FORENSIC TAPHONOMIC RESEARCH AND PRACTICE: THE IMPACT OF TAPHONOMY ON FORENSIC ARCHAEOLOGY

CIfA Forensic Archaeology Special Interest Group

Saturday 17 June 2017

School of Forensic and Applied Sciences
University of Central Lancashire

School of Forensic and Applied Sciences, University of Central Lancashire, Preston PR1 2HE, Lancashire, United Kingdom
**FORENSIC TAPHONOMY**

Taphonomy is the science of post-mortem processes. Originally defined by the palaeontologist Efremov as the “transition of organic remains from the biosphere to the lithosphere” the discipline has had significant impact on the geosciences, prehistoric archaeology, and latterly forensic science.

The co-option of taphonomy into the forensic sphere has been described by Dirkmaat and colleagues (2008) as “the most significant development [to] alter the field of forensic anthropology” in the last 20 years. Applied to the medico-legal process the discipline has become synonymous with the ‘laws of burial’, and has included the study of processes as diverse as post-mortem interval estimation, the degradation of biomolecules, burial chemistry, trauma analysis, and biases in recovery methods in forensic archaeology. This Special Interest Group meeting will focus on the interplay between forensic taphonomy and forensic archaeology, with particular emphasis on the role that Taphonomic Research Facilities, colloquially known as ‘body farms’ play in both research and practice.

The day will include a visit to TRACES. Established by UCLan in 2009, this is the largest dedicated decomposition and taphonomic research facility in Europe.

**Confirmed speakers include:** Peter Cross (UCLan), Mike Groen (Netherlands Forensic Institute, Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice), Pat Randolph-Quinney (UCLan), Steve Walden (University of Cardiff) and Anna Williams (University of Huddersfield).

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00 - 09:30</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:30 - 12:00</td>
<td>Taphonomy and archaeology presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 - 15:00</td>
<td>Site visit to UCLan TRACES taphonomic research facility</td>
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<td>15:30 - 17:00</td>
<td>SIG AGM and business meeting</td>
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Refreshments will be provided during the day. If you are intending to visit the TRACES facility please ensure you bring your own:

- Packed lunch
- Drinking water
- Sunscreen and/or a hat
- Wet weather gear
- Wellington boots

A 12-seater minibus will be provided for those without their own car transport.

**Venue:** Foster Building  
(marked FB on campus map, reception accessed via Corporation Street entrance)

**Parking:** Visitor parking will be provided in the Victoria Car Park (marked 19 on campus map). Please email the organiser with vehicle licence number.

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**ORGANISER DETAILS**

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