Making the connection to the Past
CAA 99

Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology
Proceedings of the 27th Conference, Dublin, April 1999

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2004
Making the connection to the Past - CAA 99 - Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology: Proceedings of the 27th Conference, Dublin, April 1999

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ISBN 90-73368-20-0

Printed in the Netherlands by HAVEKA BV
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Preface

You may know the joke of the Irishman asked to give the translation of the Spanish word 'mañana'. After considerable thought, he replied: "There is no word in Irish expressing that sense of urgency". Well, here are the proceedings of the 27th international congress Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology (CAA), which was held in Dublin (Ireland) from 14 to 18 April 1999. The conference venue was the magnificent and prestigious Dublin Castle that played such an important role in Irish history. The nearly 200 participants came from more than 20 different countries, and the 60 lectures were divided into seven themes: Database Applications, GIS Applications, Internet Applications, Management & Organisation, Statistics and Quantitative Methods, Surveying and Mapping, and Virtual Reality, Presentation and Education.

As every year, the standard of the contributions was generally high and the congress fully met with the aims of CAA, viz. to encourage communication between archaeologists, mathematics and computer scientists, to provide a survey of present work in the field and to stimulate discussion and future progress.

Ireland has a rich history and the conference offered opportunities to sample this history. One excursion was to the Lough Crew Passage Tomb Cemetery and Tara, the seat of late prehistoric and early historic Kings of Ireland. The other visited the Medieval City of Kilkenny.

Yet holding a conference in Dublin entails more than only lectures and excursions. There were no fewer than three receptions, a State Reception in Dublin Castle hosted by the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, a reception hosted by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and lastly a reception in the National Museum of Ireland hosted by its director. The close proximity of Temple Bar with its scores of pubs and restaurants provided many opportunities to meet and talk after the official parts.

The congress was sponsored by The National Monuments Division of Dúchas (the Heritage Service), a subdivision of the Department of Art, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, The Discovery Programme, a State funded private company carrying out archaeological research into Irish archaeology, the Archaeology Department of University College Dublin, and Paradigm Technology, Ireland's leading suppliers of Autodesk CAD and ESRI GIS solutions. The overall organisation was in the hands of an enthusiastic team headed by Edward Bourke. Other members of this team were on behalf of the Dúchas, apart from Edward, Muiris de Buitléir, on behalf of the The Discovery Programme Roseanne Meenan and Barry Masterson, and on behalf of University College Dublin Gabriel Cooney. In general the organisation went smoothly but Ireland wouldn't be Ireland if some solutions didn't require improvisation on the spot. Just before one of the receptions it became clear that there were no drinks available, so Edward jumped into his own car and with a police escort went to buy a huge quantity at the nearest off-licence that was still open.

The completion of the congress, the publication of the proceedings, bore some resemblance to a steeplechase. Nevertheless, the steering committee of CAA managed in the end to publish part of the papers presented. The twenty articles presented here should give an impression of the large diversity in the subjects discussed in Dublin.

The complete book is also available in PDF format on the enclosed CD. There you will also find contributions submitted with figures in full colour which in the book appear in black and white only to avoid excessive printing costs. The CD also contains the film made to illustrate the article by Stephen Bullas, Glynn Barratt and Roberto Grassi, Paradox or panacea? – archaeological field trials with the GEM\textsuperscript{\textregistered}-300 Multi Frequency Electromagnetic Profiler, and the internet pages of the project of Allard Mees, The RGZM web databases. Java implementations on cultural heritage websites.

All contributions have been reviewed and we should like to thank the anonymous referees for their kind cooperation.

Leiden, March 2004

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Steering Committee CAA
www.caaconference.org