

JETLAG AND A VERY FULL DAY – GIS MANUALS, EGYPTOLOGY AND CONFERENCE PREPARATION

July 30, 2011 Udjahorresnet Archaeological Prospection, Commercial Archaeology, Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011, Digital Archaeology, Egypt, Excavation, Expeditions, Survey Amarna, Archaeology, Australia, bank, Christina Robinson, Congress, Dana, database software, Geographic information system, geomatics, George Martin, Germany, GIS, GIS software, GPS, Gurob, GvSIG, illustration software, Isle of Man, Kindle, Lancaster, Liverpool, London, Malkata, Memphis, metal, Microsoft Windows, New Kingdom Egypt, Nottingham, Open source, open source tools, Oxford, Peine, Perth, Pi-Ramesse, Quantum GIS, Rockingham Golf Course, Rottneist Island, Singapore, speaker, supervisor, Total Station, Vienna, visualisation tools, Western Australia, Western Australian Museum

Hello!

Yesterday was a very busy day, thus I am only now able to submit a post here!

Australia!

I got back from a two-week holiday to Western Australia on Thursday. My Dad and I went to visit his brother who moved to Perth from the Isle of Man 40 years ago, and his family. We had an awesome time, saw lots of places and wildlife: Roos, [Quokkas](#), Koalas, the lot



A herd of Kangaroos at Rockingham Golf Course



Myself and a hungry Quokka on Rottneest Island

My family out there is lovely! I am still rather tired and recovering from a long journey back, which commenced on Wednesday afternoon: 5h flight from Perth to Singapore, then 13h Singapore to London-Heathrow. Then another 3h back to Liverpool by train. My poor Dad had to fly back to Hanover, which is close to [Peine](#), Germany, where I am originally from! The thing that struck me, whilst visiting Australia, however, is the general attitude towards archaeology. Whenever I mentioned my interest in visiting a particular museum, or seeing anything related to archaeology, I was told that “Australia doesn’t have very much history at all”, and that “surely, there is not very much archaeology around”... I was rather shocked and

saddened by this, given the huge amount of [aboriginal culture](#) in Australia. I did point this out, and obtained some understanding, but the attitude of Australians towards Aborigines is a very problematic topic in general. When visiting the [Western Australian Museum in Perth](#), however, I saw a very well-displayed and super-informative exhibition on aboriginal culture in Western Australia. Shame it didn't seem to be too-well visited!

Back to work!

I had to get up extra-early yesterday (29th July), as I had to get straight back to work: I work as a Supervisor in Geomatics for [Oxford Archaeology North](#), specialising in open source GIS. I totally love it and really do think it's the way forward, especially given that proprietary software can "lock in" archaeological data, which can lead to data loss – something that should be avoided, I guess we all agree! Over the past couple of years we have been using open source GIS software, such as gvSIG (both the "original [gvSIG](#)" and the [OADigital Edition](#)), [Quantum GIS](#), [GRASS](#), in addition to some 3D GIS visualisation tools, such as [Paraview](#). Furthermore, we have been testing and using database software, such as [PGAdmin](#) ([PostgreSQL](#) and [PostGIS](#)), and illustration software, such as [Inkscape](#) successfully. I must say that all of the software we used has come a long, long way in those past two years, and at OA North, we use open source tools more or less as a standard and I can confidentially say that it is replacing the proprietary software previously used, such as AutoCAD and ArcGIS.

My friend and colleague Christina Robinson and I were given some time to document our combined knowledge in order to make it accessible to both colleagues within the company, and also the wider archaeological community – what is better than a free guide to open source GIS, which allows you learn to use free, powerful GIS software, and edit and analyse your own survey

data! We have produced guides and manuals during the past couple of years – they are available for free download on the [OA library](#) website and released under the creative commons license. Here are the manuals we released so far:



*Survey and GIS Manual
for GPS (Leica GX1230)
Second Edition*

Anna Kathrin Hodgkinson



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Survey and GIS Manual for Leica 1200 series GPS

Hodgkinson, Anna (2010) *Open Source Survey & GIS Manual*. Documentation. Oxford Archaeology North. (Unpublished)

Hodgkinson, Anna (2011) *Using the Helmert (two-point) transformation in Quantum GIS*. Documentation. Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd.. (Unpublished)

Robinson, Christina and Campbell, Dana and Hodgkinson, Anna (2011) *Archaeological maps from qGIS and Inkscape: A brief guide. Third edition*. Documentation. Oxford Archaeology North. (Unpublished) – this is the third edition, re-released today!

And here are two brand new guides, produced on the Day of Archaeology and made available today:

Robinson, Christina (2011) *QGIS Handy Hints*. Documentation. Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd. (Unpublished)

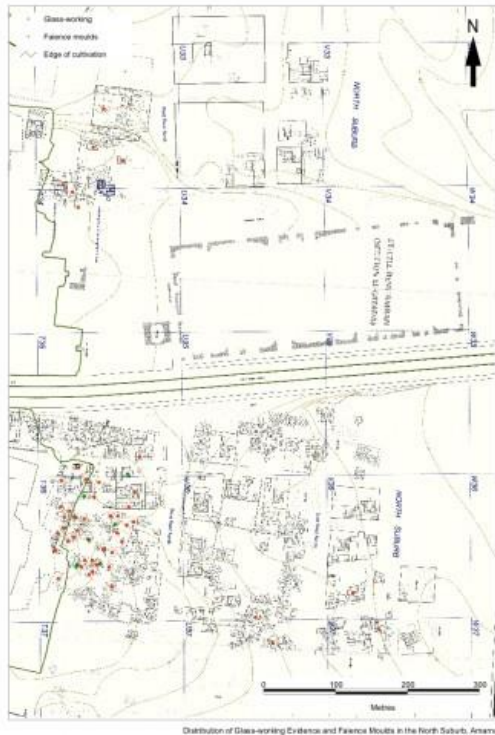
Hodgkinson, Anna (2011) *Download of the Leica 700 and 800 series Total Station*. Documentation. Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd. (Unpublished)

Please download and use these and extend your skills; please burn them and let us know, we are grateful for your feedback! Some more guides/manuals are currently in production and will be added to the library, so please [watch this space!](#)

Lunch Break – (not really) time for some Egyptology

I briefly escaped work at lunchtime in order to go to the bank – I had to make an international transfer, the only way (annoyingly) to pay for my speaker's fees for the upcoming [16th International Conference on Cultural Heritage and New Technologies, Vienna, November 2011](#). My paper on “Modeling Urban Industries in New Kingdom Egypt” was accepted for

presentation, my abstract can be found [here](#). I will be presenting my current research on the distribution of (mainly) artefactual evidence from [Amarna](#), ancient Akhetaten, in Middle Egypt. Using open source GIS (naturally), I am studying the distribution and density of artefacts relating to high-status industries, such as glass, faience, metal, sculpture and textiles within the settled areas of Amarna, in order to establish how products and raw materials were controlled and distributed.



Distribution of the evidence of glass- and faience-working within the North Suburb at Amarna

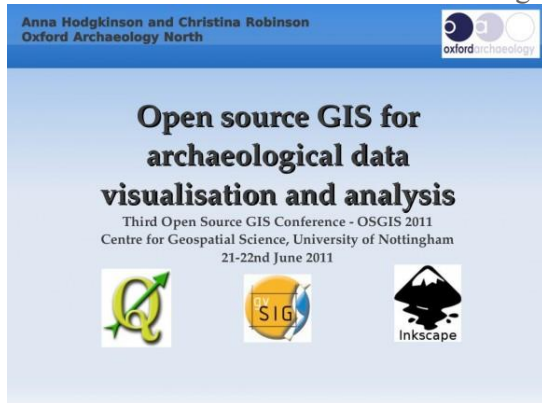
This paper presents part of my PhD research on high-status industries within the capital and royal cities in New Kingdom Egypt, [Memphis](#), [Malkata](#), [Gurob](#), Amarna and [Pi-Ramesse](#). I have now completed my third year of part-time research and am hoping to finish the whole thing within the next two or three years. We will see, though I'd better get on with it!!

I am a member of the fieldwork team at Gurob, and I am very much looking forward to our next fieldwork season in September this year! Check out the project [website](#) for reports of past fieldwork seasons and my work in the industrial area, which I also presented at [The Third British Egyptology Congress](#) (BEC 3) in London, 2010.

After-work seminar and more open source GIS

We had an in-house, after-work seminar at 5pm, at which Christina and I gave our paper on "Open Source GIS for archaeological data visualisation and analysis" to colleagues, which we presented at OSGIS 2011 in Nottingham. You can watch the [webcast](#) of the original talk online (scroll down until you find it), unfortunately it only works for Windows, though. :(The paper, which was presented on June 22nd 2011, is about our successful case study, moving Geomatics at

OA North to open source GIS and away from proprietary software. We even won the prize for the second-best presentation! It went down well with colleagues, and after a discussion we moved on outside for a barbecue, which was very nice, as it stayed warm all day (unusual for Lancaster). I had to leave rather early unfortunately, as the commute back to Liverpool takes about 1.5 hours. At least I was able to relax and read George Martin's "A Dance with Dragons" on my Kindle!



Our Presentation for OSGIS 2011, Nottingham