

In Honour of Willem Beex!

Chairs:

Benno RIDDERHOF, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Giorgio VERDIANI, University of Florence, Italy

Wolfgang BÖRNER, Urban Archaeology of Vienna, Austria

Willem Beex (1962–2019) was a member of a special generation of archaeologists. Educated traditionally in the 1970's and 1980's Willem attended universities in Groningen and Amsterdam. In those days, Dutch students first had to get a degree in Art History before they were allowed to study archaeology. So Willem got his master in Art History with a specialization in early modern architecture in Groningen. Then he moved to the University of Amsterdam and studied Prehistory and his master thesis analysed Bronze Age burial mounds in Northern Europe.

The 1980s and early 1990s were a time of change and great opportunity in Dutch Archaeology. New digital techniques along with new theories and models were introduced in Archaeology. Databases and Theodolites and first-generation Total Stations and digital drawing changed the landscape of archaeology not only in the classrooms of the universities but also in research and fieldwork. And Willem was one of the first pioneers in the Netherlands.

This starting position enabled Willem Beex not to become a one subject or period archaeologist. With his theoretical, practical and field background Willem could and did work on all periods of archaeology and in many countries.

To give a few examples:

Willem worked as university teacher in Leiden and Amsterdam. He worked as a site supervisor in Italy, UK, USA and the Netherlands. He was a theodolite and total station specialist in Lebanon, Egypt and the Netherlands. He also was a regular visitor to conferences and one of the most active members in the Scientific Committee of the annual CHNT conference in Vienna.

This session honoured Willem's long and diverse career.