

Interpret Europe

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Linking individuals and organisations to enhance the quality of the interpretation and presentation of the European natural and cultural heritage

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Special focus: Interpretation in Eastern and Central Europe

Contents

Editorial.....	1
Alive and kicking: Living Heritage in Bulgaria.....	2
Trailing, but no way behind: An Information Nature Trail in the Slovak Republic	3
Interpretation training in the Czech Republic.....	5
Natural Heritage Interpretation in Slovakia	6
Wilderness Interpretation - The European contribution	8
Interpret Europe: News and plans	10
Steering Group	12
Country news and reports.....	13
Job request!.....	15
Reports from recent events	15
Forthcoming events	17
Next edition.....	18

Editorial

Welcome to the fifth edition of the Interpret Europe bulletin! With no less than xx pages this is the largest edition to date, providing the usual round-up of news and developments. It is also the first issue that has a specific thematic focus, as well as containing a discussion paper on a particular issue. This time the spotlight is on Central and Eastern Europe and on wilderness interpretation - the beginning, we hope, of a regular series of features and a lively discussion amongst IE members.

CEE countries are amongst the most rapidly developing countries in terms of interpretation. Some very exciting and innovative approaches to heritage and environmental interpretation are currently being developed, as Steering Group members were able to experience at the April meeting in Bratislava. What is particularly interesting is the wide range of contexts in which interpretation

takes place and the objectives it serves: Not only is interpretation considered an essential tool in the preservation of historic monuments or in showing heritage to the local and international public, but it also has a firm place as a tool of community development. The Living Heritage Project is an impressive example of this. CEE countries are also at the forefront of developing new approaches to training in interpretation, drawing in experts from abroad where necessary and using this as a basis from which to address specific needs. We're pleased to be able to share some of the creative energy currently experienced in CEE countries.

On an internal front, Interpret Europe has continued to consolidate its activities by contributing to several conferences and expanding our membership base. Unfortunately activities are still severely restricted by lack of funding, and hence we've not been able to achieve as much as we had hoped to. Delays primarily affect our planned website re-design and the establishment of the web-based membership database. New opportunities might present themselves through the continuation of the TransInterpret Project through LEADER+, offering possibilities for hosting our long awaited launch conference in 2004 and providing a framework for taking Interpret Europe some steps closer towards becoming a formal Association. More information on Interpret Europe is provided in the News section.

Our thanks to everyone who actively contributed to this bulletin. We always look forward to hearing from you - so if you have any articles, information, requests or comments, do get in touch with us at

info@interpret-europe.net

With seasonal greetings and best wishes for 2003

Your Interpret Europe Secretariat

Kira Gee and Patrick Lehnies

Alive and kicking: Living Heritage in Bulgaria

Violeta Nenova

Living Heritage - what is it?

Living Heritage (LH) is an initiative of the King Baudouin Foundation. It is a grant and capacity development programme aimed at enabling local community development in Southeast Europe through the promotion of sustainable culture and heritage initiatives. The foundation is working towards this aim through working with local communities, public authorities, NGOs and other partners; facilitating open, fair and participative processes in every stage of development of Living Heritage projects so as to establish mutual commitment and local ownership; gearing the work according to the specific features of local situations; boosting local expertise, knowledge and organizational skills, and supporting appropriate sustainable heritage and cultural projects.

The LH programme builds upon an innovative approach to heritage and its interaction with local communities. Beyond traditional typologies, heritage is to be understood here as a resource, a form of social capital which may contribute to the environment and quality of life of local communities. The LH programme is based on the principles of empowering local communities to take control over resources, addressing priority needs as identified by communities themselves. It promotes participation and inclusiveness whilst also respecting diversity and actively supports the celebration of local distinctiveness.

Main programme components

Living Heritage provides small and/or medium size grants to community based organizations and local institutions to enable positive change in the lives of communities through cultural and heritage resources. The grant-making policy

(number and size of grants, project identification and assessment) may vary from one country to another, according to local needs and priorities as well as the budget available.

Living Heritage also has a capacity building element targeted both at the co-ordinating partners and at the project holders. This scheme has been designed in order to address basic needs, such as the following:

- Participatory planning and decision-making
- Organisational development and capacity building
- Local resources mobilisation
- Networking and coalition building

A 'Regional development team' comprising international experts and consultants was set up in order to further develop the programme tools and elements. In addition to specific schemes determined according to local needs, two types of training can be delivered by the Regional development team:

- **Information seminar:** a one-day meeting aimed at introducing the LH principles and practices to co-ordinating partners as well as reference group members and local stakeholders
- **Project development workshop:** a three-day training session aiming at enabling projects holders to turn their initial ideas and plans into an operational project

Living Heritage in Bulgaria

The Living Heritage is co-funded by the Open Society Foundation-Sofia and is implemented by the Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation (WCIF). During the first phase of the programme which was launched late 2001, small grants are provided to community based organizations and local institutions in Dorkovo, Ivanovo, Trigrad and Gotse Delchev. Apart from producing tangible positive change through the support to grassroots initiatives, the programme also aims at strengthening the

capacities of local institutions and organizations to engage successfully in similar processes and activities in the future. Additionally about twenty young professionals have been recruited to follow a one-year training programme focused on community facilitation, participatory project development and implementation.

Ivanovo village: Preserving memory and cultural heritage

"In quest of the spring" this is how the Ivanovo team calls their project. "We want to know more about our past, about our roots. We want to raise the self-confidence and pride of our children, make them aware of the cultural richness of our village and by doing so - keep them here" - says Tatiana Mladenova, the director of the local kindergarten and presently - a coordinator of the project.

Ivanovo is now a thriving modern village with 1100 inhabitants but few of them remember what it looked like before 1962 when the village was 4 km away from its present day territory. Now one cannot find any traces from the old village but two remaining walls of the old church.

"By recording stories from the people who still remember the old village and by looking through the archives we will revive and preserve the memory and cultural heritage of our village - we believe that this will strengthen the sense of identity and pride in local people" goes on Vasil Vasilev - coordinator of the local Tourist center.

Presently the number of volunteers is rising with a tendency to reach 100.

Dorkovo: The Festival

"The Festival" was organized for first time in 1996. However it has its roots far in the past and is related to the old traditional feast dedicated to St. Ilia. Since 1996 we have been trying to make it more sustainable and to improve its quality.

We believe that the Living Heritage Programme is a good opportunity to reach this goal which will bring about for preserving, supporting and promoting the

development of the cultural and historic traditions, for bridging the diverse religious and ethnic communities in Dorkovo and its region." - says Todor Mazanov - one of the first organizers of the festival and presently, coordinator of the project "Development, Revitalization and Promotion of the International Authentic Folklore Festival - Dorkovo".

One of the new aspects of the Festival will be the Children Festival in the spring - a miniature copy of the big summer one. "So far we have been organizing everything just a few weeks before the beginning of the event. Now (at the beginning of June) we already have a clear idea about the groups that are going to participate and many of the organizational details are already taken care of" - says Stanislava Kotulova- curator of the museum in the nearby village and member of the coordinating team.

The people living in Dorkovo (3000 as of the last census) are very proud of the nearby medieval fortress. Currently they are working on plans of its usage for the development of the festival.

For more information about the LH Foundation and its projects, check www.living-heritage.org or contact:

Violeta Nenova
Living Heritage Programme Manager
WCIF,
Knyaz Boris str. No 78
Sofia 1000
Bulgaria,
+ 359 2 980 12 68
+ 359 2 987 98 03
vnenova@wcif.bg.org

Trailing, but no way behind: An Information Nature Trail in the Slovak Republic

Stefan Szabo

Brief portrait of SOSNA

In the following, our Information Nature Trail in the Upper Abov Microregion is

described as an example of our activity. The organisation responsible is SOSNA, a nonprofit, non governmental environmental civic association founded in 1991 in Slovak Republic. Our mission is to spread ideas, attitudes and skills which contribute towards sustainable life. Our programmes are focused on the following: Natural heritage interpretation, development of educational pathways, environmental protection, environmental education, guide services, rural tourism, trainings on sustainable tourism, strategies for sustainable development of rural regions, cross-border cooperation with Hungary.

Information Nature Trail in the Upper Abov Microregion

Eleven stations, eleven information panels, are waiting to tell you more about this area. Walk slowly, touch after touch absorb the pictures on the panels. Give them the opportunity to touch you. Take only your impressions and leave only your footsteps.

First station - the village of Ždana and traditional architecture of the Upper Abov region

...in the cooking quarters there was a stone stove where the woman of the house baked bread...

Second station - Turecký creek

...the falcon or Common Buzzard circles high above with its prey to bring it to its forest nest...

Third station - Skaros and the traditional dress of the Upper Abov

...under the traditional decorated vest she wears a sleeveless blouse, under this blouse a shirt with cuffed sleeves...

Fourth station - botanical

...in the forest canopy dominate local species of Oak trees, rare oaks appear to be found Quercus cerus...

Fifth station - Koscelek and the stone labyrinth

...water from the spring was heated by hot stones and later taken to the Turkish bath...

Sixth station - Olšava and Hornád Rivers

...a rare nester in vertical banks of the river is Riparia Riparia...

Seventh station - geological and paleontology

... drylands were here, 22 million year ago, while the north Kosice basin was already flooded...

Eighth Station - the history of Nižná Myšľa -- archeological excavation

...they brought pottery to perfection without ever knowing the pottery wheel...

Ninth Station – The Skároš Castle

...the Castle was used not only for settlement, but also for the watching of old way from Abaújvár to Košice...

Tenth Station - the history of Trstené pri Hornáde

...original name of this village was "Saka", taken from old slavonic surname "Sak"...

Eleventh Station – flood forests of Hornád river

... flood forests presents the most rich ecosystems in the central European conditions ...



Example of a panel at one of the stations

For more information on the trail and other SOSNA activities contact:

Stefan Szabo
SOSNA
Pražska 2
Kosice
Slovak Republic
tel-fax +421 55 644 51

Interpretation training in the Czech Republic

James Carter

Since February this year I have been working with Nadace Partnerství, a Czech based environmental and community development project, on an interpretation training scheme. This is part of a wider programme to train facilitators across the Czech Republic in the skills they need to help locally based environmental and heritage groups.



The Slavonice Gang

The training covers the philosophy of what interpretation is, introduces good practice guidelines for common media such as exhibitions, and gives participants a chance to practice developing clear themes and to think about the characteristics of their audiences. So far we have run two sessions: one in Svätý Jan pod Skalou, a tiny village near Prague where St John the hermit lived in a cave, and a second in Slavonice near the Austrian border, where Renaissance houses are decorated with sgraffito pictures of Bible scenes. In May next year we meet again to review progress on the projects and plan for the future. A manual on interpretation planning that I edited and co-authored a few years ago (*A Sense of Place*, published by The Tourism and Environment Forum, Inverness, 1997) has been translated into Czech and forms a handbook for the courses.

Interpretation in the Czech Republic faces some interesting challenges. One is for interpretation to help establish other visitor destinations apart from Prague. The capital is as magnificent as everyone had told me it would be, but there is a rich store of other beautiful and fascinating places that are hardly known outside its borders. There is also a huge network of well marked footpaths: they made me realise just what a poor legacy Britain's feudal land ownership system has left us! Another challenge is a legacy of the bitter aftermath of the Second World War. In some areas the German speaking population was expelled, after which the communist regime stifled any ideas for community-based action. This has left whole regions with a population that must make new connections with the land, and develop a new sense of their culture.



In Svätý Jan pod Skalou

Another challenge is to make sure that interpretation is developed as a creative act: a special sort of storytelling linked to exploring places, objects and culture. It is all too easy, in Scotland just as much as in the Czech Republic, for it to be dominated by academic specialists. The result is exhibitions that should have been books, and that only their peers might find interesting!

James Carter works a freelance consultant and trainer in interpretation and communication
Chair of the Association for Heritage Interpretation
(www.heritage-interpretation.org.uk).
He is based in Edinburgh, Scotland and can be contacted on james@jamescarter.cc.

The manual *A Sense of Place* is available as a pdf file from www.scotinterpnet.org.uk

Natural Heritage Interpretation in Slovakia

Janka Cziráková & Veronika Fodorová

Slovakia is a small country in Central Europe with 5 million inhabitants on ca. 49,000 km². Comprising its highest and largest parts Slovakia is really the heart of the Carpathians. Thanks to the varied topography and a long-standing tradition of forestry 40 % of Slovakia is still covered by well preserved forests with high biodiversity. Species like wolf, bear, lynx, golden eagle etc. form part of our wilderness. The most valuable parts of nature are protected in 9 national parks (NP) and 14 protected landscape areas (PLA). The value of these nature areas has also been recognised at international level with 4 UNESCO Biosphere Reserves designated in Slovakia.



Slovakia at the heart of Europe

Under the current economic transition considerable pressure is exerted on our protected areas from the timber industry and tourism entrepreneurs. In this context environmental education and interpretation

have highest priority. Interpretation is seen as a way of creating positive public attitude towards protected areas and increasing environmental awareness. It is necessary to explain scientific knowledge of nature's values in such a way that local people can and tourists can appreciate.

Interpretation can take a lot of different forms. However, it is important to choose the right form for a given site and target group. In the past interpretation has focused mostly on general environmental problems especially during big events such as the Days of Nature Protection, the Day of Earth, or World Environmental Day. During such events films and documentaries about environmental issues were shown in cinemas but without any consideration given to the age and interest of the audience. Normally these were school children who were told to take part but had no real interest. Traditionally litter picks in the areas surrounding schools and parks were also organised as part of these events. Hundreds of pupils took part. However, the main message was not put across as there was no time for explanations and for creating positive attitudes to nature.

A better means were lectures and discussion provided by NP staff about their daily work. Another activity, which children like very much, are the summer camps for young friends of nature organised by the NGO 'Slovak association of nature and landscape conservators'.



Outdoor activities

During these camps young people have an opportunity to join scientists and specialists in mapping species and habitats in protected areas. Scientific knowledge is transformed into children's understanding of natural values in a very active way which brings useful results for both.

This NGO has also designed and implemented many useful education trails but sometimes the language on the information panels is too scientific for the general public.



Nature trail information panel

Political changes have brought about the establishment of many other environmental NGOs very active in the field of environmental education. Also state environmental organisations e.g. the State Nature Conservancy and Slovak environmental agency – have realised that there is a need to co-operate more intensively with local people.

Many new activities and ideas dealing with nature interpretation now come from students of environmental education. A good example is the so-called "Ecotheatre". Some environmental problems can be

explained to children and also adults in theatre plays. The alternative is for the children to prepare and perform their own play about environmental issues encountered in their daily life - in a way they themselves understand these issues.



Ecotheatre in progress

New experiences and trends can be obtained from our international co-operation and partnerships, for instance between NPs. Many successful projects have resulted from such co-operation such as new education trails, brochures, leaflets, or films. According to our experience the best way of working with children and adults is active interpretation outside the classroom, where they can see, hear, taste and feel nature. There are few people dealing with this kind of interpretation in Slovakia but with support from the "Danish Cooperation for the Environment in Eastern Europe (DANCEE)" the "school of nature protection" was established in Varin, which provides interpretation training for teachers, NP staff and volunteers.

Another DANCEE project "Participatory and Sustainable Management of Tatra NP" in Slovakia focuses on increasing public environmental awareness especially in the process of preparing a new management plan for the NP. Interpretation is very important in this process for achieving one of the aims of the project – to involve stakeholders and the public in the sustainable management of this protected area.

Interpretation is one of the main tools for increasing understanding of nature protection, and for achieving sustainable

development in our country. Therefore there is clear need for sharing experiences between other countries.

Janka Cziráková and Veronika Fodorová
Tatra NP, Slovakia

Wilderness Interpretation - The European contribution

Thorsten Ludwig

We know that the USA provided the stage for the development of interpretation from an idea to a profession. We also know that interpretation has always paralleled efforts of protecting wilderness areas.

In 1871 **John Muir**, son of a Scottish priest, who paved the way for Yosemite National Park, wrote into his note book:

"I'll interpret the rocks, learn the language of flood, storm and the avalanche. I'll acquaint myself with the glaciers and wild gardens, and get as near to the heart of the world as I can."

Even in the US, this was an uncommon way to look at wilderness. Interpreting the "language" of the wild became a new type of "translation".

A few years later, 14 year old **Enos Mills**, a young friend of John Muir's, went to the Rocky Mountains and set up a small cabin to live there. Through his advocacy, Rocky Mountain National Park was established, and we interpreters owe him the first establishment of nature guiding. As he brought his visitors up to Long's Peak he gradually broadened his horizons. Face to face with wilderness he created a trail school which certified the first men and women(!) as nature guides. "He who feels the spell of the wild... is in tune with the universe", Mills said. He elaborates on that in his book *Adventures of a Nature Guide*, first published in 1920 (Mills, 1990).

Finally **Freeman Tilden** travelled the parks, set up his six principles of interpretation, and with the first edition of *Interpreting Our Heritage* (Tilden, 1957) a new profession was born.

Now of course, interpretation is no longer limited to national parks. Nature parks, museums, zoos and botanical gardens became interested in the methods of translating the language of specific phenomena into the language of their visitors. Today we deal with a lot of fields of interpretation ranging from interpreting the sky to underwater interpretation.

Was wilderness interpretation just a preliminary stage, reflecting the situation in the USA, and should we class it insignificant in densely populated Europe?

I don't think so. Wilderness interpretation is one of the most modern branches of our profession. It can stimulate personal growth and support the sustainable development of our western society. Wilderness interpretation is not just a question of outer place, but also needs impulses from inside.

The Relevance to the Individual

We are used to living in a well-organized world. On the one hand, wild nature fascinates us; but on the other, we consider it a permanent threat. For a long time man has assumed that the laws of culture wouldn't have much to do with the laws of nature. Wild and cultivated areas seemed to be the opposite ends of a scale. But times have changed.

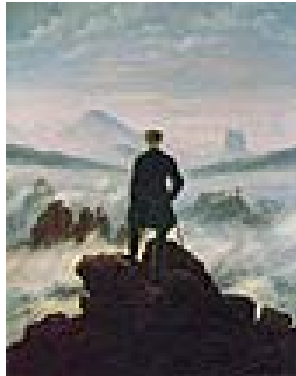
Apart from values such as loyalty and order, creativity and adaptability have become key qualifications in a society which is increasingly characterized by continuous change. Suddenly we recognize relationships and patterns - e.g. between ecology and economy - and are beginning to suspect that nature has much more to tell us than we first assumed.

Fortunately interpretation is about revealing such connections. On the occasion of planning an interpretive trail through a gorge for the German-Czech international park Sächsisch-Böhmische Schweiz, we figured out a whole bunch of similarities, showing that "the wild" is not only a phenomenon surrounding us in a national park. It also penetrates our society and the mind of each individual. Finding a balance between order and chaos becomes vital.

Our national parks allow visitors to search for this balance in a safe atmosphere. And wilderness interpretation supports them to focus on the themes essential for their personal growth.

*The Wanderer
above the sea of fog*
C.D. Friedrich, 1818

A lonesome visitor facing the wilderness: Today the landscape is part of a German-Czech international park.



The Relevance to Sustainable Development

The mission statement of *Interpret Europe* clearly points out, that

"The network will actively support sustainable development."

But what does that mean? In *Interpretation for the 21st Century* (Beck/Cable, 1998) the authors emphasize the role of interpretation in resource preservation, and the motto of the international conference on interpretation, which was intended to take place in Denmark this summer was *To be or not to be – sustainable*.

Indeed sustainability is essential for our planet. Since the UN Conference on Environment and Development, which took place in Rio in 1992, sustainable development is the central theme in our search for a solution of the economical, ecological, and social problems to which we are exposed today. But how can we implement sustainability, and what part might wilderness interpretation play?



The way ahead to the future seems to have two tracks. Both of them are indispensable for the process.

The first track is called **efficiency**. How can we satisfy our needs, by using less material and by avoiding waste and emissions?

On this point, we have already achieved some success in Europe. Since Rio for instance, most of our countries are constantly striving to reduce their energy consumption. In 1997 the report to the Club of Rome pointed out that problems could be solved if people understood the advantage of buying less energy-intensive items (Weizsäcker et al., 1997), reversing some of the familiar patterns of competition. But what seemed to be an advantage unfortunately also became a problem: People buy more and more energy-saving but additional devices, and replace them after a shorter and shorter period of time. This is how a consumer society works. It is obvious, that not every person on earth will be able to share this way of life without irreversibly destroying the basis of our existence.

To break through this vicious circle, we need the second track which is called **sufficiency**: We have to be happy with less material wealth.

It is of some interest that the first steps in this direction were taken by economists. In 1975 the long-standing consultant of the British National Coal Board, Ernst F. Schumacher, spoke up for a general set-up of easy to grasp economical structures to allow more responsible individual action (Schumacher, 1975). This framework is still necessary. But, of course, setting frameworks is not our job as interpreters.

So, what does all of this have to do with wilderness interpretation?

Wilderness can not only remind us that there are still ways to enjoy our life in an almost immaterial way.

Wilderness not only teaches us billions of years old strategies for solving at least some of our contemporary problems.

Wilderness stimulates us to leave our everyday structures behind and inspires our creativity in the search for more sustainable life-styles.

The IUCN defines National Parks on the basis of their renunciation of economical use. Let us make use of this advantage to train ourselves to become more sufficient. That means

- not just to be in space, but to animate it
- not just to save time, but to use it wisely
- not just to possess things, but to share them.

Wilderness interpretation can help with achieving each of these points by "building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind", as Aldo Leopold once said (Leopold, 1949). Because "in wilderness is the preservation of the world" (Thoreau, 1862).

Conclusions

Wilderness interpretation is one of the most modern branches of our profession, as it can

- ⇒ support the mental growth of the individual
- ⇒ inspire the search for sustainable life-styles.

Wilderness interpretation first began in the USA. Today in Europe some new aspects seem to take shape. By way of thanks - and also looking forward to a vivid dialogue - we like to send these impulses back over the atlantic.

The discussion on this new view of wilderness interpretation started at the World National Park Convention in 2000. We would be happy if we could develop a forum for discussing this theme at *Interpret Europe*. If you would like to join in, please contact us at mail@interp.de.

Thorsten Ludwig
Germany

NAI interpretive trainer
training, planning, and
consulting since 1993

www.interp.de

Th.Ludwig@interp.de



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***** Interpret Europe: News and plans *****



Winning strategies? No problem...
Bratislava, April 2002

Transinterpret II

As already indicated in the Editorial Interpret Europe's developments have been a little slower paced than anticipated. This might change when the second phase of the **Transinterpret** project, carried out under the EU [LEADER+ programme](#), will hopefully be approved.

[Transinterpret](#) is a transnational co-operation of rural areas with the aim of enhancing the performance of Heritage Interpretation in rural areas. Its core element is a common database that collects detailed recommendations for practitioners. Instead of usual printed guidelines a database offers some advantages:

- (1) It allows a differentiation of concrete recommendations according to special target groups, media, etc.
- (2) It allows selection of only those recommendations that are relevant for a specific project.
- (3) Feedback given by people involved in these projects allows permanent updating the recommendations according to new findings, experiences and innovative ideas.

Transinterpret thus networks know-how and experience of Heritage Interpretation. It can trigger an exchange among interpreters about what should be considered best practice or professional standards.

Interpret Europe has been founded alongside a **Transinterpret** workshop in 2000, and continued close co-operation should yield mutual benefits. Some of the **Transinterpret** services might be useful for Interpret Europe, and we hope to be able to organise a conference which could serve as launch event for the intended European Association for Heritage Interpretation.

However **Transinterpret II** has not yet been approved by the LEADER+ Action Groups and there is still some uncertainty about matched funding which is required for LEADER+ projects. On the other hand this means that there is still an opportunity for LEADER Action Groups to take part in the co-operation. For further information directly contact [Patrick Lehnies](#). We will keep you up to date about the development of this project.

You might remember our last spring's call concerning the **EU's 6th Framework Programme on Research and Development**. We received great response by many members and Freiburg University was able to submit an Expression of Interest in time. Although the chances to be selected by the European Commission are quite low (our submission was just 1 among 11700) the work done has been very valuable. It showed us the necessity of research on several fields of Heritage Interpretation on a European

scale. The proposed Integrated Project combines

- (1) basic research on the key-factors for success,
- (2) research on the potential impacts of professional Heritage Interpretation,
- (3) investigations on the factors that hinder or promote its professional use in different countries,
- (4) effective dissemination of the respective knowledge base.

All Expressions of Interest which were submitted by research institutions from Baden-Württemberg (where Freiburg University is situated) have been reviewed by the regional government. Freiburg University won a small grant to follow up the co-ordination of our project idea. Thus [Eva Zányi](#) will be able to carry on with the preparation of this Integrated Project in the beginning of 2003.

Thanks to the excellent initiative of Dieter David at Kleio Heritage consultants the **mission statement** and basic Interpret Europe **flyer** are now available in **Dutch**. Both have already proven very useful at a recent conference in Belgium and can be downloaded from the website - thanks again David!

As mentioned in edition four an **international workshop/conference** on interpretation will take place in **Göttingen**, Germany, in the period **1 - 4 May 2003**. We are currently in the process of drawing up a programme, so anyone interested in contributing ideas please do contact us. The conference will coincide with the next Interpret Europe Steering Group meeting, and so we are hoping to be able to have some international speakers. The conference will also include field trips and workshops and be open to everyone with an interest in the subject. Invitations will be circulated early next year.

Membership update

Interpret Europe currently has 111 members from 21 countries including Taiwan and Australia. As usual, an up-to-

date list of members is available on request from the Göttingen Secretariat.

Steering Group

Here we continue our series of informal self-portraits of Steering Group members.

Portrait: Prof. Rossana Bonadei

ROSSANA BONADEI is Professor of English language and Literature at the University of Bergamo, Italy. She teaches English Literature at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures (curricula of Literature and Cultural Tourism). An expert in Landscape Studies, she has published essays on Victorian and Modernist poetics, and a book on Charles Dickens, with special regard to urban landscapes. She is currently concerned with cultural studies on travel, tourism and identity (with focus on the Grand Tour, the women travellers in the 19th century, heritage tourism and touring cultures), and is presently working on a Critical Anthology on 20th century theories on tourism. In the last five years a lot of her research devoted to these subjects was presented in papers at international conferences and published in reviews and volumes.

Rossana is coordinator of the curriculum on Tourism Studies at the University of Bergamo and Director of the postgraduate Course on "Cultural Mediation and Tourism Management". She is currently in charge of consultancy activities for public and private institutions, concerning cultural and heritage tourism (Regione Lombardia, APT del Trentino, Universidad Pablo de Olavide in Siviglia).

Rossana is the Faculty delegate for the MED-CAMPUS (MALTA) project on "Sustainable Tourism" 1988-1996 and Co-organizer (with Andrea Macchiavelli) of the meetings on "Turismo e culture del Territorio", Bergamo 1997, 1998. She is also the Faculty delegate for the SOCRATES Intensive Programme (Finland) on "Heritage and Tourism" 1998 and since 1998, Director of the

postgraduate course "Mediazione culturale e gestione del turismo" held at the University of Bergamo in collaboration with Regione Lombardia (now in its 5th year). She has also been co-organizer of the Seminario ATOI "Il turismo contemporaneo e il mondo dell'impresa", Origlio(Lugano), 1999 and since 1999 local contact and coordinator of Leonardo Mobility projects on "Tourism and Heritage Management" (TEXT I; TEXT II)

Recent publications include:

- "Riattraversare il turismo: scenari e discorsi", in Visentin C. (a cura di), **Turismo contemporaneo e mondo dell'impresa**, G.Piero Casagrande ed., Lugano, 2001
- "On Cult images and their resignifications. The Lure of Italy and the Politics of the Grand Tour", in **Il confronto letterario**, Pavia, feb.2000
- "Chianciano Terme: appunti su un pausaggio da rileggere", in Bonadei R., Simonicca A.(a cura di) **Ripassare le acque**, Turismatica 2, Franco Angeli, Milano, 1999
- **Paesaggio con figure. Intorno all'Inghilterra di Dickens**, Jaca Book, Milano, 1996

Examples of taught courses and lectures include Tourism and Leisure (Tourism in different societal contexts and philosophies), how tourism is staged, a critique of different forms and attitudes to tourism, (Benjamin, Baudrillard, Levy-Strauss, Barthes, Enzenberger, Eco, Augé, Foucault, Urbaine, Urbaine, Clifford), new looks at Heritage as landscape, material culture, memory and identity; and Heritage Interpretation as a way of looking at and presenting heritage

Prof. Rossana Bonadei
Dept of English
University of Bergamo
Piazza Duomo 8
I-24129 Bergamo
ITALY
rbonadei@tin.it

Country news and reports

ITALY

Request for help!

Our organisation ACTA has been invited to participate in a conference at which the Sardinian region will decide what to do with some of its natural sites. It would be important to show some positive examples of how natural sites have played a role in local development.

I am writing to ask for your help in gathering positive examples of sites which have developed thanks to a specific natural feature. In Italian we call this "geotype". The area may be small or large, but needs to be clearly defined, and one of the main reasons for its development should be this natural geotype. A geotype may be a geyser, a lake, a particular mountain or waterfall, or particular forest... however, for our purpose, the geotype must NOT be part of a wider natural site or attraction of a protected area (for instance a national park). We imagine that the site has largely developed because of interpretation built around it, allowing it to be used as a resource for the surrounding area.

I thank you dearly for any information or contact which you may be able to provide. Please let me know if you need any further explanation. Thank you!

Laura Capone
ACTA
Via Scarlatti 27
20124 Milano
ITALIA
tel: +39 0266980931
fax: +39 0266716371
e-mail: l.capone@actanet.it
www.actanet.it

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### SPAIN

#### Taller Seminar on Cultural and sustainable tourism and local development

30 Sept - 8 Oct 2002, Pablo de Olvidade University, Sevilla, Spain

This seminar addressed university students and employees working in tourism management at a local administration level. Against the background of cultural tourism development in Mediterranean countries, the seminar aimed to highlight ways of analysing tourism as a cultural practice, concepts and practices of sustainability and the resulting conflicts of resource use. It brought together European researches, trainers and experienced professionals who have been working within national and international contexts and projects for a long time. A significant part of the seminar was dedicated to the theories and practices of Interpretation and Presentation of heritage to the visitor, with an examination of the techniques and tools elaborated in the international field.

The following provides an overview of the course programme and an example of an abstract. More abstracts are available on the [Interpret Europe website](#) (Events/ Past Events).

#### Lectures

Andrea MACCHIAVELLI  
"Evolution of Tourism in the Mediterranean: implication in the management of the destinations"

Rossana BONADEI  
"Cultural Tourism in a moment of change: from the niche to the widespread phenomenon"

José Maria DE JUAN ALONSO  
"Sustainability and tourism: general politics and economic point"

Lorenzo CANOVA  
"Sustainability and quality label in the accommodation structure"

José Maria GARRIDO  
"Normative and financial tools for the conservation of the territorial patrimony"

Marcelo MARTIN  
"Management for the diffusion of the patrimony"

Jorge MORALES (adviser, expert in the Interpretation of the Patrimony)  
"Heritage Interpretation and Presentation to the visitor", I

Jorge MORALES

"Heritage Interpretation and Presentation to the visitor", II

Jorge MORALES

"Heritage Interpretation and Presentation to the visitor", III

Francisco José GUERRA

"Interpretation and formal and informal formation"

Ettore CASTAGNA

"Tourism and local micro reality: meetings and conflicts. Compared Presentation of cases of the Mid-Mediterranean"

Paolo BERTACCINI

"Events and Inventions in the politics of the local tourist development"

Jorge MORALES

"Heritage Interpretation and Presentation to the visitor"- IV

Frans SCHOUTEN

"Development of tourist local products: authenticity and quality of the experience"

### **Selected Abstract:**

**"Development of heritage products: authenticity and quality of the experience"**

***Frans Schouten***

History, as the interpretation of the past, is - like any other phenomena - subject to change, and even to fashion. The way historians in the past looked at history tells us nowadays as much of them and the society they are lived in, as it tells us about history itself. The same applies for heritage which too easily is defined as the tangible remains of the historical process. Heritage is not the same as history. Heritage is history processed through mythology, ideology, nationalism, local pride, romantic ideas, or just plain marketing into a commodity. Visitors to historic sites are looking for an experience, a new reality based on the tangible remains of the past. For them this is the very essence of the heritage experience. A good example of this process is the observation of Washington Irving on the Alhambra in Grenada: "The peculiar charm of this old dreamy palace is its power of calling up vague reveries and picturing of the past and thus clothing naked realities with the illusion of the memory and the imagination."

The "historical reality" is not an independent identity, because it is subject to interpretation, both scientifically and psychologically. The interpretation provided by heritage professionals in museums and on sites is only one of the manifold interpretations our visitors carry around in themselves. Good interpretation is based upon making connections with ideas and experiences with which we are already familiar, and in raising curiosity in our visitors. Ashworth argues that heritage is the product of a commodification process in which selection is central. Heritage is a product and as a product it is subject to the differences in validation and interpretation as the historical process itself, and it changes over time in the way it is presented, and in appreciation by the public.

The influence of the mass-media on the image of the past of the visitors to museums and heritage sites cannot be underestimated. It shapes the way in which history and heritage is seen by the public. For young generations, especially, reading is a secondary mean of collecting information. Their learning attitude is primarily focussed on visual impact and they are used to getting these images very well staged. But at the same time our visitors carry around much more sophisticated images of their surrounding world, and there is a need for more coherence in these images. Our visitors are more critical to what is presented to them, and are much more outspoken in their opinions. Museums and heritage sites shall have to adjust to these changes in attitude if they want to survive in the competitive leisure market. "Disneyfication" has become a pejorative term when applied to the use of historic topics in theme parks and so on, but the success of many such venues suggests that the public does not currently share these critical views. However, a demand for greater authenticity and "real" experiences could well fit with the priorities of the new "thoughtful consumer".

### **GERMANY**

#### **Center for Heritage Interpretation and Tourism established**

The Centre for Heritage Interpretation and Tourism (Zentrum für Landschaftsinterpretation und Tourismus, ZELT) is an independent, charitable organisation dedicated to developing and supporting good practice in Interpretation. It was founded in October 2002 and is based at the Department of Cultural and Social

Geography at the Georg-August-University, Göttingen, Germany.

The Centre's main aim is to raise the profile of quality heritage interpretation in Germany. It will support the development of good practice by providing a forum for exchange, carrying out demonstration projects and research and offering practical advice. In the long term, its ambition is to become established as a centre of excellence and expertise and national resource centre.

The Centre will work closely with national and international partners, experts and practitioners in the field including Interpret Europe.

For details contact:

ZELT  
C/o dept of cultural and social geography  
georg-august-university göttingen  
goldschmidtstr. 5  
37077 göttingen  
GERMANY  
tel. +49 (0)551 39 80 22  
fax +49 (0)551 39 121 40  
e-mail: k.gee@gmx.de

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## Job request!

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### Geographer, 33 years....

I am Karin Zahn, a 33-year old female Geography graduate of the University of Tübingen. My minor subjects include educational science and geology, with a strong focus on sustainable development in Latin America. My thesis looked at environmental education and ecological agriculture within the framework of sustainable regional development in Nicaragua.

I have work experience in environmental education (biosphere reserve, UNESCO world natural heritage), in leading excursions (forest ecology and other subjects); as a group leader and in the implementation of seminars, as well as working with children and young people. I am fluent in English, French and Spanish

and have thorough knowledge of WORD, excel, SPSS, freehand, usage of internet

### .... is looking for

I am now looking for work in the field of environmental education; heritage interpretation or sustainable regional development: If you know of any opportunities or contacts please do let me know! My e-mail address is [karinzahn@yahoo.de](mailto:karinzahn@yahoo.de). Many thanks in advance!

Karin Zahn

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## Reports from recent events

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### HERITAGE, NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

#### Authenticity, Intellectual Integrity, and Sustainable Development in the Public Presentation of Archaeological and Historical Sites and Landscapes

*11 – 13 September 2002, Ghent, Belgium*

On 11-13 September 2002, the Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation – with the support of the Institute for the Archaeological Heritage of the Flemish Community and the Province of East-Flanders – hosted a major international conference on new approaches to the development and presentation of local heritage resources.

This conference, attended by political officials, heritage professionals, and scholars from Europe, the Mediterranean region, and the United States, featured plenary addresses by senior officials of international bodies involved with Tourism, Heritage Preservation, and Community Development as well as workshops and demonstrations of state-of-the-art of heritage presentation as a means of sustainable development and enhancement of community identity. The specialised workshops on "Professional Guidelines and Standards;" "Heritage Planning, Funding, and Management;"

“Cultural and Heritage Tourism;” and “Heritage Education” offered attendees the opportunity to meet colleagues from other regions to exchange information on presentation techniques and technologies, international partnerships, community-based programming, management, and funding sources.

An objective of this conference was the participation of the delegates (and their governmental bodies and institutions) in the drafting of the “Ename Charter” representing consensus views on the importance of community involvement in Heritage Management and Presentation—and on an international agenda for heritage presentation and management in the coming years.

The aim of this proposed Charter is to emphasize the essential role of public communication and education in heritage preservation. Divided into four main sections—Scientific and Professional Standards, Planning, Funding, and Management, Tourism Aspects, and Heritage Education—this charter will identify the professional and ethical criteria to ensure that preserved historical and archaeological sites are recognized by the general public as reliable and authoritative centres of learning and reflection about the past—as well as vital local resources for sustainable community development.

The need for such an international charter is clear: archaeological sites and historical monuments all around the world are in immediate danger—not only in danger of physical destruction, but in danger of losing their cultural value by being overly-commercialised, overrun by too many visitors, or, even in some cases, being exploited for political or ideological ends. New stories report the bitter controversy over the presentation of the antiquities of the Acropolis in Athens; over the reconstruction of the destroyed Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan; over the Temple Mount in Jerusalem; over the Mostar Bridge in Sarajevo; and over the damage done to the monuments of ancient Iraq as casualties of modern ethnic strife and

warfare<sup>1</sup>. Regional governments, municipalities, tourist authorities, private firms, and international organizations are increasingly investing in expensive and technologically advanced presentation systems as a spur to tourist development. Yet while there are a large number of international charters, declarations, and guidelines to maintain the quality of the conservation and restoration of the physical fabric of ancient monuments, there is no generalized international oversight of the methods and quality standards of public presentation.

It is evident that scholars, government officials, heritage professionals, and community leaders must increasingly turn their attention to the effective presentation of archaeological and historic sites. They must work closely together to establish professional and practical standards to ensure the public value and economic sustainability of heritage development projects throughout the world. Such guidelines—and the reliable research data and expertise that support them—can ensure that local heritage sites are effectively presented to the public, with continuing benefits to the taxpayers and residents of the local community. The Ename Charter seeks to establish scientific, ethical, and public guidelines for the public presentation of heritage.

Dirk Callebaut  
Acting Director, Institute for Archaeological  
Heritage of the Flemish Community  
Executive Director, Ename Center for Public  
Archaeology and Heritage Presentation

For additional information on the Ename  
Charter and participation in the on-line working  
groups contact:  
Eva Roels  
Ename Center for Public Archaeology and  
Heritage Presentation  
13-15 Abdijstraat

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<sup>1</sup> The examples can be multiplied by the hundreds. The ICOMOS *World Report 2001-2002 on Monuments and Sites in Danger* includes sites from more than 60 countries, in which the physical threats to material remains are being compounded by a widespread failure to communicate the significance of heritage to the public at large.

B-9700 Oudenaarde  
Belgium  
Tel +32 55 23 24 47  
Fax + 32 55 30 35 19  
[eva.roels@enamecenter.org](mailto:eva.roels@enamecenter.org)  
<http://www.enamecenter.org>  
[Ename Charter proposal 2<sup>nd</sup> draft](#)

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**Interpreting our Mountain Heritage:  
Guiding, Environmental Education and  
Interpretation in Mountain Areas**

*7 - 10 November 2002, Zakopane, Poland*

International Friends of Nature together with its Polish member federation PTTK in co-operation with Interpret Europe organised an international Seminar on mountain tourism. Participants from 12 European countries devoted themselves to the role of heritage interpretation in the framework of sustainable development.

Several mountain areas have in recent years been literally swamped with visitors and sportspeople. In some places the ecological and social carrying capacities have been exceeded. Professional interpretation can raise visitors' awareness on the fragility of mountain areas and their ecological problems. It is able to provide added value to leisure activities with relatively low environmental impact (like walking and hiking). Additionally interpretive provision – if carefully planned – contribute to a sustainable visitor flow management. With a view to reducing environmental strain complementary elements have been discussed, like the promotion of the ecological design and management of accommodation and facilities.

An interesting observation during the seminar: the concept of Heritage Interpretation is quite new for many countries but well established in others. In Poland for example the interpretive approach has been introduced as early as the late 1970s i.e. still in communist times. This goes back to co-operation between Polish and American national parks. On the other hand for some participants from Austria and Switzerland the Zakopane

Seminar was the first occasion to get acquainted with this concept.

To mark the International Year of Mountains, the participants drafted and adopted a joint [declaration on sustainable mountain tourism](#), which is available from the Interpret Europe website (Events/ Past Events).

Manfred Pils  
Managing director of IFN ([www.nfi.at](http://www.nfi.at))  
Patrick Lehnés  
Interpret Europe Secretariat

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## **Forthcoming events**

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### **International seminar:**

#### **Heritage Interpretation in the context of regional development and regional identity**

*1 - 2 May 2003, Göttingen, Germany*

This seminar will coincide with the annual Interpret Europe Steering Group meeting and take a look at the use of Heritage Interpretation in the context of regional development and regional identity. The programme for the event is currently being drafted and will be posted to all Interpret Europe members shortly. For details please contact the Göttingen secretariat or get in touch with us directly at [k.gee@gmx.de](mailto:k.gee@gmx.de)

### **EUROPARC 2003 conference**

*27 - 31 August 2003, Stryn, Norway*

EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation of Europe's protected areas, uniting national parks, regional parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves in 38 countries in the aim of protecting Europe's unique variety of wildlife, habitats and landscapes. Sustainable tourism, environmental education and interpretation form an important part of EUROPARC's work and is expressed for instance through the preparation of a European Charter of Sustainable Tourism.

The thematic annual conference takes an in-depth look at a subject of current importance for European protected areas. In plenary sessions and thematic workshops, participants are able to explore the issues and develop common solutions and recommendations for future work. This is the first time the conference takes place in Norway. Venue is the small community of Stryn, situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty close to Jostedalsskogen National Park. For details check: [www.europarc.org](http://www.europarc.org) or [www.europarc2003.no](http://www.europarc2003.no)

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## **Next edition**

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**Your contributions are always welcome!**

**Copy deadline for the May edition is 1 April 2003.**

**The special focus topic of the spring edition will be "New Media".**