

Barry Raftery

We are sorry to have to report that Prof Barry Raftery of Dublin has died after a long illness. Barry was one of the founding members of WARP, the Wetland Archaeology Research Project, in the mid-1980s, and the first modern Irish archaeologist to tackle the major wetland peatbogs of central Ireland. His work at Corlea, on a massive Iron Age trackway, led to important developments in the conservation of wood, the preservation of structural remains, the presentation of results through the Corlea Visitor Centre, and the recognition that the Irish peatlands deserved major attention within the wider archaeological community.

Barry collaborated with Bryony Coles through their universities, Dublin and Exeter, with European Social Fund support, to promote post-graduate training in wetland archaeology. This combined work came to involve Dutch and Danish archaeologists in collaborative and fruitful training and research. Barry's attendance at conferences at Silkeborg in Denmark and Gainesville in Florida, and his frequent visits to the Somerset Levels, led on to the 1998 WARP conference in Dublin, a major event. His own research led to a fine series of publications on the Irish wetlands. His visit to the wetlands of Japan with Akira Matsui was profitable to the development of wetland archaeology in both countries.

Barry was on the Directorate of the Discovery Programme in Ireland, along with John Coles, and this encouraged the emergence of wetland research projects such as that at Loch Kinale. Throughout his long career, Barry lectured widely in Europe and helped in the development of wetland archaeology in many countries. Members of his field and laboratory team are now working to promote wetland studies, and we of the Wetland Archaeology Research Project acknowledge the enormous contribution made by our good friend and colleague Barry Raftery.

John and Bryony Coles, August 24 2010



Barry Raftery (on ladder) at Derryoghil 1988 Photo John Coles



Barry Raftery and Bryony Coles at Lanesborough 1988 Photo John Coles