behind both partnerships are the same and there will be much cooperation.

Didarchtik

The first of our projects is called Didarchtik, referring to both ‘Didaktik’ (Riis in EuroREA 7/2010) and to archaeology. In Didarchtik, we have six archaeological open air museums and Bäckedal Folkshögskola, which is a Swedish adult education institute in ancient crafts with a long standing. VAEE in the Netherlands is a network with hundreds of professionals in archaeological experimentation and education.

Zeitgeist

Our second partnership is called Zeitgeist. This refers to a quote from Goethe: “Was ihr den Geist der Zeiten heißt, Das ist im Grund der Herren eigner Geist, In dem die Zeiten sich

bespiegeln" [The spirit of the ages, that you find, In the end, is the spirit of Humankind: A mirror where all the ages are revealed] (Faust I: 575-577). One partner in Zeitgeist is Noguera, an educational camp with close links to the University of Barcelona; the other five are archaeological open air museums. All are members of EXARC.

Didarchtik	**EXARC (NL), Coordinator** Archäologisches Zentrum Hitzacker (DE) ArcheoParc im Schnalstal (IT) Bachritterburg Kanzach (DE) Bäckedals Folkhögskola (SE) Butser Ancient Farm (UK) C.I. de Calafell (ES) Parco Archeologico Didattico del Livelet (IT) VAEE (NL)
Zeitgeist	**Hunebedcentrum (NL), Coordinator** Archäologisches FreilichtMuseum Oerlinghausen (DE) Archeon (NL) Bronzezeithof Uelsen (DE) Camp d'Aprenentage de la Noguera (ES) Fortidslandsbyen Landa (NO)

TABLE 1. PARTNERS OF THE TWO GRUNDTVIG LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS RUNNING FROM MID 2010 TO MID 2012, DIVIDED OVER DIDARCHTIK AND ZEITGEIST.

Goals

We would like to learn more about adults, and about teaching them in archaeological open-air museums. We need to know how to connect with the visitors. Groups of adults are much more diverse than school groups, just think of age, generation gaps and backgrounds. We need to characterise their needs and interests. We like to understand what visitors expect before their arrival. When we better describe what we intend to teach them we can see if this culminates in a successful visit. We need to develop a good offer for pre-visit and post-visit – both in practical information and in providing knowledge.

We want to learn from each other how to exhibit and animate history to the public and how explaining science is an added value. We will explore new ways of educating the adult public (cross media, new media and unusual methods) and analyse the usage and possibilities of experimental archaeology & live interpretation. Finally, we need to develop an approach to serve repeated visits: on a second or third visit, people like to do other things.

Results

When all is said and done, there will be several results of both Didarchtik and Zeitgeist which will be shared with EXARC and its members. EXARC will be responsible for keeping these

results online and shared. There will be a glossary of common terms for archaeological open-air museums, available in several languages. It is an important step because most of us do not speak English as a first language and even those who do might have another thing in mind when talking about, for example, experiment than their colleagues do.

A visitor survey system will be available, so whoever likes to join can use the same basic questions and methods of analysis we developed. Surveys like that are only interesting if you have something to compare with – and there is not much known about our adult visitors. We will collect articles and other sources of information during the two years and the many workshops we have. This material will be in a kind of on line download area. We will also have several handbooks or readers, mainly about the following subjects: storytelling, adult didactic methods, new media & ancient technology.

Finally, there will be an on line system for videos of the partners (think of Vimeo, an on line system for videos like YouTube) and we plan an on line network on ancient technology in archaeological open air museums, probably in a kind of Wikipedia style.

Keywords education
experimental archaeology
crafts

Country Germany
Italy
Norway
Spain
Sweden
the Netherlands
United Kingdom

Share This Page

Corresponding Author

Roeland Paardekooper
EXARC
Frambozenweg 161
2312 KA Leiden
the Netherlands
E-mail Contact

Gallery Image

FIG 1. A TOTAL OF 18 MEMBERS OF EXARC MET FOR A TWO DAYS' WORKSHOP IN OERLINGHAUSEN (GERMANY) IN FEBRUARY 2010.

FIG 2. 14 -17 SEPTEMBER 2010, A PRODUCTIVE TWO-DAY FIRST MEETING OF ZEITGEIST, AT THE HUNEBEDCENTRUM (THE NETHERLANDS).

FIG 3. THE THIRD WORKSHOP OF DIDARCHTIK, 7-10 APRIL 2011 AT THE BACHRITTERBURG KANZACH (GERMANY).