



A VIEW FROM THE DIGITAL ATTIC

July 29, 2011 Judith Winters Day of Archaeology 2011, Digital Archaeology, Early Medieval, Medieval, Viking e-publishing, HTML, Internet Archaeology, Jen Mitcham, Lucky, Music, Singles, York

The Location: The [Internet Archaeology](#) office, King's Manor, Dept. Archaeology, University of York

Some last minute changes to childcare arrangements have meant that I am not in the office for the Day of Archaeology itself, so this is written on the Day before the Day of Archaeology but is still pretty typical of the range of things I do.

Picture the scene: It's a beautiful sunny day in York and from my office window here in the [King's Manor](#) attics, I have a rather splendid view of [St Mary's Abbey](#) and the busy [Yorkshire Museum Gardens](#) where Antiques Roadshow is filming today! My window is open and I hear the pleasant hum of people talking and laughing, and the occasional train horn from the station just across the river.

It looks a bit like this except much busier and sunnier! (and yes, I know I'm lucky having a view like this)



Thanks to Jen Mitcham for the picture.

Morning: I have spent most of the morning formatting in HTML a *very* long bibliography (472 entries!) with a large number of Norwegian, Swedish, German, Danish and Polish references on medieval bone and antler hair combs. I am making sure all the accented letters are marked up as HTML entities to ensure they display correctly. The bibliography has already gone through the beady eye of our copy-editor but there are always more things to fix at every stage right up until the day of publication. And so as I go, I remove some surplus commas, full-stops, and double-check spellings, as well as add ‘anchors’ to each reference (so that in-text citations go to the correct reference) and also add URLs and/or DOIs where possible. The task is interrupted by an emailed subscription query from an overseas agent checking the 2012 institutional price for the journal. I welcome the distraction and subsequently update the subscriptions page to avoid further queries on the matter! (And if your library does not yet subscribe to Internet Archaeology, send your librarian [this link!](#))

I’ve only just started to work on the article (*“An Atlas of Medieval Combs from Northern Europe”*) which the long bibliography is associated with. Much more work is needed before that’ll be ready for publication (I’ve not even started on the images and maps), and so I’ve decided to give myself a break and return to it later. I check my inbox and one email contains the news that some funds have been agreed to make an article I’ve just released Open Access. Unusual for this to happen post-publication, but welcome news nonetheless. I’ll await official confirmation before making the access changes.

Internet Archaeology is what is currently called a “hybrid Open Access journal” where authors (or more usually their research funding bodies) can pay to make their article freely available rather than be subject to subscription. And part of my job is to remind and encourage all potential authors to approach me early enough so that I can draw up costs so they can be included in research funding applications. It clearly worked in this case!

The last of the LEAP II exemplars was completed earlier this week, and a quick chat to Kieron from the [Archaeology Data Service](#) downstairs confirms that the associated archive is ready too. So I 'plumb in' the article to the issue Table of Contents and add it to the subscriptions management system and to the LEAP II project pages. See the fruits of our labours at: http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue30/limp_index.html on laser scanning artefacts from late pre-Columbian villages and towns in mid-central USA and from the Egyptian site of Amarna . The [LEAPII project](#) exemplars try to integrate narrative with underlying data, publication with archive, blurring the boundaries between the two and allowing readers to drill down through the resource to investigate data and come to their own (maybe different) conclusions. In this final exemplar, the article integrated with digital data hosted by both the [Archaeology Data Service](#) in York and [tDAR](#) in Arizona. I'm very hopeful that the LEAP II exemplars will generate some real interest and stimulate contributions to the journal from more overseas archaeologists. A comments feature has been added which will allow readers to interact with authors and other readers too. But the hard work has not finished. I now need to start thinking about what has been achieved and learnt from the LEAP II experience for the end of project report. I insert some thoughts down in the journal's internal 'wiki' to elaborate on later, and go back to my references.

1.30pm Very spooky! Just received a new article proposal from a US-based author who wishes to link their proposed article to an online database and would like the article to pan and zoom through data and images. Offering the ability to connect readers with searchable datasets is even now still something not routine to most e-journals, and so I'm glad to see that the message that IA *does* is filtering through unprompted 😊 I need to clarify and follow up some technical details with the authors but this looks like it could become a really great article. Bibliography work beckons.

3pm An email comes in from JISC Collections following a request from me to re-word and simplify the licences that UK Higher and Further Education institutions need to sign. Essentially JISC has purchased access to the journal on their behalf but librarians need to register first and sign a licence confirming rights – hopefully this will make their life – and mine – just a little bit simpler! Back to the bibliography, but working through the references is constant reminder of just how small the archaeology community is and yet how much it actually achieves. It seems there's almost always a handful of people I know personally in the list of references — whatever the topic! But there are poignant moments of reflection too when I come across a reference (or in this case, several) to publications by people no longer with us and I pause to remember fondly my former IA colleague [Alan Vince](#).

4.30pm I'm still not finished. This is one *long* bibliography...

5pm Proposal and first draft of a recently accepted submission saved to USB to read over the weekend. I'll be visualising what I can do technically to make it work as an online publication and will also need to ponder on a referee. Off home to my two lovely boys and

husband, and so the end of my archaeology day. Well, sort of ... not sure we ever stop being archaeologists.