

**Ecomuseology:**  
***a holistic and integrated model for safeguarding ‘spirit of place’ in  
the North East of England***

GERARD E. CORSANE, PETER S. DAVIS, STEPHANIE K. HAWKE AND  
MICHELLE L. STEFANO

*International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, University of Newcastle  
upon Tyne, Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.  
g.e.corsane@ncl.ac.uk*

**Abstract.** This article explores whether or not ecomuseology can provide a model for safeguarding ‘spirit of place’ in the North East of England. The philosophy of ecomuseums is briefly explained, paying particular attention to the relationship between places, communities and their heritage to explore the idea of how intangible and tangible heritage resources contribute to ‘spirit of place’. Expressions of intangible heritage from which senses of belonging, pride and place stem, along with various community-based heritage projects in the rural area of the North Pennines, are described and analysed to examine the community-heritage interaction. The limitations of the more ‘traditional’ approaches to heritage management and museum work are compared to those embedded in ecomuseum processes.

## **1. Introduction**

In response to the challenges of globalisation, people have become increasingly interested in the notions of ‘local distinctiveness’ and ‘spirit of place’. These are important for many people as they are closely associated with the construction of identities and feelings of belonging. As people have become increasingly interested in these notions, they have also become more and more concerned with the promotion and safeguarding of the range of intangible and tangible heritage resources that form the very essence and fabric of local distinctiveness and ‘spirit of place’. The North East of England is rich with these types of heritage resources and there are community-led projects and groups that are working to ensure that they are not lost. Many of these projects and groups are using principles and practices that are in-line with the ‘ecomuseum’ ideal, which break from the more traditional approaches to heritage management and museum work. The aim of this article is to highlight the synergies between ecomuseum philosophy and practice and the promotion, safeguarding and conservation of heritage resources associated with some representative regional case studies, even though none of the latter directly use the term ‘ecomuseology’ to describe their work. In order to do this, the article will begin with an introductory discussion on the links between communities, defining place and the significance of heritage resources. This will be followed by an overview of the principles of the ecomuseum ideal, which will lay the platform for considering the case studies of people involved with two selected intangible cultural heritage expressions unique to the region, and the case studies of the community-based work being facilitated by the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership.

## 1.1 DEFINING YOUR PLACE – HERITAGE AND LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

What do small local communities value most about their environment, the features of their natural and cultural landscape for which they share communal ownership and responsibility? What is it about our local environment that provides a feeling of belonging, a sense of place, the knowledge that we inhabit somewhere with distinct characteristics? Meinig's (1979:45) view of landscape is consistent with the 'holistic' paradigm for museology proposed by Corsane and Holleman (1993:121). It also provides a strong indication of the importance of place, not simply for the tangible elements within it, but also for its intangible features. It is how these elements relate to one another and the meanings attached to them that provide a sense of continuity and identity, a 'spirit of place'.

However, the idea of place needs to be treated with care, as it embodies much more than physical components and for each individual it is a unique experience. For example, Buttner (1980:178) suggests that "it is the style of life associated with place which is still far more important for me than its external form". Relph (1976:29) quotes Donat's warning that "places occur at all levels of identity, my place, your place, street, community, town, county, region, country, and continent, but places never conform to tidy hierarchies of classification. They all overlap and interpenetrate one another and are wide open to a variety of interpretations". Davis (1999:18) when exploring place within the context of ecomuseum philosophy, concluded that "... place is a chameleon concept, changing colour through individual perception, and changing pattern through time". However, despite these complexities, there is no doubt that the elements of place – tangible and intangible – are vital in helping people to understand their own and other places in the world. These elements provide us with the resources to construct cultural identities.

The need to recognise and appreciate the richness of individual places has been promoted in the UK by the organisation Common Ground. They stress that it is important to value the detail and the commonplace in the landscape, the characteristics that give 'local distinctiveness', defined by Clifford and King (1993:7) as "that elusive particularity, so often valued as 'background noise' ... the richness we take for granted". To Common Ground (1996)

"local distinctiveness is about everywhere, not just beautiful places; it is about details, patina and meaning, the things which create identity. Importantly it focuses on locality, not on the region - small scale approaches are essential. It is about accumulation and assemblages ... accommodation and change ...it includes the invisible as well as the physical; dialect, festivals, myths, may be as important as hedgerows, hills and houses".

Traditionally the preservation, conservation and documentation of the cultural and natural landscape have been carried out by designated (often governmental) organisations. 'Experts' who attach their own meanings to sites or objects have largely carried out these processes but have not empowered the people who experience them. It might be argued that the complexity of place and

what it represents to individuals and communities makes it evident that the traditional approaches can never capture their elusive qualities. The essence of place lies in the environment itself, and is defined by the individuals and the communities that live there.

If communities are going to play a major role in conserving places, in protecting their environment and 'spirit of place' then a new approach is required, one that demands community empowerment. From the 1970s, ecomuseum practitioners have attempted to use their new philosophy to try to reach these goals, having at their core the need to represent their place, their past and the cultural identity of their inhabitants.

## 1.2 ECOMUSEUM PRINCIPLES

The ecomuseum paradigm, its origins, development and diversity has been most fully described by Davis (1999). The ecomuseum was originally defined by comparing it to a traditional museum, with Rivard (1984, 43-53; 1988, 123-4; and, also see Boylan 1992; Corsane 2006:404) stating that the:

- *Traditional Museum = building + collections + expert staff + public visitors; and,*
- *Ecomuseum = territory + heritage + memory + population.*

More recently the European Network of Ecomuseums (2004) provided a concise definition, namely that: "An ecomuseum is a dynamic way in which communities preserve, interpret, and manage their heritage for sustainable development. An ecomuseum is based on a community agreement". This definition has been further modified by Davis (2007:199) who regards the ecomuseum as "a community-driven museum or heritage project that aids sustainable development". Ecomuseums demonstrate remarkable diversity, yet, despite these variations, Davis (1999:228) suggested that the following list of attributes can be applied to most of them:

- The adoption of a territory that is not necessarily defined by conventional boundaries.
- The adoption of a 'fragmented site' policy that is linked to in-situ conservation and interpretation.
- Conventional views of site ownership are abandoned; conservation and interpretation of sites is carried out via liaison, co-operation and the development of partnerships.
- The empowerment of local communities; the involvement of local people in ecomuseum activities and in the creation of their cultural identity.
- The potential for interdisciplinarity and for holistic interpretation is usually seized.

This list, along with the ecomuseum characteristics identified by Corsane and Holleman (1993), have been further developed as a set of indicators that have been utilised to assess how far ecomuseums reach the tenets of the philosophy (Corsane 2006: 405 and Corsane *et. al.* 2007:105). It would seem that the guiding principles for ecomuseums should enable them to conserve local

heritage resources in a democratic manner and effectively capture local distinctiveness. Ecomuseum principles have now been deployed in many countries throughout the world, and in a variety of ways, responding to local physical, economic, social, cultural and political environments in order to manage the full range of environmental and heritage resources through processes that encourage public participation. Where these ecomuseum principles are utilized there is often an emphasis on: self-representation; full community participation in, and ownership of, heritage resources and the management processes; rural or urban regeneration; sustainable development; and, responsible tourism. So how might these processes aid the formation of ‘spirit of place’? The following sections explore examples of community-based intangible and tangible heritage projects and phenomena found in the North East of England, to see if there are parallels with ecomuseum processes and whether there is scope for these to be more widely applied.

## **2. Expressing ‘Spirit of Place’ Through Intangible Cultural Heritage in the North East**

Just as history and culture form foundations for experiences of place, so can they shape the meanings of a ‘spirit of place’ that is held by inhabitants of a particular region (Rodman 2003:208). Crang (1998:108) notes that creative, cultural expressions can be vehicles for conveying a certain ‘spirit of place’ for various groups of individuals by writing:

“...people experience something beyond the physical or sensory properties of places and can feel an attachment to a ‘spirit of place’. If the meaning itself extends beyond the visible, beyond the evident into realms of emotion and feeling then one answer may be turning to literature or the arts as being ways people can express these meanings”.

Coupling artistic practices with the communication of meanings brings to mind the very nature of intangible cultural heritage or, as Smith (2006:56) argues, all heritage. She states, “Whether we are dealing with traditional definitions of ‘tangible’ or ‘intangible’ representations of heritage, we are actually engaging with a set of values and meanings, including such elements as emotion, memory, and cultural knowledge and experiences” (ibid). Nonetheless, it can be said that a certain ‘spirit of place’ – and all the values, meanings and emotions within which are living – can be manifested in both physicality as well as the immateriality fundamental to intangible cultural heritage. Interestingly, this notion of expressing ‘spirit of place’ through intangible cultural heritage lacks recognition within the heritage sector at present. This section aims to highlight the resonance between an attachment to place and the senses of belonging and pride that are embedded within particular intangible cultural practices found within the North East of England.

Intangible cultural heritage finds many unique examples within the culturally rich counties of Northumberland, Durham and Tyne and Wear. Particular occupational skills, culinary techniques, dances, music and dialects, among others, have both their roots and evolutionary paths in the countryside and urban areas of this region. This section will focus upon a sword dance and the folk music, two intangible cultural expressions of the performing arts that are

centuries-old and still thriving today. Through an examination of senses of belonging and pride expressed by the devotees, or communities, of these living traditions, a strong existence of 'spirit of place' is demonstrated.

The following subsection will provide a brief introduction of these two expressions, as well as an account of their current states. The second subsection, entitled *Senses of Belonging and Senses of Pride*, will present data collected in an ongoing study of over forty dancers and musicians on the significance and values embedded within these living traditions, which began in September, 2007. The last subsection is an analysis of 'spirit of place' based on the interconnectedness of heritage, community and place articulated by the abovementioned community members when talking about motivations and the importance attributed to their intangible cultural practices.

## 2.1 TWO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS OF THE NORTH EAST

The first intangible cultural expression of this study is a sword dance, the Rapper dance, which originated around the 18<sup>th</sup> century coal mines of the North East (Lawrenson 2007). The dance consists of five men (or women in recent history) continually stepping in and out of configurations whilst holding each other's swords, otherwise known as rappers. The records of Cecil Sharp, the founder of the English Folk Song and Dance Society, who travelled around Northern England and wrote about several sword dances in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, have documented an otherwise orally transmitted tradition. However, there are accounts dating back to the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century as various historians and writers made reference to the sword dances they encountered in childhood, or by travelling (Sharp 1913:v.1:69). In general, the Rapper dance was performed on special holidays, as well as in pubs throughout the region for making extra money for beer. The second expression consists of the folk music traditions of both the countryside and the city of Newcastle using a range of instruments from the fiddle to the flute. These musical traditions developed over centuries with their largest divergence occurring in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, Newcastle was becoming more cosmopolitan and, in turn, music halls were opening at a rapid pace. Thus, musicians moved from the countryside to the city and developed new styles that blended with the popular music of the time, which was not as prevalent in the countryside (Harker in Allan 1972:xiii; Murphy 2007). Within these traditions lies the music specifically written for a bagpipe, the Northumbrian Smallpipe, unique to this region. The earliest known Northumbrian Smallpipes date from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, although bagpipes throughout the United Kingdom have existed for hundreds of years as seen in medieval manuscripts and images (Say 2003).

These two living traditions have remained in the care of community-based societies and networks even if the people and settings have changed. Folk musicians are still out in pubs and other cultural venues playing tunes that are centuries-old, or recently written, in a style particular to the region. The Rapper dance is no longer performed around the coal mines of the North East; the venue has shifted solely to pubs and festivals due to the decline in the mining industry. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the dance shifted hands from the miners to a more general community of devotees (as well as descendents of miners) with differing occupations and interests. However, it is this devotion and the relationships embedded within these expressions that give them their vitality. The significance

and values attributed to them, by these devotees, are part of the reason why these expressions continue to exist. Investigating such significance and values not only provides insight into the survival of such expressions, but highlights both senses of belonging and pride that, as examined in the following subsection, constitute a certain ‘spirit of place.’

## 2.2. SENSES OF BELONGING AND PRIDE

As examined elsewhere (Stefano & Corsane 2008), strong linkages between heritage, community and place have emerged in the data. When asked about why they partake in these living traditions, as well as about what feelings stem from this participation, a majority of respondents (over two-thirds) expressed senses of belonging to the history and heritage of the particular practice, the region within which it has evolved, as well as to the groups of participants who had come before and practice today. Respondents often cited all three entities when expressing their motivations for involvement, although degrees of specificity varied, as presented below. In addition, when asked about why they consider these living traditions as important, this same interconnectedness between the history and heritage of the expression, the surrounding environment and their own community of fellow dancers and musicians emerges (again, within over a two-thirds majority). In order to keep this discussion to a manageable length, key respondent quotes have been selected to highlight these multi-layered senses of belonging and pride.

Throughout the responses, it was found that the history and heritage of the region went hand-in-hand with the history and heritage of the particular living tradition. Oftentimes, within the same train of thought, a respondent would express a sense of belonging to both the tradition and the region as if one implied the other. For example, one Rapper dancer noted, “I do get a definite feeling of belonging because I do this dance, but it’s actually most enhanced when you’re not in the North East...so, it’s when you’re somewhere else, you can talk about coming from the North East...talk about being a part of this tradition”. Moreover, a bagpiper who is explaining why he plays the Northumbrian Smallpipes states that, “it’s a skill which is embedded in the county, itself...the tunes which are played, the actual instrument, itself”. Another bagpiper poetically notes, “when they played the music and you walked around that countryside, it was almost as though it was just expressing the whole location...you could picture scenes...matching every note to a blade of grass ...it was so close to that part of the country and that’s where I was living”.

Attaching the notion of belonging to a community to both the environment and heritage of the music traditions, another piper recalled that, “as soon as I started, I became a member of the society...so, you’re sort of becoming a member of the tradition and keeping the tradition going, I suppose.....so, being able to play these tunes on this local instrument is a sense of belonging”. A fiddler also noted that, “it gives people who get involved in it a way of expressing themselves that relates to their locality”. Here, it is expressed that the first step into this world of belonging to the heritage of the North East and these traditions is through a belonging to a community, an established network of people with common goals. A dancer succinctly phrases this by saying, “I mean, we don’t just all meet to dance every Wednesday night...we were all at [another dancer’s] house at the weekend for her birthday...or we’ll go down to somebody

else's house just for fun and a barbeque... if there are enough drinks around, we may actually start dancing...and if we don't have swords, we'll use tea towels!" Although these communities have long histories of musicians and dancers who had come before, senses of belonging have also been felt upon joining these groups with warm support. A bagpiper mentions that, "they took me in and let me feel very welcome and part of this whole scene...so, it's really a sense of belonging...a sense of expressing the land through the music; it's amazing".

Sources of the expressed senses of pride were also rooted in an interconnected relationship between the heritage of the tradition, the community and the region. One Rapper dancer has said that she is "proud of the origins of it and proud of the fact that it is something specific to the North East of England". Further explaining the source of her pride, she notes, "back two hundred years ago during the mining industries, it was only in the North East of England that you would ever see this dancing". In addition to the pride felt for the region, the traditions, the communities and their heritages, half of the respondents mentioned their pride of creating interest among new audiences. When asked overall feelings in participating, another dancer comments:

"I feel quite proud, actually ...when people see the dance and they've never heard of it before and you're explaining it all to them and how it's so old as well...it dates back at least two hundred years...and they've never heard of it and you go through the whole thing with them...they just love it and I love explaining it to them".

On the whole, the senses of belonging and pride that were expressed, again, related to a deeply layered relationship between heritage, community and place. Nonetheless, what has been reflected both in the above quotes and throughout the study is this encompassing theme of preservation of all three entities as well. A strong source of pride came from participating on both personal and communal levels in these safeguarding efforts. This is most exemplified by half the respondents who specifically cited a pride in bringing these traditions to new audiences. In the words of one musician, "I've become more interested recently in where I'm from...Northumberland and Newcastle...the North East traditions...and I'm interested in keeping those things alive, especially in young children". The following discussion will examine how this data can be interpreted as evidence for a certain 'spirit of place' amongst this network of people.

### 2.3 'SPIRIT OF PLACE'

'Spirit of place' for these musicians and dancers has its roots within their senses of belonging and pride to the heritage of the region, the communities and the traditions themselves. Moreover, belonging and pride were expressed in relation to the present – to their fellow community-members, the living traditions themselves and the connection to place at this current time. Moreover, the pride of being involved, both on personal and communal levels, in the safeguarding of these intangible expressions, bringing them to new audiences and sparking interest, resonates strongly with the 'spirit' of 'spirit of place'. Every respondent stated that these expressions are important and that they, personally, are involved with their preservation. They detailed, in varying degrees, the reasons of this importance and demonstrated that certain values and meanings are truly present

at rehearsals, performances and even birthday parties. By highlighting the components of both senses of belonging and pride expressed by the respondents, a certain 'spirit of place' has emerged. It can be argued that this spirit is for the multi-layered relationships between the heritage and land of the North East, the heritage of the expressions and all the people who had come before and with whom they currently share these ongoing experiences. In the words of one folk musician, "you don't have to be born here, you just have to have the knowledge of the place and the music and it's accessible to anybody...and then that wholeness just comes to anybody who wants to find it".

### **3. Communities, Heritage and 'Spirit of Place' in the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

Contemporary pressures on rural England pose threats to cultural landscape or 'spirit of place' as it is known and shaped by traditional residents. The North Pennines region, situated at the top of the Pennine mountain chain described as the 'spine' of England, exemplifies these difficulties. Whilst threats to the physical appearance of the landscape are understood, the cultural landscape, as sustained by local communities, also finds itself under increasing pressure. Agricultural employment opportunities for young people are limited, a situation compounded by house prices pushed up by the desirability of rural housing for urban-commuters. This changing profile of rural residency can, in worst case scenarios, effectuate a loss of key local services with severe ramifications for the sustainability of traditional communities and the particular 'spirit of place' that their culture creates. This section briefly investigates how 'spirit of place' is appreciated by local people through oral reminiscence and traditional music. Then a description is given of a protected landscape organisation's efforts to sustain local distinctiveness in the form of species rich hay meadows and dry stone walls.

#### **3.1 COMMUNITY GUIDED PHENOMENA**

A visit to the North Pennines in 2003 by a group of Swedish traditional musicians inspired the development of *SNAP*, an international musical exchange project. Musicians aged between 14 and 23 years were able to explore and share their musical heritage and pride in their local traditions, resulting in 2005 with a three way musical and cultural partnership between Sweden, France and the England. Funded by LEADER +, a European Union and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs sustainable development grant programme, the success of the project is characteristic of a wider community interest in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. In particular, individuals in the North Pennines are recording cultural heritage through oral reminiscences. When pressed to explain their motivations, such individuals talk of a realisation of the mortality of older generations, of an interest in cultural heritage and desire to somehow preserve it for the appreciation of the young. The *SNAP* project addresses such concerns and has proved that it is possible for young people to be enthused about cultural heritage. Now in its fourth year, *SNAP* continues to



engage the young, safeguarding this particular ‘spirit of place’ in a way that is entirely community-driven.

### 3.2 NORTH PENNINES AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY PARTNERSHIP

A protected landscape organisation has developed a project to support the passion for ‘spirit of place’ that is exercising people in the North Pennines. The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership is embarking on the *Living North Pennines* project, one aspect of which, *Our Pennine Stories* seeks to involve people in interpreting their heritage. Popular interest in the recording of oral reminiscences has been supported by delivering free training sessions. In this way the North Pennines AONB Partnership has begun to explore, acknowledge and support the local appreciation of ‘spirit of place’ with some parallels to the ecomuseum model. The North Pennines is one of 40 AONBs in England and Wales and was designated in June 1988 for its distinctive features. Designation aspires to conserve and enhance natural beauty and encompasses the cultural landscape through grant aiding and developing projects related to social and economic sustainability, and celebration of place. The AONB Partnership has identified threats to the cultural landscape, including a loss of traditional skills and the diminishing heritage of traditional patterns of dry stone walling and characteristic hay meadows (North Pennines AONB Partnership 2004:25). Specific action has been taken to address these issues through the *Hay Time* and *Dry Stone Walling Apprenticeships* projects.

#### 3.2.1 *Hay Time*

The AONB Partnership has been working with farmers to restore and enhance ‘spirit of place’ in the form of locally distinctive hay meadows through the *Hay Time* project. The North Pennines is home to some 40% of the UK’s upland hay meadows, one of rarest grassland types in the country but in recent decades, intensive farming practices have threatened the quality of hay meadows, stifling wild flower growth through the production of heavier crops of grass. Farmers have been offered advice on a return to more traditional, sustainable farming methods and volunteers have supported mechanical methods of harvesting seed. Twenty-five local volunteers collected seed by hand, creating ‘plug plants’ to aid restoration, whilst twelve amateur botanists volunteered to help survey the meadows. *Hay Time* finds itself increasingly concerned with cultural heritage: the role of farming families in the creation of hay meadows is vital as each hay meadow is a result of the idiosyncrasies of each individual farm. Retired farmers were consulted about their practices (North Pennines AONB Partnership 2008), leading to a partnership with a local museum to record oral history and hopefully create a touring exhibition. Opportunities have been provided for people to enjoy hay meadows, an in-situ approach to interpretation that resonates with ecomuseology. Walks and a plant identification guide have been published and this summer saw a *Hay Time History* event that invited people to come and learn about hay-making through talks, handling of tools, oral histories and photographs. An element of ‘spirit of place’ is thus preserved by local farmers, attracting visitors whilst sustaining traditional practices. Upland hay meadows however, are not the only element of ‘spirit of place’ in jeopardy and the AONB Partnership has also turned its attention to dry stone walls.

### 3.2.2 Dry Stone Walling Apprenticeships

The North Pennines is characterised by thousands of miles of dry stone walls, in varying states of repair, a serious maintenance issue being the dearth of professional dry stone wallers in the region which the AONB Partnership has sought to address through an apprenticeship scheme (North Pennines AONB Partnership 2008a:8). The historic walls are a visual link to the past, contributing to 'spirit of place' and also serve to provide barriers for stock, nesting sites for birds and habitats for small mammals and reptiles (North Pennines AONB Partnership 2008b:6). Seeking to address the skills shortage, the AONB Partnership teamed up with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and developed ten apprenticeships in dry stone walling which were delivered in 2007. In providing employment, the scheme has addressed issues of joblessness affecting sustainable communities. Furthermore, by making the built heritage of the walls and the associated intangible heritage of traditional walling techniques more sustainable, the apprenticeship scheme has sought to further safeguard elements of 'spirit of place' through a practical initiative delivered by local people.

### 3.3 A NORTH PENNINES ECOMUSEUM?

Activities currently being undertaken to safeguard and interpret cultural heritage indicate some similarity to the ecomuseum ideal. Revisiting the list of ecomuseum attributes described above (Davis 1999:228) some parallels can be drawn. Physically the AONB, like an ecomuseum, sits outside of conventional boundaries, cutting through three county boundary lines and encompassing several local authorities. The AONB Partnership through projects such as *Hay Time*, *Dry Stone Walling Apprenticeships* and *Our Pennine Stories* evidence an approach to conservation and interpretation which is carried out via liaison, co-operation and the development of partnerships. Local communities are empowered to decide how the region should be interpreted and visitors are encouraged, through published guides, to engage with the cultural landscape by travelling from site to site within the AONB. In developing the skills to record oral histories and accessing financial support to deliver folk-music projects, local communities are empowered to create their own cultural heritage. Research is now underway to investigate through in-depth interviews the motivations of members of these projects and others, to find out what involvement in such heritage-related activities can reveal about 'spirit of place' in the North Pennines and its ecomuseum potential.

## 4. Conclusion

With the brief overview on the ecomuseum principles and the discussion of the selected case studies, it can be noted that people have followed approaches very similarly to those of ecomuseology in the North East of England. These approaches are aimed to promote and safeguard a number of intangible and tangible heritage resources that are crucial in terms of defining local distinctiveness and which help to provide the essence and fabric associated with the 'spirit of place', linked to specific places within in the region. Because the approaches used are more democratic, they give people the opportunity to participate in heritage management processes that bring together heritage resources (both intangible and tangible), place, identity construction, self-representation, affirmation, local pride and feelings of belonging. With the apparent synergies between ecomuseology and the approaches taken in the case studies, the authors would like to suggest that people interested in 'sense of place' and 'spirit of place' acquaint themselves with the literature on ecomuseums that has been produced by academics and practitioners. Due to their understanding of what is meant by the terms 'eco' and 'museum', some English-speakers sometimes find the name ecomuseum difficult to conceptualise. However, it is the principles and practices of ecomuseology that are of use when researching, or working with, heritage resources associated with 'spirit of place'. Unlike traditional heritage management and museum work, the principles of ecomuseology ensure that people have fuller access, control and sense of ownership of the heritage resources that are retained in their original contexts thereby giving colour and texture to 'spirit of place'.

## References

- Allan, T. 1972. *Allan's Illustrated Edition of Tyneside Songs*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Newcastle upon Tyne: Frank Graham.
- Boylan P. 1992. Ecomuseums and the new museology – some definitions. *Museums Journal* 92, (4), 29.
- Buttimer, A. 1980. Home, reach and the sense of place. In Buttimer A. and Seamon, D. eds. *The Human Experience of Space and Place*. London: Croom Helm, p. 166 – 187.
- Clifford, S. and King, A. 1993. Losing your place. In Clifford, S. and King, A. eds. *Local Distinctiveness: place, particularity and identity*. London: Common Ground.
- Common Ground 1996. *Promotional Leaflet; Common Ground*. London: Common Ground
- Corsane, G. 2006. Using ecomuseum indicators to evaluate the Robben Island Museum and World Heritage Site. *Landscape Research*, 31(4), 399-418.
- Corsane, G., Davis, P., Elliot, S., Maggi, M., Murtas, D. and Rogers, S. 2007. Ecomuseum evaluation: experiences in Piemonte and Liguria, Italy *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 13(2), 101 - 116.
- Corsane, G. and Holleman, W. 1993. Ecomuseums: a brief evaluation. In De Jong, R. ed. *Museums and the Environment*. Pretoria: Southern Africa Museums Association, p.111-

- Crang, M. 1998. *Cultural Geography*. Routledge, London and New York.
- Davis, P 1999. *Ecomuseums: a sense of place*. Continuum, London and New York.
- Davis, P. 2007. Ecomuseums and sustainability in Italy, Japan and China: adaptation through implementation. In Knell, S. J., MacLeod, S. and Watson, S.E.R. eds. *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and are Changed*. London and New York: Routledge.
- European Network of Ecomuseums 2004. *Declaration of Intent of the Long Net Workshop*. May 2004. Trento (Italy). Available from <http://www.localworlds.eu/PAPERS/intents.pdf> ;accessed 14 July 2008.
- Lawrenson, T. 2007. *Lecture: History of Rapper Dancing*. 17 September 2007. Newcastle on Tyne.
- Meinig, D. W. 1979. The beholding eye: ten versions of the same scene. In Meinig, D. W., ed. *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 33 – 50.
- Murphy, J. 2007. Northumbrian Music from the Smallpipes to Alex Glasgow. In Robert Colls ed., *Northumbria History and Identity 547 – 2000*. Chichester: Phillimore.
- North Pennines AONB Partnership 2004. North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2004 - 09.
- North Pennines AONB Partnership. 2007. North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Annual Report 2006/2007
- North Pennines AONB Partnership. 2008. Apprenticeship Success. *North Pennines News*. Autumn & Winter 2007/2008: 6
- North Pennines AONB Partnership. 2008. Spotlight on...the History of Hay Time. *North Pennines News*. Autumn & Winter 2007/08: 8
- Relph, E. E. 1976. *Place and placelessness*. Pion, London.
- Rivard, R. 1984. *Opening up the museum*. Quebec City. [Typescript at the Documentation Centre, Direction des Musées de France, Paris].
- Rivard, R. 1988. Museums and ecomuseums – questions and answers. In Gjestrum, J. A. and Maure, M. eds. *Ecomuseumsboka – identitet, okologi, deltakelse*. Tromsø, Norway: ICOM, 123 – 128
- Rodman, M. 2003. Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality. In Low, S.M. and Lawrence-Zúñiga, D. ed. *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell, 204 – 224
- Say, B. 2003. Northumbrian Pipers' Society [online]. Available from <http://www.northumbrianpipers.org.uk/history.htm>; accessed 3 November 2006.
- Sharp, Cecil J. (1913) *The Sword Dances of Northern England*. London: Novello and Company.
- Smith, L. 2006. *Uses of Heritage*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Stefano, M. & Corsane, G. 2008. The applicability of the ecomuseum ideal in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in North East England. In Amoêda, R., Lira, S., Pinheiro, C., Pinheiro, F., & Pinheiro, J. eds. *World Heritage and Sustainable Development*. Barcelos: Green Lines Institute.