

The European Archaeological Heritage Prize 2010

Decision

The EAA Committee for the European Archaeological Heritage Prize, consisting of Anastasia Tourta from Greece, Luboš Jirán from the Czech Republic, Mircea Angelescu from Romania, and Willem Willems from the Netherlands (chair), has decided to award the twelfth Heritage Prize of the European Association of Archaeologists to professor doctor David John Breeze from Scotland, in recognition of his contributions to international cooperation in heritage conservation and archaeological heritage management.



Justification for the Prize

Professor Breeze has recently retired from a distinguished career with the national heritage agency, Historic Scotland, where for many years he served as head of profession within the Inspectorate.

His contribution to the advancement of archaeology, and particularly to standards of archaeological scholarship within the United Kingdom and further afield, would have been remarkable had he worked within an academic institution such as a university. To have achieved so much while working within a heritage management organisation is truly exceptional. Professor Breeze's contributions to the field of Roman studies, and particularly to the topic of Roman frontier studies, are widely recognised throughout Europe. His role in organising the Congress of Roman Frontier Studies is of major significance for European research and for research cooperation between European countries and those along the shores of the Mediterranean in North Africa and the Near East.

However, the reason for awarding him the EAA prize is specifically for his contribution towards the field of international cooperation in heritage conservation and management. Already heavily engaged in international heritage matters through his links to the Limes Congress over many years, Professor Breeze seized an opportunity to advance the practical conservation of the Roman frontiers of Europe – and potentially beyond, into Asia and Africa – which presented itself in the early 2000s. He led the negotiations and practical work involved in nominating Scotland's Antonine Wall as a UNESCO World Heritage Site while also managing the EU Culture 2000 project "Frontiers of the Roman Empire" and the EAA working group on Roman frontiers.

The outcome, as is now widely known, was not simply the acceptance of the Antonine Wall onto UNESCO's list in July 2008 but also the invention of a new type of trans-national, multcentred, World Heritage Site. This novel concept required considerable skills of diplomacy and resourceful negotiation, bringing together several national heritage agencies and ministries, as well as many independent scholars, to agree a shared vision and a forward agenda. Without the unrivalled knowledge, unfailing energy, philosophical disposition and constant cheerfulness with which Professor Breeze approached his duties, this monumental

task would almost certainly not have been achieved. The multi-, or transnational model is now being emulated in other areas of cultural heritage around the world.

Thus we might perhaps say the achievement is not limited to the Roman frontiers of Europe, but is genuinely proving to be a creation of "outstanding universal value" in its own right. Within the United Kingdom, Professor Breeze has been awarded numerous distinctions: he is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, an Honorary Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and an Honorary Member of the Institute for Archaeologists. He holds the status of visiting or honorary professor at 3 Universities (Durham, Edinburgh, Newcastle) and has been awarded the Honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by a fourth (Glasgow). He has recently been created an Officer of the Order of the British Empire. But that is all national. It is for his international and European achievements and contributions that the Heritage Prize Committee of the EAA came to the unanimous decision to award the 2010 European Archaeological Heritage Prize to David Breeze.