

From the president's desk

Dear Colleagues,

May 2003 be a happy and prosperous year for all of you! ESEH will be four years old this spring. Many of the plans of the attendees of the first meeting have since been realised. In September, 2003, the Second International Conference of ESEH will take place in Prague, as many of you will already know. On December 6–8, 2002 the Scientific and Local Committees met in Prague to convert a pile of abstracts into a conference programme and to decide about the overall programme layout. Due to the overwhelming response to the Call for Papers, decisions were very hard. Of the almost 250 proposals, only about 20% were rejected, mostly due to them being insufficiently detailed to enable decision or to them being clearly off topic. With the help of a greatly enlarged poster session of about 30 posters and the increase of concurrent sessions from 4 to 5, or at some times 6, we have managed to allow for the majority of contributors to be included. The task of the Scientific Committee was not an easy one, and the members have done great work, for which I would like to thank my fellow members Geneviève Massarde-Guilbaud, Bernd Herrmann and Poul Holm very much.

In this issue of *Notepad* you will find the internet-connection of the conference website. Please help the organisers with early registration! The major part of this and the next *Notepad* are devoted to introducing the Regional Representatives of ESEH to the membership. As I mentioned in the last *Notepad*, the General Assembly will elect Regional Representatives for the first time. Elections for RR are non-contested and the Provisional Nominating Committee will prepare a list of Nominees in advance of the meeting. The same committee will also prepare a list of nominees for Executive Board positions, which can be contested, and a slate of candidates for the first elected Nominating Committee. So members will have a lot of important decisions to make. I would like to encourage you to write to me directly or to our Secretary, Jan Oosthoek, with any suggestions for candidates. If you feel you can contribute to the development of ESEH with your own time and energy, please do not hesitate to tell us! We are also seeking two members for our Financial Control Committee, and I would like to encourage all members with some experience in accounting to volunteer for these important positions. ESEH is what you make of it!

Communication in a 300+ member society spread over so many countries is not always easy. Please write to your Regional Representative, to Jan Oosthoek or to me with suggestions, questions or problems with regard to ESEH. My best wishes for 2003 to all of you,

Yours,

Verena Winiwarter

President

Registration for Second International Conference ESEH

The organisers of the Second International Meeting of ESEH in Prague are encouraging early registration of participants for the conference. Information about registration, accommodation and the programme will become available on-line at the conference website in February. The conference site can be found at: <www.natur.cuni.cz/ICESEH2003>.

Profiles of ESEH Regional Representatives

In preparation of the elections for new regional representatives we present below short profiles of our present representatives. The aim of this is to provide voters at the next general assembly with information to making sensible decisions. In the profiles the regional representatives introduce themselves, describe their work for ESEH, and give their vision for the society at large and the ways they want to be involved in it. Representatives who do not wish to be re-elected indicate this in their profile. We should also like to draw your attention to the fact that the Balkans, Greece and Turkey still do not have representatives. Suggestions for new representatives are welcome and should be mailed to ESEH Secretary Jan Oosthoek (email: k.j.w.oosthoek@phil.uni-goettingen.de).

Myriam Daru, Benelux

I am an independent researcher, born in France, educated in France, Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands as an architect, design researcher and historian. I have been active as an environmental historian since my diploma thesis at the Erasmus University at Rotterdam in 1986, which was on the subject of faecal matters, fertilisers and sanitation in the nineteenth century Netherlands, a subject which at the time was considered queer and slightly laughable. I grew up on a farm with a septic tank. I have always known how deeply such lowly matters can influence daily life.

I started the foundation 'Net Werk voor de geschiedenis van hygiëne en milieu' (established with statutes, 1986) in order to give a forum to Dutch historians active in the field of history of hygiene and the environment. The first and foremost instrument for this was the newsletter *Net Werk* which I have edited and distributed. Together with other members of Net Werk I have organised a number of seminars on a wide range of subjects.

I participated in the restarting of ESEH and in the discussions during the decisive meeting sponsored by the Breuninger foundation, and I designed the first ESEH internet site to get ESEH going on the digital highway.

Since then private circumstances have restrained my activities and I think a researcher with a direct link to the academic world would be best as a new regional representative for the Benelux.

I do not wish to be candidate for re-election as regional representative

Dr. Leos Jeleek, Czechia and Slovakia

Leos Jelecek is Assistant Professor at the Department of Social Geography and Regional Development of the Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague, teaching geography, historical geography and history and doing research in historical land-use and environmental history. During the past decade his research focused on long term land-use changes in Czechia in the 19th and 20th centuries, their social driving forces and environmental consequences. He has published several articles concerning the development and methodology of environmental history in the US and Europe, to stimulate the subject in both parts of the world. He is a member of the editorial boards of *Historical Geography* and *Environment and History*, and in 1999 he was organiser of the session 'Environmental History' at the Czech historians' congress.

Active as ESEH regional representative since 1999, he has co-operated in the preparation of the ESEH website bibliography. At the First ESEH International Conference in St Andrews, 2001, he was charged with the organisation of the Second ESEH meeting in Prague, 2003. As chairman of its Local Committee, he became a member ex-officio of the ESEH executive board.

In the future he would like to continue in his duty of ESEH regional representative and would like to attract more colleagues in Czechia and Slovakia into ESEH activities.

Geneviève Massard-Guilbaud, Francophone countries

I have been the ESEH RR for francophone countries, and will in 2003 be a candidate for a second and last mandate.

I am a *maître de conférences* at Blaise-Pascal University in Clermont-Ferrand (France). I teach economic and social modern history, especially urban history, environmental history and statistics applied to history. In 2003, I shall defend a *habilitation* dealing with industrial pollution in French cities during modern times.

In 1999, I took part in the meeting which launched ESEH. Given the French position of environmental history, which is weak, my main effort has been to distribute information, publicise our conferences and try to attract some French contributors to them. The French potential in environmental history is certainly great, but the field needs to be more visible. My effort has also been directed

towards the francophone of Quebec. Since the St Andrews conference, I have taken part in the tasks shared by the all the ESEH RR: discussing the draft statutes, distributing ESEH leaflets, feeding information to our website. I have also been a member of the Scientific Committee selecting the papers/panels for the Prague conference.

If elected again, I intend to go on with creating of a list of French scholars interested in environmental history, informing them of our initiatives and increasing the French contribution to future conferences. More generally, I aim to make environmental history as research topic better known in France.

Andreas Dix, Germanophone countries

Assistant Professor in Historical Geography, Institute of Geography, University of Bonn, Germany. PhD in historical geography with a thesis about the historical interplay of industrialisation and water use. Most recently my second book was published, about rural planning and settlement policy in East Germany after World War II. Present research interests are focused on two fields:

- Regionalisation of historical land use and its influence on fluvial dynamics (IGBP-PAGES-LUCIFS Project)
- Natural catastrophes and risks

My work for ESEH in 2002 was mainly to distribute ESEH-flyers at various conferences. Recently an issue of *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen* has appeared with informations about ESEH and environmental history.

My ideas for the future:

1. Digital Networking for ESEH: systematic search for homepages to put links to the ESEH Homepage
2. I would like to make germanophone environmental history more visible within an international context. That means for instance:
 - a) To feed the bibliographical database systematically with german references. We should establish a small group which should be responsible for this task.
 - b) To bring more germanophone items to the ESEH-Homepage. I see this as my personal duty.
 - c) To encourage articles about the scene and specific approaches of environmental history in the germanophone countries.
3. We should print and distribute a better designed flyer a.s.a.p.
4. The germanophone ESEH members should think about the idea of organising an ESEH Conference in the future.

Mariano Barriendos, Iberian Peninsula

PhD in Geography (1994). Contracted researcher at the University of Barcelona specialising in historical climatology and climatic hazards. My activity for the ESEH in the Iberian Peninsula has been to contact many departments of History, Geography and Environmental Sciences in which any interest may exist in the temporal dimension of environmental factors. Eventually, around 100 Departments were contacted in the mailing process. After this initial stage, I think a person with more teaching/research experience should become the ESEH representative for Iberia.

Fiona Watson, UK and Ireland

Originally a medievalist, I got into environmental history through working on a research project on 'Sustainability in the Management of Scottish Woodlands, 1600–1900' under Professor Chris Smout, who is one of the foremost environmental historians in Britain. In 1995 I became a lecturer at the University of Stirling in central Scotland, where my remit was, among other things, to develop environmental history as a subject within the main history curriculum and in collaboration with other departments. The History Department at Stirling also funded a studentship in environmental history under my supervision, which was undertaken by none other than Jan Oosthoek, the current ESEH secretary! In 1999, I became Director of the Centre for Environmental History and Policy, which received three years funding from the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council. The Centre is a collaboration between the departments of History and Environmental Science at Stirling, and the School of History at the University of St Andrews. In October 2002 we received another four years funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Board. This time our research will concentrate on the overall issue of 'Waste', both waste management and waste lands. The Centre also houses *Environment and History*, of which I am an editor.

As ESEH representative, I would like to encourage more people to join the ESEH and to act as a conduit for information among the disparate group of researchers who would call themselves environmental historians in the UK and Ireland. I must also pay tribute to the work of the UK branch of the old European Association for Environmental History which still meets annually for a most invigorating conference. It has been a pleasure in the last few years, particularly through the first ESEH conference in St Andrews, to meet other environmental historians from these islands but there is a long way to go until we might feel ourselves to be a secure and expanding community.

Note: The regional representative profiles for Hungary, Italy, Scandinavia, and Russia & other Eastern European countries will be published in the May issue of *Notepad*.

European Society for Environmental History

Executive Board:

President: Verena Winiwarter, *University of Vienna*

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Germanophone Countries Andreas Dix, Germany

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Italy, **Marco Armiero**, Italy

Nordic Countries, **Eva Jakobsson**, Norway

Russia & additional Eastern European Countries, **Alexei Karimov**, Russia

ESEH aims to promote environmental history in Europe, by encouraging and supporting research, teaching and publications in the field. The ESEH maintains their web site at <www.esch.org>.

Items for the next Notepad should be sent by 31 March 2003 to the address shown below.

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