



First Newsletter of the Association for Tree-Ring Research

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**Association For Tree-Ring Research (ATR) founded**

In September 2001, during a conference held in honour of Prof. Dr. Fritz Hans Schweingruber in Davos (Switzerland), a group of scientists involved in dendrochronology met and founded a new scientific association dedicated to tree-ring research.

The aims of this organisation are to represent dendrochronology towards policy makers, funding agencies and the interested public, to promote the public awareness of tree-ring research and to support and coordinate activities in the scientific and educational field.

Part of the motivation for funding such a association lies in the structure of tree-ring science in Europe and in the situation of many small laboratories and working groups. While established tree-ring laboratories in Central Europe, especially in Germany, are centred in Institutes for botany, forestry or archaeology, during recent years a bulk of activities came up in many other applied disciplines, such as climatology, geomorphology, vegetation sciences and other fields. The situation of these newly-established working groups is in some cases characterised by a lack of technical and scientific infrastructure (e.g. scientific literature) and a lack of experience in many aspects of tree-ring sciences.

On the one side, the ATR does not want to focus its activities to Germany or German speaking countries. In fact, ATR intends to serve regional European demands but also tries to include Russia and other eastern countries. Therefore, the main language of communication will be English. On the other side, the ATR does not intend to extend its activities outside of the area mentioned. The latter policy, of uniting dendrochronologists regardless of their

geographical position, is covered by the International Tree-Ring Society (ITRS). Activities between the ATR and the ITRS will be closely coordinated in the future, but a certain regional allocation of the society is demanded by some European funding agencies.

Thus, there is a regional demand to serve the needs of a very vivid, but dispersed structure of dendrochronological working groups in Germany and the surrounding countries. This was the starting point for the foundation of a society that can provide a certain structure to host and promote activities in dendrochronology and that also can mediate contacts in specific problems related to the wide field of tree-ring research.

Thus, important aspects of activities of ATR shall be dedicated to education of undergraduate and graduate students. Therefore, classes, lectures, laboratory and field weeks organised by different institutions shall be coordinated and supported.

As a central information platform, a website (<http://www.jahrring.de/> and <http://www.tree-ring.org/>) was created which presents topic information about ongoing conferences, education, new literature, free positions and a discussion forum. Presently, the website is available in English and German, translations into French, Spanish and Russian are under way.



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**Membership:**

Membership application forms can be filled out online via the homepage of the ATR (<http://www.jahrring.de/> and <http://www.tree-ring.org/>).

The annual membership-fee is € 50,- (**Students € 20,-**, attestation required).

2003 is the first year during which the membership is collected. Payment is possible by bank transfer to the account of the association (see below), or cash at the general meeting of the association in Utrecht in May 2003 (see homepage). For the future we kindly ask the members to transfer the amount at maturity. This is January 31st at latest. To avoid bank charges (esp. for foreign members) there will always be the opportunity to pay cash at the general meetings.

Bank account:

Gesellschaft für Jahrringforschung e.V.
Volksbank Bonn Rhein-Sieg eG
Bank code: 380 601 86
Account number: 300 222 90 12

Starting in 2003, the members of the association will receive the Proceedings of the Association for Tree-Ring Research for free. These proceedings contain the papers resulting from the presentations given during the annual conference and meeting of the ATR in the preceding year. Volume 1, based on the conference in Bonn in April 2002, will be presented at the upcoming meeting in Utrecht (1-3 May, 2003).

Outlook on the Annual 2003 in Utrecht:

From 1-3 May, we will gladly welcome you to the second annual conference of the Association for Tree-Ring Research (ATR): TRACE 2003 - Tree Rings in Archaeology, Climatology and Ecology. It will take place in the historical town of Utrecht (The Netherlands). Around 70 scientists and students from Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Great Britain, Germany and The Netherlands will participate.

During TRACE 2003, 25 talks and 12 posters will be presented on subjects ranging from geomorphology and climatology (ring width and isotopes), to palaeo-environment and cultural heritage. The variety of subjects illustrates that tree-ring research is successfully applied in a wide range of research contexts. By organizing TRACE 2003 in the Netherlands, we hope to communicate this fact to (parts of) the Dutch scientific community, in order to ensure that dendrochronology becomes more firmly embedded in the various educational programs offered by, among others, universities.

We express our gratitude to the following sponsors: (1) the National Service for Archaeological Heritage in the Netherlands ROB (Amersfoort); (2) the Faculty of Biology of Utrecht University (Utrecht), (3) Forschungszentrum Juelich GmbH (Juelich) and (4) the Netherlands Centre for Dendrochronology (RING Foundation; Amersfoort).

More information about TRACE 2003 (location, programme, list of participants, abstracts) can be found at

http://www.bio.uu.nl/~palaeo/Congressen/Dendro2003/intro_dendro2003.htm



Topics of the meeting will be:

TOP 1: Report of Prof. Schleser about achievements and developments of ATR since the last annual meeting in Bonn.

TOP 2: Report of the treasurer (Dr. Holger Gärtner) about the financial situation of ATR

TOP 3: Introduction about the development of a flyer about tree-ring research for the public

TOP 4: additional topics

Members are warmly invited to bring up further topics that shall be discussed in the plenum and mail their suggestions to Achim Bräuning (achim.braeuning@geographie.uni-stuttgart.de).

Series: Tree-Ring Labs in Europe

In this column, which will appear regularly in each forthcoming newsletter, we introduce tree-ring labs all over Europe. Doing so, we hope to encourage contacts and scientific exchange between different working groups and laboratories and to offer a platform also for younger, smaller or specialised laboratories to make themselves known within the scientific community. The short articles should contain information about specific interests and competence, laboratory facilities and staff, ongoing projects and training and education activities. Contributions are welcome and should be sent to A. Bräuning (achim.braeuning@geographie.uni-stuttgart.de).

The Budapest Tree-Ring Laboratory

The most important event of the year 2002 for us was the establishment of the Tree-Ring Laboratory within the Department of Palaeontology of Eötvös University (Budapest, Hungary) (<http://pangea.elte.hu/paleo/dendro>). András GRYNÆUS (archaeologist and dendrochronologist) and Miklós KÁZMÉR, (geologist) cooperated in assembling the basic equipment: increment borers, tools for a wood workshop, a chain saw, books of the profession, and a LINTAB measuring table. Disks and cores were collected in several field trips throughout the year, and sixteen students attended the first ever dendrochronology course at Eötvös University.

Projects

Ghetarul de Focul Viu (otherwise named as Eskimo Cave) in Bihor Mts, Romania, contains 14 m thick ice. Trees have been falling in the cave through an opening in the roof, and are preserved frozen in the ice. A 7 m long ice core has been analysed previously for oxygen isotopes and for tritium. We plan to date the ice by dendrochronology of the trees embedded at various depths. Trees around the cave entry were sampled by increment borer. Logs in the ice were accessed by mountaineering techniques, and hand saws were used to take disks.



Trees and ice in Ghetarul de Focul Viu (Eskimo Cave), Bihor Mts, Romania. (Photo: B. NAGY)

Another, extensively sampled locality is near Nyékládháza. Some of the gravel pits expose subfossil trees here. Recent excavations to supply earth fill for the new M3 highway removed the 3-4 m thick topsoil. Hundreds of dark-colored tree trunks were exposed in an area 500 m long and 200 m wide. Position and orientation of logs were measured by GPS and compass. We found a Medieval well, lined with planks, too. Members of the July expedition were András GRYNÆUS and Miklós KÁZMÉR, and Tamás PUSKÁS (archaeologist).



Subfossil tree at Nyékládháza, Hungary.
(Photo: A. GRYNÆUS)

We started a systematic study for climate sensitivity of tree species in the Pannonian Basin. A black spruce forest was sampled in Buda Hills by the help of the Dendrochronology student class.

Teaching

The first course of Dendrochronology at Eötvös University held during the Fall semester in 2002 was a success beyond any anticipation. 16 students attended and got credit: geographers, geography teachers, biologists and a meteorologist. Lecturers András Grynaeus and Miklós Kázmér provided a broad overview on the history, methods, and applications of tree-ring research. Field and laboratory practicals involved forest measuring techniques, use of the increment borer, sample preparation, and skeleton plotting.

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