

Newsletter

Winter 2020



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Dear members,

A rather challenging year is approaching its end, and we are so grateful for all your initiatives to keep the spirits high.

Our social media activities increased with new posts almost every day, and some trainers literally lurked for lockdown-free periods to run at least some IE courses. Although securing these periods to run training was more a question of lucky coincidences, we are happy to congratulate our very active Croatian members for making Croatia the first country that exceeded the number of 200 members! Meanwhile, nine active IE trainers support and are supported by its vibrant country team, and Interpret Croatia also encouraged and organised several IE courses. During those last months, you sent real sunbeams through our network.

The latest invitation for a virtual party comes from our Gastronomic Heritage Team: Saturday, 19 December at 18:00 CET. Watch out and don't miss it.

However, we also need to reinforce an urgent call to those who haven't done so far: **Please check whether you paid your membership fees!** Like many organisations, the crisis hit IE hard and although it is already December, some members still have not paid their fees. We can only sustain the means for managing our webinars, courses, conferences and many other activities if all of you contribute.

Besides our IE events there are now several other opportunities to join meetings and conferences that have not been open to the wider public before. Some subjects are quite interesting for us. Through our social media channels, we try to keep you updated on such occasions, besides our own webinar programme. Please use them and get into an exchange about your experiences.

That many of us now spend so much time in armchairs and behind desks gives us the opportunity to watch and to read – and to get ready for the times when we can grow again. All might look frozen but don't forget that during long winter nights, the new seed is getting ready for spring.

We wish you calm and fulfilling holiday times.

Thorsten Ludwig and Helena Vičič
Managing Directors



Embracing the change in seasons (Image: Banks)

Heritage is both nature and culture – How Interpret Europe could strengthen the connection

Eva Sandberg (Sweden) & Peter Seccombe (UK)

Some thoughts on nature and culture in the field of interpretation.

Traditionally, we separate nature and culture. They are seen as the 'natural world' and the 'human culture world', and we often think that somehow they should be regarded as two separate fields of study and two separate topics for interpretation. This tradition is strong – our language, education and professional cultures maintain and enhance this divide and we tend to regard ourselves as either 'natural heritage people' or 'cultural heritage people'. We are biologists, or we are historians.

In 2017, Jon Kohl wrote an article for this newsletter (Jon Kohl (2017) 'Nature and cultural heritage are one and the same') encouraging us to think that nature and culture are not divided. They are one whole – we are part of nature and nature is part of us. He stressed that there was only one process of evolution, and evidence of this process is all around us and folds us into it. We find nature in all culture and in all nature, there is culture. There is not a square centimetre on Earth's surface that has escaped alteration by human action.

During Interpret Europe's web conference 2020, one of the round table discussions addressed nature interpretation. And almost immediately the discussion questioned the idea of handling nature interpretation as a separate activity and not a fundamental part of what Interpret Europe is all about. Part of the problem is that cultural heritage is the default idea of what heritage is, and we, therefore, feel we need to talk about nature as a separate theme.

The group found that roughly two of the presentations came from a natural heritage context and fourteen were examples from the cultural heritage field. Also, the connections to EU programmes at a strategic European level were all focused on cultural heritage and education. Is this a trend for our work, conferences and members? If it is, there is a risk that people working in the context of natural heritage think of IE as an irrelevant organisation for them, when actually one of the fundamentals of IE is that it is a bridging organisation where people working

both in the natural and cultural fields can meet and develop heritage interpretation together.

Interpret Europe should be the one organisation that really connects these two artificially separated worlds, by connecting the people working to interpret them. IE's mission is to 'serve all who use first-hand experiences to give natural and cultural heritage a deeper meaning'. But if we are to serve all we should be considering heritage as one whole, with IE acting as the bridging organisation that sees no separation in the interpretive approach.

There are many global initiatives that support this comprehensive approach. The signatories of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) were committed to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner. The European Landscape Convention, the Faro Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity walk hand in hand in recognising that culture is dependent on nature and on the proper functioning of ecosystems and biodiversity. They also recognise that communication is the key to achieving their goals, involving heritage communities and local and traditional knowledge.

Sometimes interpreters have a focus on culture and sometimes on nature. That is fine. But for an interpretive approach to communication there is no divide. Interpret Europe cooperation is an opportunity for our community of interpreters to "meet" over professional boundaries in our common interest for interpretation, to share experiences and to engage. The professional encounters in IE are also a great chance for all interpreters to build and develop knowledge, both in the art of interpretation and in the holistic view of nature and culture, and the concept of heritage.

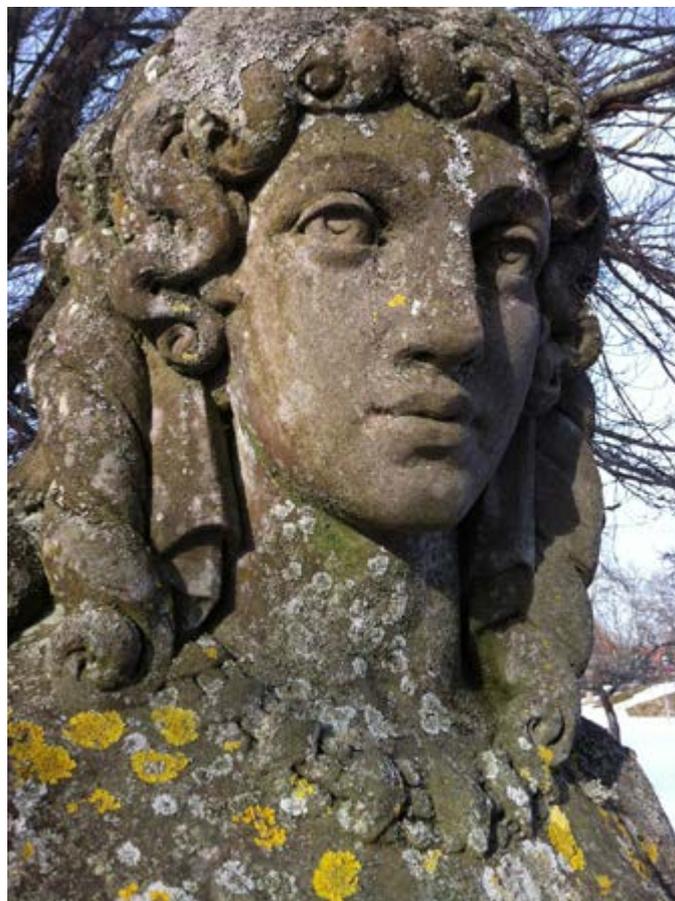


Tom's Field stone wall (Image: Seccombe)

A group of participants from the web conference in May would like to encourage more discussion. We would like to know what you, as IE members, feel about 'natural' and 'cultural' interpretation. Do you agree, or not, that by separating these into two distinct disciplines merely maintains an unnatural division between human and natural evolution? Should we be aiming more to consider 'natural' and 'cultural' as one integrated 'heritage'? How can we work actively to use interpretation as a bridge and to maintain the relevance of membership for professionals from both fields – in our common field of interpretation? Anyone interested in contributing is welcome to contact Eva or Peter with comments and suggestions.

Eva Sandberg is the Director of the Swedish Centre for Nature Interpretation in the Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. She can be contacted at: eva.k.sandberg@slu.se.

Peter Seccombe is co-director of Red Kite Environment, a consultancy specialising in interpretation and learning experiences for heritage organisations throughout Europe. He can be contacted at: peter.seccombe@redkite-environment.co.uk.



Nature and cultural heritage combined (Image: Sandberg)

Increased attendance – if only virtually

IE News Team

Covid-19 has forced us to spend more time at our desks, but has allowed us to attend online meetings that we may not have travelled to in person.

Regarding our representation at international events, the current situation offers challenges but also opportunities. Events that were at first postponed have now been taking place online, and in many cases, they were opened to wider audiences. This also allowed our management and coordinators to represent IE at more such events.

While not all virtual events are as intense as in-person meetings, their number is still increasing. If you follow us on social media, you can find announcements for events that are open to everyone. Why not take the opportunity to get involved and exchange views with other members? Some events are recorded and the recordings are uploaded which allows you to watch them later.

During the past few months, we have attended and presented at the following meetings and conferences to maintain IE's profile.

The third meeting of the Commission's Expert Group on Cultural Heritage took place, in which Covid-19 and its impact on the cultural heritage sector was discussed.

We presented IE's tourism initiative to other stakeholder organisations at the European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN) conference:

<http://www.culturaltourism-network.eu/conference-2020.html>.

We introduced IE's cooperation with UNESCO at an online seminar of Parks Norway in order to link more World Heritage sites with our tourism initiative.

We attended UNESCO's launch of the ESD for 2030 Roadmap (Education for Sustainable Development) in the Europe and North America region and found that the IE training programme contributes to three out of five priority action areas of the roadmap (Transforming learning environments, Building capacities of educators, Accelerating local level actions).

We attended the high-level webinar, A Cultural Deal for Europe, led by Europa Nostra in cooperation with Culture Action Europe and the European Cultural Foundation. It was introduced by a powerful message from the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, and the joint statement 'A Cultural Deal for Europe: A central place for culture in the EU's post-pandemic future' was issued. This joint statement puts forward an overarching Cultural Deal for Europe to realise the potential of culture and heritage for Europe's recovery and long-term future, which was welcomed by Commissioner Mariya Gabriel.



Commissioner Gabriel at the Cultural Deal for Europe online meeting (Image: Ludwig)

Finding inspiration in food and gastronomic heritage during lockdown was not hard and we attended these events: FoodTreX Research Summit, Arrival 360: The virtual in-destination event, and Food and Cultural Heritage: an EU Policy Perspective.

Of course, we also attended several online work meetings. We joined six meetings to prepare for the UNESCO pilot course on interpretive planning (based upon the IE CIP course) which will take place next year for people around World Heritage sites, and we also joined six meetings with the working group on traditional knowledge within the Climate Heritage Network to prepare for the Climate Heritage week, which took place 16-22 November.

Furthermore, we have been busy thinking about our next steps as IE enters a new strategic period in 2021 – more about that coming up – as well as preparing for the launch of a new-look website coming soon. Our coordinators will have met online on 12 December so as we write we are looking forward to seeing what activities especially our managing coordinators have come up with and hearing everyone's reports on how they are doing in their various countries and subject areas.

DELPHI project comes to a close

Sarah Wolferstan (UK)

The closing conference of this project – in which IE was an associate partner – is available for all to watch on the project website.

We reported on the Erasmus+ project, DELPHI – Development of continuing professional development for heritage interpretation staff to facilitate lifelong learning for social inclusion and European cohesion, in the autumn newsletter 2019. The project aimed to use heritage interpretation to inspire values, like peace, freedom, tolerance and solidarity.

The team comprising of seven partners (including IE as an associate partner) from Germany, Greece, Belgium, Italy and the UK is wrapping up the final stages of the project and reflecting on all we have achieved over the last two years. Amid Brexit negotiations and a pandemic, the partnership, involving specialist Interpretation trainers, institutes of higher education working on heritage and interpretation, adult education, cultural associations, NGOs and government bodies, is finalising its CPD modules, available through its online learning environment, complete with a self-evaluation tool.

Our final conference was held online on 14 October and the recording can be watched on our website: <https://delphi-eu.org/final-conference-documentation/>. A total of 70 participants registered from across Europe. After introducing the general themes of the project, the ten pilot projects were introduced in break-out rooms, and project leaders presented back the groups' views in the plenary. A virtual walk and talk was held using the gather.town app, allowing participants to chat and network.

The take-away from the conference was an acknowledgement of the power of heritage interpretation in revealing why heritage is meaningful, offering paths to deeper meaning. Our interpretations are not value free and we can challenge or reinforce clichés and exclusionary identities or foster values of inclusiveness and mutual understanding. Delphi's strength is the way it helps heritage interpreters to draw on the core values of the EU, and the latest Council of Europe heritage standard, the Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005) into their work. The Delphi pilots demonstrated this, and reflect the strength of our training and the Competence Framework (EQF levels 4-7).

The Delphi tool kit is a modular learning approach that can be tailored to different requirements. Blended learning – through a mixture of webinars, web-based learning and a face-to-face courses – were developed and tested in our pilot course, and through mentoring of 'homework projects'. These are all linked to the competence framework, allowing a learner, or learner provider, to understand the range and level of knowledge, skills and attitudes that a learner or employee possesses. Learning can be validated using a tool on the learning platform, where all the Delphi course modules and materials can be found, together with various didactic patterns that can be tailored to suit the particular needs of a group or team provider.

The outcomes of the project, including its training tool kit and pilot projects, will also be available at www.delphi.eu.org. More information can also be found in the project newsletters.

Sarah Wolferstan is the European Project Manager at the Centre for Applied Archaeology, a commercial consultancy and training division of the Institute of Archaeology, University College London (UCL) <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/centre-applied-archaeology/about>. She can be contacted at: sarah.wolferstan@ucl.ac.uk.



The first Certified Live Interpreter course organised in Croatia

Vesna Bulić Baketić (Croatia)

All the challenges of 2020, the course postponement and counting days until it could begin, were worth it for such an incredible experience.

The first Certified Live Interpreter (CLI) course to be organised in Croatia took place in the Dalmatian capital, the city of Split, from November 9-13. Interpret Croatia organised the course as a part of the Split-Dalmatian County's head project, Dalmatia Storytelling Destination.

Mostly museum staff and tourist guides were invited to take the course and develop their interpretations of historical characters from their surroundings. Most of the participants already had guiding experience through their museum collections or cities. However, no-one knew what to expect from the training.

The excellent synergy created by IE trainer Valya Stergioti and Mark Wallis from Past Pleasures Ltd in the UK, enabled 16 participants to learn about first- and third-person performance and improvisation, evaluation, public speaking, storytelling, props and costumes, and finally to develop their historic characters.

Renata Tešija, the project coordinator for Dalmatia Storytelling Destination and Meri Vesanović from Interpret Croatia took care of all organisational issues, making them smooth and easy and the amazing weather in November made it possible for many of the activities to be conducted outside on the sea front or inside the Diocletian's palace, which was a delight.

Regardless of the previous experience of the participants, the workshop offered a valuable insight into many important subjects. The course took us through themes, such as who visits and why, the philosophy of live interpretation, the four hats, the qualities of heritage interpretation, how to critique, the rollercoaster, universal themes, historical posture, problem visitors, passion and persuasion.

Besides introducing theoretical and practical knowledge, the course led this heterogenic group of people from the point of complete strangers to a very coherent group of people who successfully worked together and gave their best efforts while learning

and performing. The atmosphere created positive relations between trainers and participants and also a space for freedom of expression, articulation of the most unexpected thoughts and feelings, evaluation of self and others, raising awareness on different topics and broadening our own limits and horizons. Our perception of the importance of heritage interpretation has been enriched by a completely new dimension, giving us a valuable tool for bringing people closer to heritage, addressing all of their senses, but also enabling us in creating a wider picture of our role in a sustainable society. Theory and practice enveloped in a travel-like experience, together with encounters with future friends are essential parts of this exceptional training course.

Vesna Bulić Baketić holds an M.A. in Art History and English. She is the Head of Marketing and PR at The Ivan Meštrović Museums. She is a certified tourist guide for the Split-Dalmatian and Dubrovnik-Neretva counties. Her special interest is heritage and culture interpretation/ preservation and education in cultural and tourism institutions. You can contact her at: bulicv@gmail.com.



Presenting at Marjan Terrace and Prokurative Square (Image: Dalmacia Storytelling Destination)

Certified Interpretive Host – First time in Slovenia

Melita Gaber (Slovenia)

The picturesque region of Goričko, where the heritage is a part of everyday life, was host to the first training for CIH in Slovenia.

How come, that such important training is having its première in Slovenia in such an unknown region? This is easy to explain. It is a region where volcanoes erupted forming a landscape that was once the bottom of the Pannonia sea, millions of years ago. This special interplay of fire and water made the landscape magnificent. And the humans living here do such magic things. Not exploiting the nature that surrounds them, but living with nature, knowing and understanding that it is the one and only force that gives us all we need for living.

The banks of the Ledava river, that flows down the valley to an artificial lake in Krašči, are appreciated by hikers, runners, bikers and nature lovers. The birds living in the treetops make the most beautiful sounds in the early mornings and late afternoons. The fields, that claim very gentle treatment, are cultivated all year round and the view of the small fields, where almost every one has a different colour, is amazing.

The natural heritage here is more than just the fields. It includes the willows growing on the river banks. They have been used by people for hundreds of years. Home-made baskets were braided during the long winter evenings. I can still remember, how my grandfather used to do it in the middle of the kitchen and my grandmother was complaining about the mess he made with it. And the smell of his cigarettes still hangs in the air, that is never going away...

One of the participants of the CIH course, Dominika, invited Janja, our trainer, me and some others to join her on a training course. Dominika has a special bond to this part of Slovenia. Although she lives in the capital city, Ljubljana, she loves the people living here; she feels this humble but very powerful mixture of people – three religions, Roman settlements, traditional farmers and entrepreneurs, experienced people and children, ... and the border to Austria & Hungary very near.

The CIH training was enriched by participation of candidates from almost all areas of Slovenia. We enjoyed the training, the new knowledge, our trainer, Janja, with her special way of teaching and storytelling. We also enjoyed the hospitality from our colleague, Brigita, when she led us to the

orchard farm and demonstrated how much a love connection and skills can contribute to sustainable and most delicious products. But what we enjoyed the most, was the feeling that was given to us by completing the training: the knowledge that all the stories we are already telling can be told in such a beautiful way. That we can interact with our visitors through such simple questions. And that the stories told by interpretive hosts touch everyone's heart.

It is your turn to find out what we accomplished by taking part in this particular training. And listen to the stories and dive into the heritage of Goričko, Slovenia. You are very welcome.

Melita Gaber is the owner of a small tourism consulting office. She is many things: a travel ambassador, entrepreneur, coffee-lover, bookworm, passionate storyteller. Above all, she loves nature. She can be contacted at: melita.gaber@regioprima.eu.



Searching for inspiration at Ficko orchard farm (Image: Koritnik Trepel)



In the classroom (Image: Koritnik Trepel)

Interpretation in university teaching as a missing link

Alexandra Boeminghaus (Germany)

How to inspire and convince people that something might be really relevant? With convincing facts and plausible conclusions, or something more?

Showing students protected ecosystems, beautiful landscapes, threatened plant species and promoting nature protection is really a fulfilling and very satisfying thing to do. Helping prospective scientists and teachers on their way in education and making them aware of their own responsibility for our natural heritage, both as private persons and in a wider society, is responsible and reasonable.

But through all my years as a teacher, there had been a kind of blind spot in my teaching whose existence I felt rather than knew. While handing knowledge and facts to a next generation of biologists there had been something missing from my perspective. Nevertheless, I improved my field guidance through self-teaching over the years, because experience and audience brings some knowledge automatically and naturally by trial and error, but only in slow motion.

At some point I figured out that I had to give knowledge and amazing facts an emotional impact to some extent, to give it a certain weight, because humans are very often influenced by their emotions in decisions of what to do and what to pay attention to, and do not only make decisions with their mind – according to my experience.

There has to be an impulse to protect heritage, not only a rational reasoning. Convincing facts and plausible conclusions alone will not cause motivation on its own terms. A feeling of being convinced of doing the right thing is absolutely necessary as a driving force in comprehensive learning and in conservation.



Finding deeper meanings (Image: Ludwig)

By joining the Interpret Europe Certified Interpretive Guide course I finally found the missing link for my teaching after sixteen years. At last a theoretical backbone for the didactics of guiding in the field.

Interpretation gives a theoretical model for field guidance. It can be very helpful and useful also in university teaching because it points out and underlines general correlations between phenomenon, guide and audience. It gives many tools to improve the presentation of heritage, regardless of the occupational framework one is in.

From my point of view, interpretation is a huge enrichment even for university teaching, and I'm very happy and grateful for having found my personal missing link after so many years.

Alexandra Boeminghaus is a biologist working at the Albert-Ludwigs-University of Freiburg in South Germany. Since 2004 she has been teaching and showing Biology students plant species, plant communities, natural field sites and natural heritage sites during the summer semester. She can be contacted at: alexandra.boeminghaus@biologie.uni-freiburg.de.



CIG course brings out all emotions (Image: Ludwig)

Cooperation and love for the land

Karlos Solana Arruti & Flor Savanti
(Basque Country, Spain)

A new wave of certified interpretive guides in the Basque Country: in search of a renewed vision for resilient times.

An IE Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course was held in San Sebastian - Donostia (Basque Country) in October. It was organised by Aktibatu-Bizibiziki consultancy agency (www.aktibatu.eus) and led by Evarist March Sarlat. A group of twelve people shared diverse knowledge and experiences, enhancing creativity through their collective brains and cooperation.

They were five intensive days held in Ekogunea, a space specially designed to extend ecological culture from environmental awareness to action (www.ekogunea.es). Our training took place among happy animals, community gardens and a space specifically designed to support environmental education, which we used to test our individual and group skills.

Combining theory and practice, indoors and outdoors, in different individual and group activities, we assimilated the bases of interpretation and the six principles of Tilden, training in the use of resources and the structure that allows us to design talks and interpretive tours in a professional way, and so contributing to improving the understanding, connection and involvement of people in the care of our planet.

Three examples of messages we explored through new eyes:

How to talk about biomimicry... without mentioning it

Here, for instance, a group of colleagues brought us closer to nature as a source of inspiration in modern design: what does the shape of the egg, the plumage of geese or the membranes of ducks have to do with the design of tools, instruments and even vehicles?

Traditional games and the commons

We saw how hopscotch, a popular children's game, can serve as a bridge to talk about aspects of culture in relation to cooperation and the commons.

Bio and cultural diversity

We looked at different oak tree leaf shapes, the result of hybridization between native and non-native species, to conclude that the richness of a territory is deeply linked to biodiversity and that cultural diversity is one more expression of it.



Talking about biomimicry (Image: Naturalwalks)

We ended the course even more convinced that guiding, more than a trivial pastime, can become an educational and empowering act. Today, more than ever, interpreting is key to transmit a holistic vision of the territory, which will facilitate a deeper connection between people and nature, not as tourists but as responsible citizens in a resilient world.

We are excited about generating new interpretive routes with content and messages that contribute to regenerating our relationship with our territory, the Basque Country, and our planet.

Karlos Solana Arruti is an educator and mountaineer, a passionate guide of Gipuzkoa, his herrialde – or territory – in the Basque Country. Karlos can be contacted through social networks: @Karlos Solana. Solana.

Flor Savanti is an anthro-archaeologist designing and guiding cultural and natural experiences in the Basque Country and the Pyrenees. Connect with her at: info@bakeana.com or www.bakeana.com.



Bio and cultural diversity through leaves (Image: Naturalwalks)

Lucija's lighthouses

Lucija Šorić (Croatia)

Playing with ideas and discovering new phenomena using practical knowledge enlightened by the Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course.

Phenomena. The uniqueness of phenomena.

Facts, true facts.

Meaning, meaning before facts, deeper meaning.

Universal terms, love, happiness, maybe sadness, emotions. Definitely emotions.

Message. A message with meaning. But what is the meaning? Listen! Listen? Yes, listen! Listen to what the phenomena are whispering. Whispering? Lucija, you must have lost your mind! No, wait! I can hear something! Yes, there it is! I can hear it, what a beautiful sensation. But what do I do with it? Maybe I should follow it. Yes, follow the message! A message that guides me, a lighthouse. My lighthouse. Isn't it wonderful, just the idea of it? Having your own bright lighthouse. I don't know about you, but to me, it brings peace and joy.

These were the thoughts roaming through my head while I was walking through my hometown's park forest, looking for new cultural phenomena to interpret. For a matter of fact, this happens every time I indulge myself in interpretation and the process that comes with it. I must say that since the CIG course, I have reached new perspectives. A lighthouse, a metaphor for the idea which keeps you on track during cultural heritage interpretation. As our CIG trainer, Max, would say, it is your own theme, your own lighthouse, it is there just for you, connect with it. What an abstract idea, but it makes perfect sense, doesn't it? And when you think about it, it is quite logical too. Would participants like to follow me to my lighthouse – or do they have other lighthouses where they would like to guide me?

"Lucija, look!". I have sunk so deep in my thoughts that for a brief moment I forgot I was with my friend Tijana. "Look! A lighthouse!". Tijana noticed a tablecloth with a lighthouse drawn on it, which belonged to a nearby beach bar. "A lighthouse, can you imagine?". A coincidence or not, it brought a big smile to our faces and a warm fuzzy feeling inside. I remembered the first time I was introduced to the Certified Interpretive Guide course principles and Interpret Europe's approach to heritage interpretation. We were a small group with different backgrounds and of all ages. I was listening in awe to our trainer, eager to learn, trying to comprehend that vision on heritage, which I had never heard before.

I always wondered why people lack an appreciation for heritage, starting with their own. One could say these individuals are ignorant. But what if there is something more to it? What if they are not aware of what is standing right in front of them. What if there is someone who could bring them close to what they are seeing, to acknowledge, to make them think, to feel. As our trainer says, address people's minds, but most importantly, address their senses and their hearts.

Lucija Šorić recently obtained her MSc and MA degree in International leisure, tourism and events management. During her studies at NHL Stenden in The Netherlands and University of Derby in the UK, she collaborated with ETFI, VVV Nederland information centres and their Knowledge platform tackling contemporary issues. Lucija can be contacted at: lucijasoric6@gmail.com.



Lucija's lighthouse tablecloth (Image: Šorić)

Fruitful cooperation with local stakeholders in Žminj

Max Dubravko Fijačko (Croatia)

It's always nice when training participants are thrilled, but when the local community joins in ... we can move mountains!

Recreating tourism through interpretation was the main idea when Interpret Europe co-organised the course for Certified Interpretive Guides (CIG) in Žminj, Croatia, with the local tourist board. Although a new approach for the local community, Lenka Šajina from the tourist board immediately accepted the idea and fully seized all the advantages of this cooperation. It was a real honor and pleasure to work with such an enthusiastic person, who saw this course as a possibility for the development of tourism in their local community.

The CIG course was held over two weekends in October and was attended by a dozen participants, of course, all within the measures introduced due to Covid-19.

The whole idea was totally supported by the local authorities, especially the Mayor of Žminj, Mr. Željko Plavčić, who also recognised the potential in raising the quality of human resources of the Žminj region's guides. Also, what a change in the tourist offer, significant for the recreation of tourism and turning to guests from the region, it will bring.

In addition, in the training, we included the local community, people who still live that heritage. Thus, among other phenomena that we discovered together, one of the most interesting was a local cake, known as the Crown of Christ, with the wholehearted help of a local expert in preparing this cake - Grandma Melija. Other local people were also happy to get involved in all the activities, feeling that their heritage was becoming relevant in the way we want to actually preserve it. That way, the synergy of proactive local stakeholders and the Interpret Europe method of heritage interpretation brought added value. Fortunately, this potential value was recognised even at the very beginning, and especially during the course itself, in which the director of the Žminj Tourist Board also participated. In this way, Ms. Šajina was able to personally participate very actively in the training. In fact, she was in a dual role: both participant and organiser - which always proves to be a great foundation for successful collaboration. This shows how the local partner is truly future-oriented.

This recognition of the importance and benefits of such lifelong learning resulted in the exceptional coverage of the entire event by local and national media. Thus, we can confirm over 20 articles in newspapers, on web portals, as well as an exceptional report that was broadcast on the national central news. What great coverage! What a great cooperation!

Max Dubravko Fijačko is an IE Certified Interpretive Trainer and is the IE Gastronomic Heritage Coordinator. You can get in touch with him at: dubravko.fijacko@gmail.com.



Croatian national TV footage of CIG (Image: Ungar)

Take a look at CIG

Max Dubravko Fijačko (Croatia)

Curious to see a bit of what a CIG course contains? This short video was created to take you there with us.

Žminj is a small hilltop town in the centre of Croatia's biggest peninsula – Istria. A very specific place hides amazing local traditions. On a Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course in October, a group of ten participants discovered local heritage and their own deeper meanings.

We hope this video will stimulate your imagination and by watching it you will also open your colourful umbrellas and fly with us – feeling at least a part of that wonderful, positive atmosphere and discovering some of the cultural, natural and rich gastronomic heritage of this beautiful region. Maybe you'll join us live, somewhere, next time... until then, follow the link:

<https://youtu.be/wqGUJIZEe18>

Max Dubravko Fijačko is an IE Certified Interpretive Trainer and is the IE Gastronomic Heritage Coordinator. You can get in touch with him at: dubravko.fijacko@gmail.com.



Discovering with all our senses and learning to fly on the CIG course (Images: Dubravko Fijačko)

The second CIG course in Zaprešić

Ivana Zrilić (Croatia)

Laughter, excitement, tears (of joy) and lots of creativity. These words best describe the last day of the CIG course.

The Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) training was held for the second time this year in Zaprešić, in the Novi Dvori castle of the governor Jelačić. The course was organised by the Tourist Board of the City of Zaprešić. The course usually lasts five days but the tourist board provided an additional day of training dedicated to communication skills and public speaking.

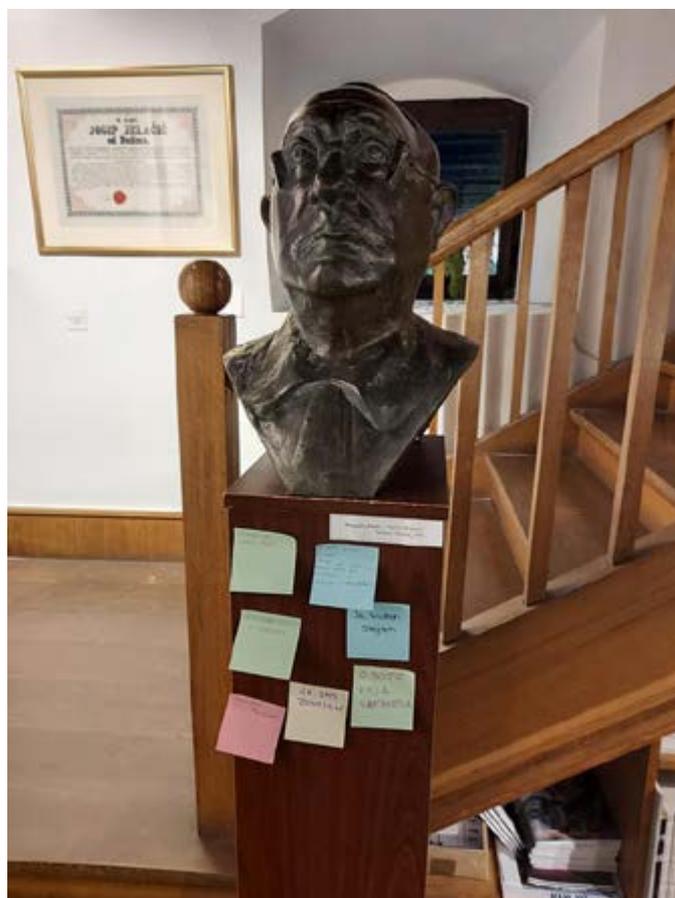
Attendees learn from each other

Building on their previous work from various interactive tasks and detailed exercises, the participants gradually revealed the meaning in their final interpretive talks and showed the difference between great interpretation and what a presentation or tourist guide looks like when they use only facts. Everyone designed a gift to give to the other attendees, although it was neither an instruction nor an obligation. They put a lot of effort into the visual presentation and included all of our senses. Precisely because of the diverse society and numerous group tasks, the participants learned a lot from each other.

As a Chinese proverb says: "Teachers open the door, but you have to enter on your own". I believe that these participants entered the methodology and understood the importance of heritage interpretation and preservation, how they can use various techniques to increase the interest and involve visitors and provide them with leadership experience and arouse emotions to find a deeper meaning. The spark of interpretation was thrown in and the fire started. And the proof of that was in the great creative and detailed presentations of intangible heritage that the participants presented on the last day of their course. We were treated to presentations on topics from the traditional housewife and woollen socks to the history of the castle, coats of arms, tiny nativity scenes and gingerbread hearts.

Looking to the future

Adrenaline, desire for certification, and the good energy created among the participants are the best incentives. After the first CIG training in Zaprešić in June this year, several participants have already experienced change in their lives, securing jobs leading interpretive walks and even working in theatre. Lifelong learning never ends and it is always a good idea to invest in yourself.



Ban Josip Jelačić being interpreted and some of the treats from CIG (Images: Zrilić)

Ivana Zrilić is an IE Certified Interpretive Trainer. She is a licensed tourist guide for several Croatian regions and since February 2017 has been working as a mentor/ teacher in the Lifelong Learning of the Baltazar University in Zagreb, sharing her knowledge and more than 20 years' experience in guiding with new generations of tour guides. You can contact her at: ivana_zrilić@yahoo.com.

Dalmatia's first heritage interpreters

Ana Jakić (Croatia)

Changing the role of a guide into an interpreter who inspires participants to learn by themselves is also a learning experience for the guide.

The guides of the Split-Dalmatia region in Croatia enjoyed theoretical and practical instruction during a five-day IE Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course delivered in October at different locations in Split. The first day was overwhelming, especially when we realised that on the last day we would have to take our written and oral exams. However, the indoor and outdoor presentations and workshops made us more confident and relaxed.

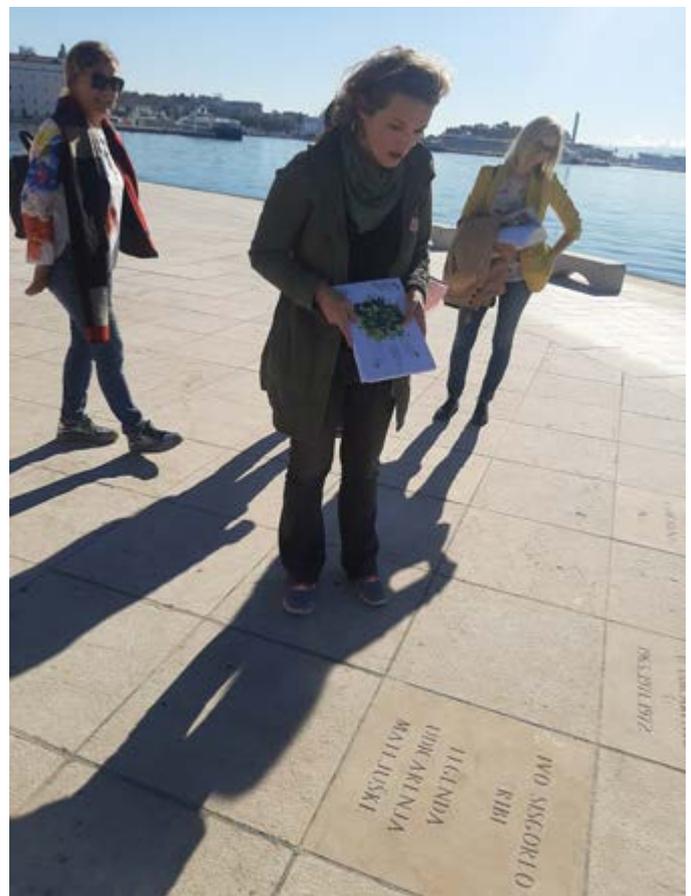
We all agreed that open-ended questions provided the most engaging problems for us, and the difference between theme and topic was not clear at first. The exercises of using stepping stones, engaging senses, drama techniques and making unusual sensory experiences were the most amusing part of the outdoor activities. In the group work we all demonstrated our collaboration and cooperation to achieve the main goal. Our communication skills improved, especially in interpretive critiquing. The participants showed high motivation, enthusiasm, appreciation and friendliness.

Personally, I liked making mind maps to remind myself of keywords and notions of my interpretive talk.

By changing the role of a guide that instructs into the role of an interpreter who inspires participants, we also became learners.

This was all possible because our trainers, Magdalena Kuś and Samia Zitouni, were very instructive, helpful and always ready to lead us. Through their knowledge, experience, and above all patience, all participants enhanced their competences in presenting and interpreting the heritage phenomena of macro and micro locations of Croatia. We were provided with many examples of how to touch emotions and open minds to different aspects and situations in interpretation.

Ana Jakić is a teacher and a tourist guide in Split-Dalmatia County, Croatia. She teaches young and teenage learners English language and simple cooking, provides different walking and riding tours in Croatian, English and Italian languages, and organises wine and oil tasting. You can get in touch with her at: a.ivica@yahoo.com.



Searching and revealing secrets (Images: Zitouni)

Interpretation – more than communication

Dejan Gluvačević (Croatia)

Interpretation as a communication tool is increasingly proving to be a medium that makes our experience unique.

As someone who deals with tourism on a practical level – as a head of a tourist office and as a tourist guide – but also as someone who deals with tourism on a scientific level by scrutinising tourism trends and communication in tourism, I can not hide my enthusiasm for the heritage interpretation training by Interpret Europe.

This type of training of various tourism stakeholders to interpret and show love for their heritage, shows how Interpret Europe keeps pace with tourism trends. More and more people are looking for a unique experience and some more meaning, some special message, and not just a list of facts and boring data.

Personally, what thrilled me the most was the enthusiasm of the trainer, whose energy moved all participants to get involved from the very beginning and very successfully master the techniques of heritage interpretation. As someone who deals with communication on a scientific level, I noticed that some participants made significant progress during the 40 hours, and our trainer constantly pointed out good and bad practices and enabled everyone to become an even better interpreter.

Each of us can make our own contribution to the interpretation of heritage through original interpretive walks and speeches. Every country, and especially small countries like Croatia, needs a special story to attract attention. Interpreting heritage as a communication tool is something that all countries, and especially those less recognisable countries, should be encouraged to embrace.

When we become aware of the importance of communication, but especially the importance of interpretation, then we will no longer have to worry about our heritage because it will be in the hands of those who recognise the importance of heritage preservation.

Many thanks to Interpret Europe, to the trainer, Ivana Zrilić, and to all participants who made me an even better interpreter.

Dejan Gluvačević, PhD, is a private entrepreneur and external associate at Faculty of Political Science (University of Zagreb, Croatia). His scientific research includes areas of destination branding and communication in tourism. Professional experience gained working as a PR manager, tourist guide and manager of a travel agency.



Becoming better interpreters (Image: Zrilić)

Congratulations to our newly certified members

Certified Interpretive Guides (CIG)

Oihane Bakedano, Spain
Alexander Barker, Sweden
Edurne Barriola Lazkano, Spain
Lucie Benešová, Czech Republic
Nadine Berger, Germany
Jessica Bergström, Sweden
Eñaut Beristain Prieto, Spain
Sandra Bjärenberg, Sweden
Lucie Bláhová, Czech Republic
Alexandra Böminghaus, Germany
Stanislava Borovac, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Lucie Budířská, Czech Republic
David Calleja García, Spain
Sunčana Cokarić, Croatia
Srdjan Delic, Montenegro
Jitka Dvorská, Czech Republic
Rafael Etxarri Azpirotz, Spain
Jana Fischerová, Czech Republic
Olaiia Garcia Garmendia, Spain
Sylva Geffroy, Czech Republic
Kristina Grahl, Sweden
Claudia Greiner, Germany
Märta Gustafsson, Sweden
Marie Heczko, Czech Republic
Vendula Hnojská, Czech Republic
Petr Hudec, Czech Republic
Ozren Islamović, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Kristina Klingener, Sweden
Šárka Kosová, Czech Republic
Kamila Koucká, Czech Republic
Jiří Kupka, Czech Republic
Marisa Lago Otxoa, Spain
Ursula Leon, Spain
Jana Marešová, Czech Republic

Jiří Matuška, Czech Republic
Radovan Mezera, Czech Republic
Eva Molčanová, Czech Republic
Pedro Morais, Portugal
Kathrin Müller, Switzerland
Ivana Nikitovic, Montenegro
Ondřej Nitsch, Czech Republic
Stig Nykkel, Sweden
Annika Nykkel, Sweden
Izabela Okrągła-Derencz, Poland
Eider Otaegi Oiarzabal, Spain
Vlatka Pehar Matić, Croatia
Jiří Procházka, Czech Republic
Maja Radunovic, Montenegro
Marie Rajnošková, Czech Republic
Manne Rytzman, Sweden
Vanessa Sánchez Goñi, Spain
Flor Savanti Collado, Spain
Bohuslava Schneiderová, Czech Republic
Karlos Solana Arruti, Spain
Ewa Wiatr, Poland
Tomáš Wizovský, Czech Republic
Lena Wobido, Germany

Certified Interpretive Hosts (CIH)

Melita Gaber, Slovenia
Dominika Koritnik Trepel, Slovenia
Metka Starič, Slovenia
Tanja Vesel, Slovenia

Certified Interpretive Trainers (CIT)

Iva Klarić Vujović, Croatia
Simana Markovska, Bulgaria

Upcoming courses and webinars

Would you enjoy an enriching course with like-minded people and to gain an IE certification?

See below and keep an eye on the training pages of the IE website for up to date information on the next courses available near you:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/events/ie-training-courses.html>

or email training@interpret-europe.net.

**** Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, some courses had to be cancelled. They may get rescheduled. Keep an eye on the website for the latest information. ****

Date	Language	Location	Trainer
Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG)			
12-14/03/2021 19-21/03/2021	Catalan, Spanish	Bellaterra, Spain	Evarist March
10-12/09/2021 23-24/10/2021	German	Freiburg, Germany	Thorsten Ludwig
Certified Interpretive Writer (CIW)			
11-15/01/2021	Bulgarian	Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria	Simana Markovska

Upcoming IE webinars

14/01/2021: Interpretation and gamification scoreboard. Presented by Iva Silla (Croatia)

IE webinars are free for members and are conducted in English.

28/01/2021: Heritage interpretation and parks - the case of Norway. Presented by Kristian Bjørnstad (Norway)

Keep an eye on the website for further details of upcoming webinars and how to register:
<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/events/ie-webinars/>

18/02/2021: Combining CIG with a national certification system. Presented by Per Sonnvik (Sweden)

Email webinar@interpret-europe.net for more information.

18/03/2021: Exhibitions and guides in the online days - engagement, authenticity, distance. Presented by Lad'a Ptáček (Czech Republic)

From interpretation to recognised excellence

Iva Silla (Croatia)

Remember how we said to keep an eye on Bakar? Keep watching... and add Ližnjan and many other Croatian destinations to your watch-list!

In an article that I wrote for this newsletter more than two years ago with Silvija Jacić, my dear co-traveller on the path of personal and professional growth in the field of heritage interpretation, we pointed to the promising tourism development based on heritage interpretation in the Croatian town of Bakar.

Since then, between all of the achievements and steps towards further development, Bakar Tourist Board led by its manager Sonja Jelušić Marić organised two Interpret Europe Certified Interpretive Guide courses, numerous interpretive walks and activities. Even this summer, when most of the destination management organisations found it impossible to deal with the Covid-19-related challenges, Bakar Tourist Board smoothly responded to the situation by turning its major traditional summer event into a set of interpretive walks and a few other cosy small-scale activities.

It would take us a few pages to list and briefly describe all of the interpretive and educational projects that the Bakar Tourist Board conducted over the past few years. One thing is for sure: This strange year brought Bakar's efforts in heritage tourism into focus and Bakar Tourist Board recently received the Golden Interstas 2020 award for excellence in tourism. The International Commission of Tourist Journalists recognised Bakar Tourist Board's efforts for its creative professional achievements in the presentation of the richness of its traditional values and culture despite the pandemic.

Bakar is not alone when it comes to recognition of excellence that has roots in a destination management's confidence in heritage interpretation as a tool for better tourism. The tourist board of Ližnjan County in the Croatian region of Istria already received the Simply the Best award back in 2019 for the project Legends of Šišan. The Association of Croatian Travel Agencies and Way To Go magazine awarded the tourism board for its creative approach to education for heritage interpreters, used for creation of themed tours that significantly contributed to the tourism offer of the destination.

Indeed, Ližnjan County tourism board with its manager Natali Palko Zirdum has always been determined to include its incredible heritage in its tourism offer. This was also the first tourism board in the region of Istria to organise Interpret Europe's CIG training and the first time that a tourism board manager took part in the training together with its stakeholders, which was one of its many steps towards a creative community and wonderful interpretive projects.

I will end this article with the similar words Silvija and I used in the article from two years ago: we only hope that the tourist boards of Bakar and Ližnjan will remain on this path and continue setting an inspiring example for many destinations on the rise. It will be interesting to follow the further development of Bakar and Ližnjan County as tourist destinations in the years to come. We should add to this count many other Croatian 'interpretive tourism hubs', such as Vrsar in Istria or the continental region of Central Podravina, and we would love to know if there are similar cases elsewhere in Europe where destination management and heritage interpretation go hand in hand – please, share your examples.

It will be interesting to observe whether heritage interpretation can really make a difference in the regenerative tourism to come. Who knows? Destinations like Ližnjan County or Bakar might be the beacons to lead the way.

Iva Silla is the author of Secret Zagreb tours (www.secret-zagreb.com) and the brand new Croatia Underrated podcast (www.croatiaunderrated.com). She is an experienced Interpret Europe CIG trainer. Contact her at: iva@secret-zagreb.com.



Bakar Tourist Board award

How my CIG homework turned into reality

Marina Krivošić (Croatia)

During the CIG course I did not even dream about it, but then the dream happened and soon came true.

The Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course I attended at the end of June this year was held in the magnificent environment of the manorial estate Novi Dvori in Zaprešić, a town close to the Croatian capital, Zagreb. The owner of Novi Dvori was the most famous Croatian ban, Josip Jelačić.

After completing this exciting, full of energy, wonderful and useful course, a written homework was required for obtaining the certificate. Although we could choose any topic, my decision was to 'stay' in the Novi Dvori, which, although I had known since childhood, I literally fell in love with.

Usually when it comes to manorial estates and castles somehow men are most often in the foreground. For that reason, I chose women in Ban Jelačić's Novi Dvori as a topic. The women who had their home there, and who gladly accepted and hosted others into that home. Women who were also benefactors – such as the ban's wife, Sofija, the ban's sister, Anka, and Hanika the castle's cook.

Over the next two weeks, I put everything down on paper, and wrote my homework according to all IE criteria and sent it to my trainer. Thanks to the excellent feedback I received, I started to think about turning my homework into reality. And it happened: I offered the idea to the Tourist Board of the city of Zaprešić and they accepted it!

In mid-October, in Novi Dvori, 'Ban Jelačić's Days' were held on his birthday. A wonderful tradition that has been successfully running for years. My tour called 'Women in Novi Dvori of Ban Jelačić' also got its place there. The excellent reactions of the people who were involved in this tour made me feel satisfied and happy.

Therefore, I would like to thank Toni Ganjto, director of the Tourist Board Zaprešić, as well as our trainer, Ivana Zrilić, for their support and encouragement. I am joyful and proud to have had the opportunity to interpret at least part of the heritage of my beautiful country. And that so soon after the course.



Women in Novi Dvori of Ban Jelačić - My course homework became a reality in this tour (Images: Krivošić)

Marina Krivošić has been a certified tourist guide for Zagreb city and Zagreb County since 2009 and works as a freelance tourist guide in Croatia. She became an IE Certified Interpretive Guide in June 2020. Marina can be contacted at: marina.krivosic@gmail.com.

Knowledge - Respect - Stewardship: How to keep the spark alive online

Janja Sivec (Slovenia)

For the third year in a row, IE team Slovenia organised an event within the European Heritage Days.

Sustainability of cultural heritage has become EHD 2020 celebrated 'Heritage and Education: Learning for Life!' and that was also a theme of our online event that focused on learning through heritage interpretation.

The event that was designed to take place in a craft centre in Veržej was, like many others, moved online. Regardless of the current situation, we wanted to keep tradition alive with organising events that are open to the general public and celebrate heritage interpretation.

Keeping the well-known format of short workshops and inviting speakers that work in the heritage field again proved a winning format.

IE trainer Janja Sivec led two 90-minute taster workshops that gave an insight into the IE training programme. She presented the Certified Interpretive Guide course and invited participants to think about their local heritage and what makes a good host.

In the second part of the event, more than 30 participants listened to five presentations that all had one thing in common: Learning for Life!

The speakers covered topics like pedagogical programmes in archives, how you can take a walk with bees in Ljubljana, learning about myths in landscape, how children can learn from geology and what can we all learn from fairy tales.

Learning from each other and exchanging ideas is always the main spark of the events we organise and even online we kept it alive.

The event closed with a special moment when, after almost three years in the role of Country Coordinator for Slovenia, Janja Sivec closed that chapter and opened a new one, becoming the IE Social Media Coordinator.

Janja Sivec is an IE trainer and is the IE Social Media Coordinator. She runs www.dlegende.com. You can reach her at: janja.sivec@interpret-europe.net.



Screenshots from the event (Images: Sivec)

Cultural heritage warriors

Nataliia Gudkova (Ukraine)

A Turkish artist from South Africa and a Ukrainian pushed local bureaucracy to uncover and recognise the value of a site in Feithiye, Turkey.

I met Bursu Cunneen, a Turkish artist and teacher, when she was photographing the stairs I went down after visiting the Lycia rock tombs in Feithiye, Turkey. She accidentally caught me in her shot and explained that she was working on a mosaics project for that staircase.

I was in such euphoria from visiting Troy with its magnificent museum, as well as the Lycia rock tombs of Feithiye, that when I saw a heritage site with ancient tombs below the popular tombs, dirty and surrounded by garbage containers, I expressed to Bursu my readiness to clean that place by myself. There were no information signs and in general the place seemed so undeservedly abandoned.

Bursu frowned and agreed that the heritage site really should be cleaned up to encourage others to appreciate it. So, we exchanged phone numbers and agreed to call each other. In the middle of the night I received a message from Bursu to meet the next morning.

I took my rubber gloves, left over from a business trip during quarantine, and went straight to the meeting place. And I was so surprised when I saw a smiling Bursu with a dozen workers equipped with shovels and equipment ready for cleaning the heritage site.



Municipality workers get stuck in cleaning up the heritage site (Image: Gudkova)

Bursu and I were later sitting in a local coffee shop drinking delicious Turkish tea with Suzan Tasor, a first female Headman of District, and two managers from the local museum. I listened to the story of how restless Bursu had called Suzan in the evening to inform her that we were planning to clean up the heritage site and maybe even to invite the press. This information reached the Municipal Manager and the District Governor. As a result, the Municipality agreed at 7am to organise the works that day. Bursu and I received a lot of thanks for our personal involvement. On parting, Suzan Tasor showed us an official letter of appeal on behalf of their community with a request to clean this heritage site, which was sent to the Municipality long before our appearance.

We celebrated our victory at Bursu's 100-year-old house with magnificent views in Faralya village. It is another art project of Bursu. She has many successful projects to her name. She used her skills and art to fight poverty in a shanty Chinatown settlement in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province. She made a dream come true for a child with cancer by organising a balloon flight in Cappadocia for them. I believe that the key to her success is not only her talent, but also her readiness to change the world for the better every day. Now many more people will be able to safely access this heritage site to engage with the past and find their own meanings there.

Nataliia Gudkova is an Associate Professor of the State Ecological Academy of Postgraduate Education and Management in Kyiv, Ukraine. You can get in touch with her at: ngudkova@gmail.com.



Celebrating success. From left to right: Nataliia Gudkova, Suzan Tasor and Bursu Cunneen (Image: Gudkova)

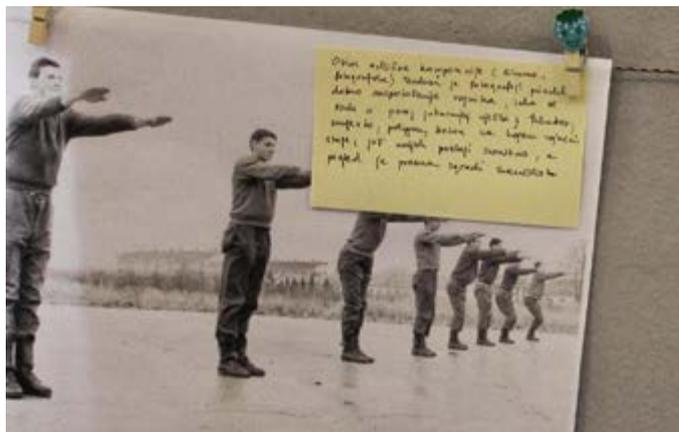
Interpreting urban transformation in Koprivnica

Vladimir Leninger (Croatia)

How to interpret a half empty former military camp. Which story to tell, which sight to show?

A diverse group gathered in the small town of Koprivnica in North Croatia, wanting to learn about interpreting cultural heritage and help organisers get a new insight about their future plans and projects. FUNK – a community of independent cultural associations in Koprivnica – organised a two-day workshop in September about creative presentation of inheritance with the purpose of creating a new product, like a tour, gamefied exploration or exhibit, to connect the community with interpreting.

The workshop was held by Iva Silla, an Interpret Europe certified trainer who is the author of the tours at Secret Zagreb and coordinator of the Croatian team on Innoguide, a European project for lifelong education of tour guides. The workshop was organised as part of the project, 'FUNK centre outside of centre' founded by the EU from European social fund.



History of the site (Image: Silla)

I had been interested in doing an interpretation course for a long time. I had completed good tour guiding courses and have a background in marketing but still didn't take a chance to participate in any interpretation courses. Then Covid-19 forced us to cut our workload so I decided to join this opportunity in the nearby city of Koprivnica.

At first I was surprised about the group coming from all different parts of culture and being very different in age and views. Only later I found out that this was the intention of the organisers. FUNK is a community of different cultural organisations which all reside in a once-busy military complex – now a new space of the city of Koprivnica dedicated to higher education, entrepreneurship, and culture. Among these emptied

socialistic, high utility buildings there is a wish to make a new centre – a cultural centre of the city. The organisers wanted to provide education about interpreting to members of their organisations, but also to draw some outsiders who could give fresh ideas and attitudes to their revitalisation of the space. So it proved to be an excellent learning opportunity because we were not just on a course but handling their real situation.

The workshop provided a great exercise in all parts of interpretation. It's easy to interpret when you have a great sight in front of you, a big historic monument, or story that is interesting and important.

So a hard task was upon us! Right up until the very end I was almost certain that we wouldn't make it. Just two short days to explain the theory and practical examples of interpretation to us – a group of absolute beginners with the terms of interpretation, and then exercises and discussions on the concrete situation of our organiser. I was sure it would be impossible without a great effort from our trainer. Iva was very precise in her teaching and always had such good practical examples that made everything so clear. I think I can say in the name of all in the group that we were quite surprised how much we learned, how we made realistic projects, and learned from our diverse experiences. We found many interesting stories to tell and share about the history and future of the space and the urban transformation that is happening there. But you will have to visit yourself to find out more. Hopefully in the future the new campus area will be an interesting stop to visit in developing the touristic story of that part of Croatia among providing cultural events for locals.

Vladimir Leninger is a tour leader leading groups in Croatia and Europe and is also trying to provide accommodation in Zagreb with a twist – providing an experience of local culture already in the room. You can reach him at: leninger@gmail.com.



Finding inspiration in local mural festival (Image: Silla)

True stories and real experiences spice up presentation

Branka Tolić (Croatia)

Touring the Zapresic Novi Dvori estates, I ran into a character called Marica, showcasing our local heritage in a refreshingly intriguing fashion.

Earlier in the autumn, I visited the Jelacic days held at the renowned Novi Dvori estates in Zapresic, Croatia. While surveying this historical manifestation, the authentic maidservant, Marica, invited me to join a heritage interpretation workshop. At last, I thought, something fun, and an activity that coincidentally resembled a project I was working on. The perfect incentive at the perfect time.

Meeting Marica (played by Ivana Zrilić), more than ever I realised the importance of who and how a story is told – she made every story interesting and personal. That influenced me to explore the role of an interpretive guide, at least for a while. I quickly cooked lunch, handed over the kids to my husband and embraced the Sunday bliss of the enchanting Novi dvori. Alone and free, curious of what I would learn and experience. Rain started pouring and it got cold so I put on my heavy coat, motivated to continue.

I was thrilled to encounter Ivana, ever enthusiastic and equipped with accessories. What a sight to see strangers showing an interest in the workshop! Driven by positive feedback, guests from Zagreb enjoyed festivities honoring the legendary Ban Josip Jelačić. It was a tremendous achievement for people from the capital to travel to a suburb for cultural events, as opposed to rushing downtown for entertainment. I always emphasised that even if it lacked in numbers, our hearts made up the difference! Zapresic has so much to discover, so much potential to develop.

Finally, the workshop began. The brief introduction and reference to bells reminded me of Hemingway's For whom the bell tolls. Ivana started displaying countless personal items and asked us to share our associations. Suddenly, I remembered all the tickets, postcards, letters, dedications, messages and other memorabilia from travels, performances and exhibitions I have kept at home... I could also show them and help others evoke their own memories. This workshop truly intended to encourage personal experiences rather than generic stories and, thinking back to my project at work; when examining Proust's masterpiece, Combray, a novel in which the narrator reminisces about his idyllic childhood while eating honey madeleines with tea, I always ask my students what smell, taste or sound takes them back in time.

For our next assignment I was paired up with an American studying Croatian heritage. We were supposed to find and draw an object near us. My choice was a counter in the forest where a young DJ played music. He picked a wooden detail from the Matija Skurjeni museum. My statement, "Those were the careless days", is singled out as the central idea - my retrospection painted a time when I was free and on my own, going out and longing for what I have today. My partner, Jeremy's, sentence was, "I like the details of Croatian architecture". It is intriguing to see how others often consider us more valuable than we do ourselves. Everybody represents another's object. There was no self promotion but a position of interpreting someone else's chosen location and experience. An interpretation of an interpretation.

We listened, talked and laughed. Even though we do not know each other, we shared secrets from our lives. However, everyone added their own, personal signature while interpreting objects others chose. That is something unchangeable. Encouraged, I realise I have so much to tell in my own, unique way. I started writing a project, decided to enroll in a tourist guide course and make sure Ivana includes me in the next heritage interpretation class as soon as possible. See you there!

Branka Tolić is a Croatian language teacher working in Gornjogradaska gimnazija, Zagreb, Croatia (www.ggg.hr). Her personal blog created during lockdown this year is:

<https://www.karantenablog.com/>. You can get in touch with her at: branka.tol@gmail.com.



We enjoyed the workshop and meeting characters from history (Image: Tolić)

The value and interpretation of personal objects

Petra Mikolić (Croatia)

How do our surroundings earn community value through interpretation? The Heritage Interpretation Workshop gave useful insights.

It was the end of September, and I had moved back to my hometown only a week prior. Covid-19 and office closures brought me back home from abroad and I was dying to be a part of the community again. My new neighbourhood, named after cherry orchards that used to grow there, has an interesting community which has been collecting stories, photographs, and gathering historic data on how the neighbourhood grew and formed its identity. My first weekend was definitely marked by an event organised by this community – a Jane’s walk through Tratinska Street, with workshops, exhibitions, stories being shared, concerts, and much more.

One of the workshops was The Heritage Interpretation Workshop, led by Ivana Zrilić. We gathered at Cibona Tower, next to the statue of the late basketball player, Dražen Petrović. Participants had to bring three objects with them – the one they hold most dear, one that was the eldest, and one which travelled the farthest. All of the participants were emotionally tied to the object which objectively would not be of high value, but each item reminded them of a period or a person in their lives. We gave meanings and a new purpose to the objects, interpreted them differently than someone else could have. We have shared stories tied to the objects and the neighbourhood, while our guide slowly shifted focus on how we as people each interpret places, objects, buildings, areas, and situations differently. This was a new way of seeing things that surround us, and their meanings and value.



Coming together to learn new things (Image: Mikolić)

The second part of the workshop entailed associations connected to the object we were shown, in our case, one of them was the statue of Dražen Petrović. The associations varied from person to person, while some of us saw Dražen as a symbol of sports and success, others associated him with his early passing.

Lastly, we were to draw anything we could see in our surroundings, explain to a person we were paired with why we chose that particular object, and say a few words about it. It was interesting to see how people saw, or interpreted, the staircase of the Technical Museum across the street, the phone booth, rubbish bin, etc. Interesting descriptions arose, from the modern rubbish bin representing our attitude towards nature, to a staircase drawing back to the once glorious days of Zagreb’s Fair and its importance in the region.

The workshop ended and we left with a new way of seeing the place we live in, and people we live among. The different media used to interactively interpret have shown us another way to look at heritage and brought us new knowledge.

Petra Mikolić is an M.Phil in Nordic Viking and Medieval Scandinavia. In her work she has tackled the notions and the difference between the history and the past through language and its historical sources, by the use of modern, cognitive linguistics approach.



My meaningful objects (Image: Mikolić)

Zooming through the basics of interpretive writing

Abby McSherry (Ireland)

Taking advantage of online technology to provide a spark and light some fires to help staff understand the skill involved in interpretive writing.

Take a bunch of scientists – ecologists, ornithologists, geologists and chemists. Add one major interpretive project that they are, of course, all able to write content for themselves, because after all, they can write, can't they? and they do know their science better than anyone! And what do you get...? Maybe not the best interpretive panels!

But a solution is at hand, even with the problems of Covid-19 preventing face-to-face training here in Ireland. That solution came in the form of IE trainer, Janja Sivec, who was more than willing to work with the CANN project (Collaborative Action for the Natura Network) to deliver an 'Interpretive Writing Lite' course over a single morning using the online platform Zoom.

The course linked 20+ partners and stakeholders from Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland through the ether to Slovenia where Janja presented from her home office. The atmosphere was as good as if we had all been in a room learning together and there wasn't a moment where the team members weren't fully engaged.

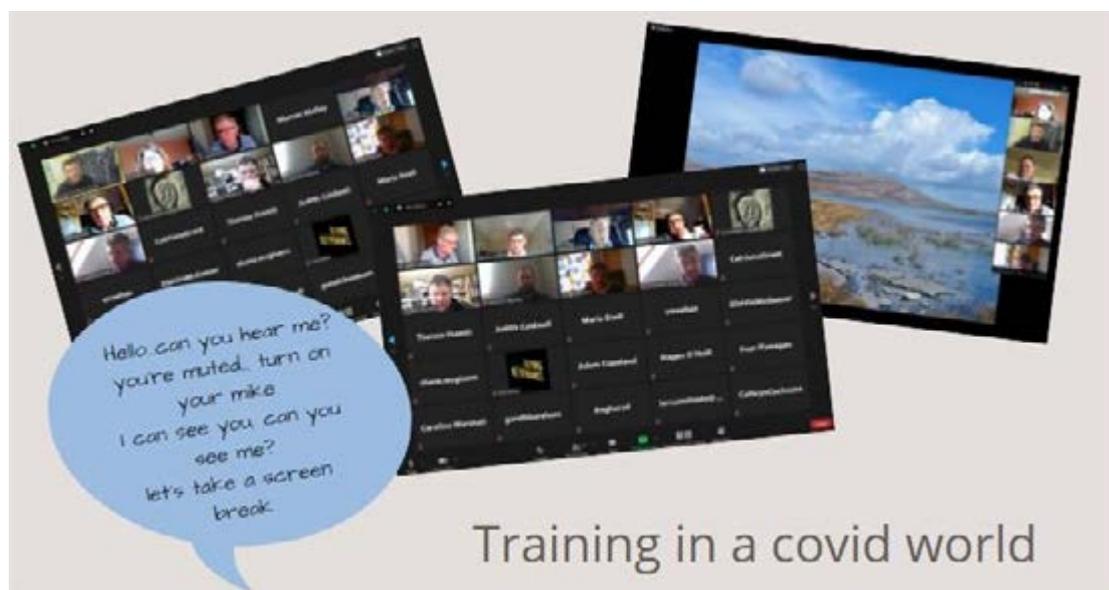
Starting with a concise history of interpretation and a brief study of the theory with some excellent examples, interspersed with lovely practical and visual exercises and regular use of the breakout rooms to get small groups working together, we

used the full gamut of the Zoom platform to enjoy a varied, interactive training session.

The pace was mixed, which was essential as anyone who has sat through endless Zoom meetings knows what a difficult task it is to keep people concentrating on a screen for hours on end. But by using simple tools and exercises to get us up from our office chairs and changing the focus of our eyes and minds by taking a trip to our front doors, Janja kept us asking for more.

I work as an outreach officer for the CANN project and organising this introductory course has made my job a lot easier. My biggest task next year will be to develop interpretation for all our sites, and I have confidence now that we will be able to speak with the individual site managers knowing that they understand the basic principles of heritage interpretation. That they understand why and how the professionals work as they do and maybe at least know what they don't know. I also believe that the next time the participants are asked to "do a panel" for a site, they might understand that this is not such a simple job and that just laminating science facts and a few pretty pictures on to a board is not enough. I know that they all understand at least some of the tools and skills needed and will work to expand their knowledge further in the future. This mini course lit some interpretive fires and long may they burn.

Abby McSherry is an outreach officer for the CANN project – The Collaborative Action for the Natura Network. The project is funded by the EU's INTERREG VA programme managed by the SEUPB with match funding from the national governments of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland. To find out more visit www.TheCANNproject.org. Abby can be contacted at: Abby.McSherry@nmandd.org.



Father Christmas goes online in Hlebine

Elizabeta Milanović Glavica (Croatia)

When faced with cancelling events due to Covid-19, it could not be accepted that Father Christmas couldn't come to children in Hlebine.

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade. This is how one family thinks during the time of lockdown. Without running events, there were no visitors and no income. But they didn't want to accept "closed and cancelled" as an option, so they thought hard and used IT and online social services to bring Father Christmas and St. Nickolas to every home. Father Christmas himself is, of course, immortal and as old as the first child who believed, so the family put their heads together and put the event online.

Father Christmas/St. Nickolas, and two busy elves with their little helper, produced really creative content and broadcast live from Father Christmas' home. Without too long for planning and preparation, and without access to expensive professional equipment, they made this huge step forward to deliver an online live show. Every evening from 1-19 December at 19.00 (CET) they broadcast live on the Facebook page for Stari zanati. In between shows, they brushed up their tech skills and thought about how Santa's home could adapt and survive in the middle of a pandemic. They wanted to keep the Christmas spirit alive in every home, because every child (and adult) needs magic in their lives.



During the live programme, Petra and Ervin the elves created magic with storytelling, online workshops, songs, plays, interesting guests and many surprises. They showed some old school games like hopscotch, rope jumping, rubber band jumping, and presented how to make beautiful ornaments and other things to try at home. Lovers of old customs and skills saw how to make horseshoes, clay baked dishes and jugs for souring milk, or how wicker corn baskets were made. In this unusual Hlebine's Christmas Workshop, various traditional toys were created, such as cars, planes, trains, horses, ducks, knights' swords, axes and shields. They even baked Christmas cookies. The elves also opened the Father Christmas post office. Every day, busy elves read out letters received from children and asked children to take action and write letters, and to be creative and share their stories on Facebook. The workshop also hosted three masters of Hlebine naive art: Branko Matina, Stjepan Pongrac and Zlatko Kolarek.

Father Christmas was played by Tihomir Želimorski, who attend an IE CIG training course last year, where he realised the importance of bringing heritage to consumers. So, instead of putting everything on hold this year, he become even more creative and brought the beauty of the love, warmth and real Christmas spirit to every home over the internet.

Elizabeta Milanović Glavica is a university specialist in tourism and hospitality management from Koprivnica, Croatia. She works for the Central Podravina Tourist Board (tzp-sredisnja-podravina.hr). She is a member of Interpret Croatia and is an IE Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) and is the IE Tourism Coordinator. She can be contacted at: elizabeta.milanovic@interpret-europe.net or elizabeta.milanovic@gmail.com.



The elves in Santa's house and Saint Nikolas meets the mayor of Hlebine (Images: Milanović Glavica)

What's going on elsewhere

Reignite: AHI offers new sparks for interpretation in a tough year

Michael Hamish Glen (UK)

IE's online conference in May inspired and informed AHI, in the UK, which ran its annual conference as a virtual event in November.

In the end, its annual gathering was a very real event, generally applauded for its success in making best use of available technology as well as for its content.

AHI chose the Hopin platform, which is devised for the conference market and is more adaptable and effective than Zoom. It allowed delegates to visit Reception for information, a Help Desk for technical assistance, a Stage for keynote addresses and other plenary sessions, a Sessions area that acted as a series of break-out rooms, an Expo Booth area (live and recorded) for promotional purposes and a Networking function. During sessions, delegates could use the Chat function. Hopin worked well once we got the hang of it – which didn't take long.



The conference was split into two parts. We quickly mastered the techy bits and were treated to three themed sessions, six keynote presentations in all, on the first day and a half (part one) and had a chance to revisit the themes two weeks later, with delegates invited to submit their own videos for discussion. This pioneering arrangement proved successful and allowed us in part two to enjoy several short video responses to the keynote speakers. The themes were partly driven by Covid-19 and partly by the furor over Black Lives Matter which, like the pandemic, is pan-world.

Stuart Frost of the British Museum and Jane Samuels of the Natural History Museum, both in London, led on Theme 1 – Covid-19, Challenges and opportunities for interpretation. Stuart explained that digital platforms and social media maintained

public contact while they faced the complexities of opening a museum of many floors and galleries with one-way routes, new signage and staff training. Alongside this was the challenge of re-interpreting collections relating to Britain's colonial past.

Jane's talk focussed on the progress of her museum's programmes for diversity and inclusion which are core values of its vision that both people and the planet should thrive. Like Stuart, she emphasised the impact on funding because of Covid-19 restrictions on visitors and the substantial absence of overseas visitors. The impact of Brexit was also of concern.

Theme 2 – Black Lives Matter and the response by heritage interpreters – brought to the stage Finn White and Kofo Ajala of the Bristol Black History Project. Finn described the importance of relating the great range of stories about the city's black community to the community itself and to the wider public, and how they had used a panel of local experts and story writers to bring the project alive.

Kofo's vivacious, spontaneous description of her involvement as a young person on the steering group demonstrated, she said, that everyone can have a voice in changing conventional directions of museums which are often a product of a colonial past. That she felt her voice and opinions would not usually be sought showed how many museums are 'institutionally white'; she acknowledged that her voice was heard only because it was wanted for this project. In working towards a more inclusive society, interpretation can play a seminal role.

Paula Larsson and Olivia Durand, the two PhD students who conceived Uncomfortable Oxford, told us why they set up walking tours of the university city to challenge and expose racial inequality, gender and class discrimination and the legacies of empire. They have found ready audiences for their unconventional and imaginative exploration of Oxford and, during lockdown, developed a way of delivering the walking tours virtually.

James Harding-Morris and Fiona Groves addressed Theme 3 – New-found engagement with the natural world during Covid-19. James leads Back from the Brink, a collaborative project that aims to save England's most threatened species from extinction through engaging and connecting people with nature. His talk will be remembered for the stunning photographs of insects, plants and animals, which have been made freely available for anyone to use for educational purposes.

Fiona Groves of the UK Wildlife Trusts rounded off this theme by discussing the challenges and opportunities of engaging the wider community with nature during the pandemic. Accessing wildlife-rich places not only develops care for the natural world but benefits physical and mental health, working for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Listening to the key speakers sparked off valuable 'chat' contributions to the debates (as they did during IE's conference) and added to the value of each topical discussion. Delegates could also chat directly to others online and arrange individual video chats.

The follow-up day two weeks later brought a collection of short, personal videos that reflected the themes that formed the core of the conference. Perhaps the most thought-provoking was Marina Hauer's presentation that asked us to look beyond ourselves and question our ethos 'and collective blind-spots, to tell better, truer and more inclusive stories'.

A further benefit for AHI was that the Hopin platform allowed poll voting at AHI's annual general meeting and collected data on attendance, use of the chat facility and visits to, and follow-ups from, the Expo Booths.

Evaluation forms are still being assessed but the immediate response during the wrap-up sessions indicated a high level of approval for the Hopin platform, Kev Theaker's design of the programme and the ensuing debates and Astrid Krumins' cheerful management of the whole conference.

The conference fee was kept as low as possible, at £50 for AHI members and £65 for non-members.

Michael Hamish Glen is an experienced wordsmith, based in Scotland, and formerly ran Touchstone Heritage Management Consultants. He creates effective and thought-provoking words to interpret natural and cultural heritage. Michael helped to found AHI in 1975 and is also a founding member of Interpret Europe. He can be contacted at: michael.hamish.glen@mhg.scot.

2021 will be the European Year of Rail

IE Management

Three years after the European Year of Cultural Heritage, another European Year might offer new opportunities for heritage interpretation.

The European Commission's official proposal for the Year was released on 4 March 2020. It was presented to the European Parliament on 23 June 2020 and was accepted by its Committee on Transport and Tourism (Tran) on 12 October 2020. Within the Commission, DG MOVE (Mobility and Transport) will be responsible for the implementation of the Year. So far, there is only limited information but questions can be addressed to: MOVE-C3-EUROPEAN-YEAR-RAIL-2021@ec.europa.eu.

The proposal strongly refers to the European Green Deal suggesting that "through projects, debates, events, exhibitions and initiatives across Europe, the European Year of Rail will promote rail as an attractive and sustainable way to move across Europe, to citizens, business and authorities, emphasising its Union wide and innovative dimension. By reaching out to citizens, beyond the railway sector, through dedicated events and communication campaigns, it will convince more people and businesses to make use of rail". In an information to the Expert Group on Cultural Heritage from 18 November 2020, DG Education and Culture underlined the relevance of the Year also for the heritage sector, stating: "The final text makes direct reference to rail's history and its cultural heritage for building on the rail's power for collective imagination. The European Year of Rail is indeed directly relevant to sustainable cultural tourism and heritage, with the great train routes of Europe, railway and transport museums, and the reuse and conservation of industrial railway heritage."

There is no doubt that the growth of the railway system had significant impact on the development and connection of European regions, especially from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century. People in villages gained access to towns, travelling between cities became much easier, in some places, railway construction work brought thousands of people from other countries into remote areas (e.g. regarding the construction of Alpine bridges and tunnels). Railway lines turned tiny villages into international hubs – or caused the decline of others that were sidelined or bypassed.

In many European countries, parts of the railway system are listed heritage, even including three World Heritage sites:

- Forth Bridge, UK
- Rhaetian Railway in the Albula / Bernina Landscapes, Switzerland
- Semmering Railway, Austria

Many recent and historic railway lines are part of protected landscapes and therefore link culture to nature. In Austria and Switzerland, the landscapes surrounding the tracks (to be viewed from the train) are actually part of the designated World Heritage, and railway companies refer to the World Heritage status of their lines. For example, in Switzerland there is a UNESCO World Heritage pass which travellers can buy, and the German main railway company is cooperating with national parks in Germany, Austria and Switzerland (some of them World Heritage) through the programme: Fahrziel Natur ('Destination nature').

There is also a large number of heritage railways (lines out of regular operation) and of railway museums in Europe (see here: <https://www.internationalsteam.co.uk/museumseurope.htm>). Most larger railway companies run their own museums or are involved in the operation of public railway museums. In Germany alone, there are more than 175 railway museums or museum lines, and even more activities are supposed to take place in France and – by far the most – in the UK.



Steam locomotive in the Technical Museum, Sinsheim, Germany (Image: Ludwig)

So, the Year might offer some potential for IE members. Interpreting European railway heritage helps to approach sustainability from a new direction and might open the field of technical heritage to some members. It could also help to get in touch with stakeholders to whom there is so far no real connection, regarding institutions for technical heritage as well as large and financially strong companies. There are also links to IE's upcoming tourism initiative since the idea of transition hubs is related to the idea of turning key railway museums into hubs for smaller railway museums.

Considering that the Year has only been confirmed in October 2020, and that so far the EU long-term budget for 2021-2027 has still not been adopted, it can be expected that EU funding will only be provided towards the end of 2021. The proposal of the Commission includes an allocation of 8 million euros for the implementation of the Year which, in European terms, is not too much. However, the proposal explicitly mentions Creative Europe and Erasmus+, and since the budget for these programmes will increase for the seven upcoming years, it could be expected that funding for projects linked to the Year would also be available within them. Furthermore, the Year might be seen as catalyst to encourage associations, foundations and companies related to the railway system to provide funding for interpretive activities, and an option for IE trainers could be to address railway museums as potential organising partners for IE training courses.

So, please get active if you feel the European Year of Rail offers opportunities for you – and share your ideas and experiences through our social media channels or through the newsletter in order to foster exchange.

You can see the details of the EC's proposal for the Year of Rail here:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/commission-proposal-decision-european-year-of-rail_en.pdf

Stories in the sky

Marie Banks (UK)

How good interpretation and engaging with local communities can inspire a cross-border inter-governmental conservation movement.

Running along the ground, the wind catches under the wing and her feet leave the ground. She's airborne. She climbs quickly and now she's soaring over the huge expanse of the Arctic tundra with only the rush of the wind and the sound of swans and geese honking. From up here, she can see more of this remote area; such a perfect breeding ground for birds, safe from predators. The only human presence, the local tribes herding reindeer in traditional ways.

Following watercourses and coastlines, she begins her 7,000km journey south, through more densely populated areas and 11 European countries to reach the UK, experiencing and recording everything that all migratory birds have to contend with on their route: habitat loss and dwindling or changing water supplies; pollution; power lines; being shot at by hunters.

Just outside a town, a huge congregation of school children shouts up and waves. She comes down on a strip of grass and is immediately enveloped in cheering and TV cameras trying to capture the moment. The Human Swan has landed, making one of many pre-arranged visits in her three-month journey along the migratory flyway where she will engage with local communities and government officials to inform and discuss the plight that migratory birds are facing and encourage cross-border cooperation for conservation.



Soaring over the tundra
(Image: Conservation Without Borders)



Human Swan meets children in the Arctic
(Image: Conservation Without Borders)

The Flight of the Swans project took place in 2016 with the human swan, Sacha Dench, flying by paramotor in often perilous conditions along the migration route of Bewick's swans. Polar bears, personal injury and huge logistical challenges, as well as everything that the real swans have to deal with, including the weather, did not stop the human swan. By using powerful storytelling, along with the ambitious adventure to capture media attention, the project gained huge support.

It was awarded the 2017 Campaign of the Year in the ENDS Environmental Impact Awards for engaging more than 10,000 people on the ground, including school children, local indigenous communities, hunting groups, fish farmers, artists and government officials. More than 1,700 stories featured in the media, most of those on TV and radio, including prime-time chat shows with celebrities, and almost every story talked about the threats to swans because it was impossible to cover a woman attempting this flying feat without also asking the question, 'Why?'.

More than 30 partner organisations got involved and were invited to interpret the story their own way to tackle their priority issues. The adaptation of the overall story to local culture and the activities inspired by it ranged hugely. In Poland, Sacha landed live on national breakfast TV to talk about lead poisoning (the only country en route with no restriction on lead in hunting) which led to a mass public response in letters and phone calls to the media and shooting associations, and hunters joining a Swan Symposium. In Latvia, an art competition encouraging people to interpret the swan stories received such a response from all ages that entries could only be cut down to a shortlist of 100. Each piece interpreted the Bewick's swan story differently and entries ranged from swans of sculptured lace to recycled plastics and the entire migration of the swans knitted into mittens.

And now, looking to 2021 when the UN COP26 meeting on climate change will take place in Glasgow, UK, the human swan is planning to take to the skies again. This time, two record-breaking

activities will come together to raise awareness of the need to act against climate change. Flying around Britain's coastline by green-powered electric paramotor, Sacha will visit as many climate activists and local grassroots projects as possible to highlight the best of the positive action already happening. While doing this, she will attempt to inspire the largest number of people ever to sign up to a climate pledge in support of positive action in their own lives – not just around the UK but around the world through media and online coverage. Finally, the climax of this exciting project will be to deliver the results directly to the world leaders at the COP next year and demand more action. She has already been offered a seat at the table with direct access to amplify all our voices and concerns on the climate crisis.

This story comes with a price tag! The project is possible only with public support: the Crowdfunder (link below with more information on the project) is live until 23 December. It's been a difficult year for everyone, but climate change is already affecting us all. If you are able to support the initiative in any way, please consider adding to the funds to enable Sacha to take our voice on climate action to the UN. And please share the link far and wide and consider how you could become a part of the journey. Thank you.

I'm sure the human swan will have even more tales to tell us from her latest adventure.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/round-britain-climate-challenge>



Human Swan takes to the skies
(Image: Angharad Barlow/Flight of the Swans)

Marie Banks is IE's News Coordinator. When not volunteering for IE, she runs her own interpretation and proofreading business, www.zebraproof.uk. She can be contacted at: marie.banks@interpret-europe.net.

Sacha Dench is the UN Ambassador for Migratory Species and set up the NGO Conservation Without Borders www.conservationwithoutborders.org.

You can see some of the highlights of the Flight of the Swans project here: <https://flightoftheswans.org/expedition/highlights/>.



Human Swan inspires school children
(Image: Conservation Without Borders)

IE announcements

Change in membership fees and categories

IE Management

The General Assembly decided that in 2021, 'Individual membership' will become the only membership category for individual members.

In 2017, the General Assembly introduced professional membership in order to have comparable fees with other international organisations. All individual members involved in heritage interpretation were asked to change to this new category which was designed to become the standard category for individual members. However, by the end of 2019, only 18% of all individual IE members were in the professional membership category. The average fee for individual members had dropped to €25 and this situation puts increasing pressure on the continued provision of IE activities and services.

To cope with this, the General Assembly decided that the category 'Professional membership' will be removed again, while membership fees for the new 'Individual membership' category will equal the fees now charged for 'Professional membership'.

Members joining IE for the first time should benefit from an entry level. Entry individual membership will be 50% of the full individual membership (which means it equals the current individual membership). This way, members joining especially to attend an IE training course can take advantage of a 'test phase'. However, by the end of their year of entry, they will need to decide whether they would like to leave IE or to continue as full individual members.

Present fee group	A	B	C	D	Future fee group	A	B	C	D
Individual	€10	€20	€30	€40	Individual (entry)	€10	€20	€30	€40
Professional	€20	€40	€60	€80	Individual (full)	€20	€40	€60	€80

Constitution and General Assembly

The revised Constitution that was decided by the General Assembly on 26 September 2020, has been accepted by the Registry Court in Freiburg, Germany. It has been updated at: www.interpret-europe.net/feet/home/interpret-europe/.

For current individual or professional members this means:

- Members who are now professional members will become full individual members but pay the same fee they paid before as professional members.
- Members who are now individual members would be converted to full individual membership by the beginning of 2022.

Against the background of the 2020 coronavirus crisis, which has also had significant impact on the growth of IE, the General Assembly decided that **there shall be no automatic conversion before January 2022.**

Nevertheless, we ask all individuals who are currently in the lower entry category to switch to the higher full category if at all possible and if their situation has not been too adversely affected by the current global crisis. Full individual membership means an annual fee ranging from €20 to €80, according to your country of residence.

If you are an individual but not a professional member and feel you could afford the full fee in 2021, it would help IE greatly.

Just drop us a line at office@interpret-europe.net to change your membership category and declare that you are ready to pay the full fee.

Our next General Assembly will take place online on **Saturday, 10 April 2021 at 17:00 CEST**. Please save this date.

As usual, you will receive an invitation including the agenda with all attachments and technical guidelines three weeks in advance. If you intend to propose a motion, please send the exact wording on which the Assembly shall vote, together with an explanation, any time up until one month before the meeting.

We are searching for a Natural Heritage Coordinator

IE Management

Would you like to coordinate our Natural Heritage Team? This volunteer position is currently vacant.

As IE Natural Heritage Coordinator, you should understand and appreciate the significant value of listed natural heritage (nature monuments, protected areas, Natural World Heritage), be able to look at nature and culture as a whole, and represent IE at IUCN, Europarc, the European Commission (DG Environment) or the Climate Heritage Network, for example.

Other tasks entail:

- fostering the implementation of IE's training programme in protected areas
- gathering and managing a team of up to five members
- annual planning and brief reporting on a quarterly basis
- collaboration with IE's Management and other coordinators.

IE coordinators are official representatives of Interpret Europe in their field of responsibility. Their activities are based upon a standard volunteer service agreement which is valid for two years. The workload depends on the coordinator's availability, but the minimum requirement is ten hours per month.

If you are interested and would like to know more, please apply with a motivational letter and a short CV by 20 December 2020 to: office@interpret-europe.net.

Change in coordinator position

IE Management

We thank Janja Sivec for her service as Country Coordinator Slovenia and welcome her to the position of Social Media Coordinator.

Would you like to organise our IE Conference 2022?

IE Management

Whilst looking forward to the end of the travel restrictions and to our conference 2021 in Spain, we already need to think where to go next.

Our conference 2022 shall take place in spring and it should be planned to ensure it is accessible for members from countries with lower income. Increasing IE's membership numbers and perception in Europe are important goals of our conferences. If you have taken part in one of our previous events, you will know that IE conferences consist of a lively mix of presentations, workshops and study visits and offer space for a lot of participation from many of our members.

Organising a conference for Interpret Europe does involve some work, but it will increase the reputation and could also help to raise an income for the organising partner in the host country. Of course, we would support you with all the knowledge gained from previous events and you will see that there are tried-and-tested standards available for most of the steps.

If you have experience in organising events, if you could imagine assembling a dedicated team in your region, and if you feel you would like to give it a try, please don't hesitate to send a brief letter of intent to office@interpret-europe.net, explaining your interest and including your initial suggestions for:

- an appealing conference theme
- a place and venue for about 200 participants
- possible destinations for study visits
- potential supporting partners in the host country.

During the upcoming months, we will work on our strategy for 2021-2025. We received several suggestions regarding the frequency and focus of future IE events and the decision on whether there will be annual in-person conferences will also be subject to those considerations. The number and quality of your suggestions might have an impact on that but for the same reason we suggest not to go into too much detail.

Please submit your proposal by 31 January 2021 and we will reply by 31 March 2021.

Welcome to our new members

Organisation members

Norwegian Parks Association, Norway

Professional members

Kiril Aleksiev, Bulgaria
Franciszek Bojańczyk, Poland
Aneta Danchovska, Bulgaria
Oltsen Gripshi, Albania
Nina Hadzhieva, Bulgaria
Pavel Hristov, Bulgaria
Arjana Isaku, Albania
Genka Ivanova, Bulgaria
Rayka Ivanova, Bulgaria
Bilyana Karadakova, Bulgaria
Maria Pashova, Bulgaria
Smilena Petkova, Bulgaria
Zhana Spasova, Bulgaria
Tonya Todorova, Bulgaria

Individual members

Oihane Bakedano, Spain
Ivan Baranovic, Croatia
Maja Benzon, Croatia
Maja Bilić, Croatia
Natasa Bircic, Croatia
Petra Blazevic, Croatia
Maya Bristow, Croatia
Sanja Budić Leto, Croatia
Vesna Bulic Baketic, Croatia
Nataša Bulić, Croatia
Doris Čavka, Croatia
Hrvoje Cokarić, Croatia
Suncana Cokaric, Croatia
Brigita Čufar, Slovenia
Dora Čukušić, Croatia
Raffaella Fiore, Italy
Gorana Galic, Croatia
Dejan Gluvačević, Croatia
Sandra Hrabar, Croatia
Ana Jakić, Croatia
Irma Jankov, Croatia
Luka Kazimović, Croatia
Alenka Krivić, Slovenia
Ivan Kusic, Croatia
Vanja Lovrić, Croatia
Iris Marinović, Croatia
Jelena Marijanović, Croatia

**We currently have no members from the following countries: Cyprus, Iceland and Moldova.
Do you have any personal contacts in these countries who would benefit from being a part of IE?
If so, introduce them!**

Other announcements

Upcoming events

For up to date information on upcoming events in Europe and the rest of the world, keep an eye on the events page of the IE website:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/events/all-upcoming-events.html>

**** Events may be subject to last minute changes. Please check individual event websites ****

Key events of heritage interpretation associations

09-11/02/2021

GAHI Forum for interpretation in the Americas

Online

<https://www.gahi.online/uncategorized/save-the-date/>

01-04/10/2021

IE Conference 'Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation'

Sigüenza (Spain)

<https://interpreteuropeconference.net/>

10-13/11/2020

NAI Conference 'Shifting sands of interpretation'

Palm Springs (USA)

<https://nai2020.pathable.co/>

International events of other organisations in Europe

11-12/03/2021

Seminar 'Digital Technology and heritage'

Paris (France)

<http://jpi-ch.eu/2019/12/seminar-cultural-heritage-and-digitization-current-issues-and-challenges-12th-13th-march-2020-paris/>

12-13/05/2021

Museums and Heritage Show

London (UK)

<https://show.museumsandheritage.com/>

17-19/05/2021

UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development

Berlin (Germany) with online participation

<https://en.unesco.org/events/ESDfor2030>

27-28/05/2021

Future for Religious Heritage Conference

Barcelona (Spain)

<https://www.frh-europe.org/events/frh-conference-2020-europes-living-religious-heritage/>

04-09/07/2021

World Archeological Congress

Prague (Czech Republic)

<https://www.wac-9.org/>

International events of other organisations in Europe (continued)

04-08/10/2021

Europarc Conference 'Tribute to our landscape'

Leeuwarden (Netherlands)

<https://www.euoparc2021.nl/>

17-19/11/2021

EXPONATEC Trade Fair for Museums, Conservation and Heritage

Cologne (Germany)

<https://www.exponatec.com/>

24-26/11/2021

MUTEC Trade Fair for Museums and Exhibition Technology

Leipzig (Germany)

<http://www.mutec.de/en/?language=en>

09-12/02/2022

25th East Mediterranean International Tourism & Travel Exhibition

Istanbul (Turkey)

<https://emittistanbul.com/Home>

And finally...

Thank you for your contributions.

Warm festive greetings from your IE News Team. We hope you all remain safe and well, wherever you are.
Marie Banks (UK) – News Coordinator

Anna Carlemalm (Sweden), Abby McSherry (Ireland), Elisabeth Nübel-Reidbach (Germany), Ageliki Politis (UK), Sarah Wendl (Austria) and Ivana Zrilić (Croatia).

Any news, projects, thoughts or adventures in interpretation that you want to share?

Send a report and some photos to: news@interpret-europe.net. Please consider that we like to promote best practice examples in the field of heritage interpretation and follow the guidelines for newsletter authors:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/news/guidelines-for-authors.html>

Deadline for contributions for the spring 2021 edition: Sunday 28 February 2021

The articles, news items and event announcements reflect the views and opinions of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent those of Interpret Europe or other organisations.

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Interpret Europe
European Association for Heritage Interpretation
Am Rasen 23
D-37214 Witzenhausen
Germany

+49 (0)5542 505873
office@interpret-europe.net
www.interpret-europe.net

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