



Newsletter 1/12

9 March 2012



Chris Wood

In 1999 more than 80 delegates from 14 European countries presented initiatives in interpretation at an international workshop at Bournemouth University. Chris Wood, a member of AHI's committee, had invited to review "Heritage Presentation and Interpretation in Europe". During this event Chris posed the overall question to the delegates; is there a need for something like a permanent pan-European network for heritage interpretation? The answer was an enthusiastic yes, and an international initiative group took on the task to prepare such a venture.

One year later we invited this group to a Transinterpret workshop in Germany. The still nameless network was called "Interpret Europe" and the initiative established the first informal structures such as a Volunteering Secretariat (run at the universities of Freiburg and Göttingen) and a Steering Group, which was lead by Chris. He inspired us all with his enthusiasm and warm-hearted commitment. After some years this entirely voluntary first initiative became dormant, due to too many other work obligations amongst the members of the group.

Chris was very happy to hear the news, in 2010, that Interpret Europe was to be re-launched as a professional association. He would have loved to have come to the Founding Assembly, but he had other obligations in China, safeguarding geological heritage there. He had found a new, very important field of dedication doing significant work for the UNESCO.



Chris with students
at Bath

Chris was teaching in the School of Conservation Sciences at Bournemouth University until deciding to take retirement last autumn. During his sixteen years working in the School, he made a significant contribution to heritage conservation and applied geography, especially in the field of heritage resource management, presentation and interpretation. Chris was a gifted and extremely knowledgeable lecturer and his professionalism and enthusiasm was appreciated by both students and colleagues.

Chris recently won the Fujian Province, China, 2011 "Friendship Award" in recognition of his outstanding contribution as lead technical adviser on six spectacular Chinese national parks and their successful bid to become a serial world heritage site.

Chris Wood, the man who took the first initiative to establish a pan European network for heritage interpretation, died on 19th January at the age of 64. Without Chris's initiative, enthusiasm and commitment Interpret Europe would probably not yet exist.



...and at Hengistbury Beach

Patrick Lehnés & Brian James

Hands across the seas – international accord

At the end of Interpret Europe's Freiburg Conference last year, members of several interpretation associations met informally – probably the first such meeting of its kind. One outcome was the draft of an 'International Memorandum of Understanding' which was sent to all the national membership organisations around the world for comment, amendment and adoption.

By February of this year, all eight national bodies, and Interpret Europe, had contributed helpfully to the wording and agreed to sign the Memorandum. We hope they will display this symbol of global cooperation in their offices and publicise it appropriately. The text of the ten-point agreement is attached for members to see.

The primary purpose of the Memorandum is to establish a series of principles to which these associations, and Interpret Europe, can adhere. It also incorporates agreement to cooperate, to offer reciprocal organisational membership and to support the work and gatherings of all partners. At this stage, only fully-established membership organisations are included although Interpret Europe also maintains excellent links with groups of interpreters, formal and informal, in several other countries.

We in Interpret Europe are delighted that our colleagues around the world have offered such a positive response to this initiative and we look forward to welcoming members of our fellow associations to the conference in Pisa in May.

The nine associations that have agreed to sign the Memorandum are:

- Asociación para la interpretación del patrimonio (Spain)
- Association for Heritage Interpretation (UK)
- Bulgarian and Romanian Interpret Heritage Association
- Interpret Canada
- Interpret Europe
- Interpretare: Associação de Interpretação do Património Natural e Cultural (Portugal)
- Interpretation Australia
- Interpretation Network New Zealand
- National Association for Interpretation (USA)

Michael H Glen



The Freiburg Declaration – in final form

Delegates at the Freiburg Conference were asked to approve in principle a declaration of intent which would set out Interpret Europe's belief in the philosophy and practice of interpretation. The Freiburg Declaration would then be widely circulated to European governmental and non-governmental organisations including commercial interests and local communities.

The initiative was the idea of Iryna Shalaginova of Ukraine / Germany, a member of the Interpret Europe Supervisory Committee, who prepared the early draft. A revised version was circulated at the conference and received a warm reception – but also many valuable suggestions relating to both content and style. Delegates asked the Committee to prepare a revised version to take account of the comments and advice received.

This is now attached for all members to see and, we hope, approve without further amendment. However, if you wish to comment, please do so by 20 March by using our [membership forum](#). We are sorry that we can't accept comments received after that date.

We will then invite you to vote on the final version of the Freiburg Declaration before 31 March. It will then be published on the website and sent to a wide range of organisations involved, or potentially involved, with heritage interpretation.

Michael H Glen and Patrick Lehnés

Publications

On-line publication series

As we announced in the last issue of the newsletter, we plan to establish an on-line publication series for heritage interpretation. Since then, it transpired that the University of Freiburg would not be able to support this initiative. Instead, the University of Malta generously has offered substantial help. The university will make available additional staff in their Institute for Travel, Tourism and Culture for this purpose from April onwards.

We hope to set up an editorial board and establish a peer-review procedure by June. The first issue, with papers from the Freiburg 2011 and the Pisa 2012 conferences, is planned to be published in the autumn.

If you would like to help/assist with editorial board or you would like to put forward a name, please don't hesitate to contact [Nadia Theuma](#) or [Patrick and Bettina Lehnés](#).

Nadia Theuma and Patrick Lehnés

Grundtvig application

“InHerit – A strategy for fostering the professionalism of heritage interpretation in Europe”

This is the title of a proposed Grundtvig project which was initiated by Interpret Europe. It was submitted in February by the University of Malta and Interpret Europe together English Heritage, AHI, UNESCO Latvia, the Swedish Centre for Nature Interpretation, the Pangea Institute (Italy), Alden Biesen (Belgium), and PLATO (University of Leiden, Netherlands).

The following is adapted from the summary of the project rationale:

Every year, millions of people visit natural and cultural heritage sites. This is a great opportunity for informal and non-formal learning. Today, however, factual information has dominance over interpretation which should reveal insights relevant to non-expert visitors.

InHerit aims to improve the adult learning potential of exhibitions, self-guided media and guided tours at heritage sites through professional development of managers and educators at these sites. Heritage specialists often focus on conservation messages. A new European-level in-service training will develop their competence to realize the full potential of heritage interpretation for non-formal and informal learning from the past for a human and sustainable European future.

We will have to wait until July for a decision from Grundtvig. Competition is very strong, but we are hopeful of our chances as this proposal fits very well with the priorities of the call for projects. Even if the proposal is rejected, the detailed preparation exercise was very valuable in re-thinking the role of interpretation in the context of European adult education.

Patrick Lehnes

General Assembly 2012

Formal notice of the IE General Assembly annual meeting

Interpret Europe's General Assembly 2012 will be held, in conjunction with our annual conference, in the Hotel Santa Croce in Fossabanda, in Pisa, Italy. It will take place on Saturday, 19 May, from 17:00 to 18:30.

The Supervisory Committee co-opted Steven Richards Price as a member for the year 2011-2012. However, his name must go forward for election by the General Assembly and other nominations may be made. In each case, they must be confirmed by the signature of the proposer and the seconder, and by the member concerned, who must confirm his or her willingness to stand for election and sent by mail, by 10 April, to the following address:

Interpret Europe e.V.
Britzinger Str. 40, 79114 Freiburg, Germany

Similarly, any motion to change the constitution of Interpret Europe must be proposed, seconded and signed, and sent to the above address by the same date.

In order to propose an item for discussion to the agenda of the General Assembly meeting just send an email to mail@interpret-eruope.net by 10 April.

Conference 2012

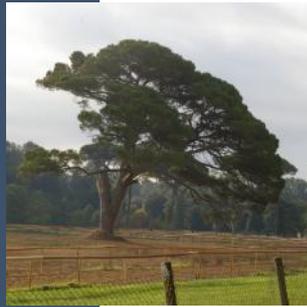


Tuscany is coming really close!

It's only ten more weeks before we will all come together in "Bella Italia".

Over the last few months, we have received many interesting proposals for **sessions and workshops** which show an exciting diversity of topics and presenters. They are all now published on our website so go and have a look at the programme to see what's in store. There may be one or two changes, of course, but it all looks very enticing.

If you are coming to Pisa, please don't forget to make your own **lodging reservation**. There are a few rooms left at Santa Croce in Fossabanda.

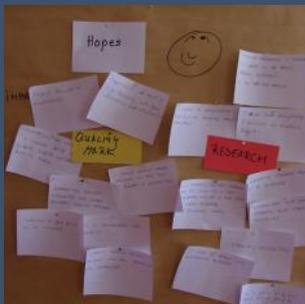


The hotel has reserved all accommodation for our delegates until 31 March. After this they will open registration to others. Do not use their booking system but book by email or telephone and quote the key-words "Interpret Europe Conference". Otherwise the hotel will tell you they are fully booked. And make sure you ask for confirmation.

We are all looking forward to a kaleidoscope of presentations about interpretation from Europe and beyond. See you there!

Bettina Lehnes

Quality group



Quality Group workshop (for members only)

In the afternoon before the General Assembly meeting in Pisa, we will continue the work started last year on the topic of quality assurance and quality standards. This workshop will be prepared and run by our Quality Group in order to get feedback from our members interested in this topic.

It will start at 14:00 and end at 16:00 in the Hotel Santa Croce in Fossabanda in Pisa. Please **email us** if you would like to participate.

Patrick Lehnes

Other events



19 to 21 July 2012
Cottbus, Germany

Symposium and Workshop "Understanding Each Other's Heritage" at BTU Cottbus

- Call for papers-

The International Association of World Heritage Professionals (IAWHP) e.V. and the Brandenburg University of Technology (BTU Cottbus) in cooperation with Interpret Europe are pleased to invite students, scholars and professionals from the field of heritage to participate in a Symposium and Workshop, "Understanding Each Other's Heritage – Challenges for Heritage Communication in a Globalized World", which will be held in Cottbus, Germany from 19 to 21 July 2012.

The city of Cottbus, situated approximately 125 km southeast of Berlin, is a typical example of a former German Democratic Republic industrial town which had to redefine its cultural identity and its economy after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The city is currently well-known in the energy sector and as a university town with an international character. The city architecture juxtaposes old and new in terms of style as well as ideology and although it lacks the representative historic architecture of its neighbours,



Dresden and Leipzig, it makes up for this with a flourishing cultural life and the rich intangible heritage of the Sorbian community.

The Symposium and Workshop, with the help of international experts, aim to analyze the instruments and methods which are most useful for the interpretation of heritage sites, with a particular focus on the needs of foreign visitors. They also aim to provide possible solutions for existing interpretation and representation issues. This is an opportunity for the international community, academics, heritage managers and museum and tourism professionals to present original work, exchange ideas and develop a new vision for the future of communication at heritage sites in the context of a globalized world.

The three sessions developed for the Symposium and Workshop cover a wide spectrum of heritage interpretation and communication issues from public relations, advertising and marketing to accessibility and representation, and to the implementation and use of new technologies.

Session 1: Advertising and Edutainment: managing expectations and reality

Session 2: Heritage (mis)interpretation: challenges and opportunities for interpretation for diverse audiences

Session 3: There's an app for that: World Heritage sites and new media



A workshop format was chosen because it offers the opportunity to share practical experiences in the field as well as to develop new ideas and solutions for existing problems in a dynamic group setting.

Share your experiences, bring your ideas and take part in the Symposium and Workshop "Understanding Each Other's Heritage" in July 2012 in Cottbus!

Practical information:

Deadline for paper submission: 1 April 2012

Symposium and Workshop fees: none

Working language: English

Financial support: There are a limited number of DAAD grants available to international participants who have graduated from a German university, or have participated in an exchange at a German university for at least 6 months. The grants cover travel and accommodation expenses and will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis.

More information under: www.iawhp.com

Iryna Shalaginova

12th and 13th September 2012
Bedwellty House and Park, Wales

For Them and By Them: Involving Stakeholders and Communities in Interpretation



Interpreters know it's important to involve communities and stakeholders when planning and creating interpretation – but how do we go about it? Does our practice really bring benefits to these groups, as policy makers and funders increasingly expect heritage and interpretation to do? How can we measure these benefits?

This conference aims to bring practitioners, researchers and policy makers together to examine current practice and share insights into the benefits of involving stakeholders and communities in interpretation.

Bedwellty House and Park was chosen as our venue as it is a prime example of a heritage restoration project that aims to bring tangible benefits to a regenerating community and involve stakeholders in all aspects of the project.

The conference is endorsed by Dehongli Cymru and AHI.

Registration for the conference will open on 15th May 2012.

Call for papers

Colleagues are invited to submit session proposals for the conference by 1st May 2012.

Please [click here](#) to download the submission form, or request a copy by emailing Nicole Deufel at Nicole.deufel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk.

Nicole Deufel

19 - 20 April 2012
Barcelona, Spain

Glocal Audiences in Culture Global Cities, local audiences

This conference on audiences in culture, for professionals working in all cultural sectors is organised by the group of museums articket BCN, in Barcelona.

The main subject is how different cultural institutions (especially museums) with lots of tourist as their main audience, reach out to local audiences. And from there, the strategies to favour the habit of culture going at local level.

As participants, there will be Steven Slos, cultural coordinator of the city of Bruges, Paul Mosterd, deputy director of the Hermitage Amsterdam, Berta Sureda, from the National Museum of Art Reina Sofia in Madrid, Marina Chinchilla, from Museo del Prado in Madrid, Anne Krebs from the Louvre Museum, Marta Clari from the cultural institution of the city of Barcelona, and Karen Bath from the National Gallery of London, among others.

More information

Do you want to share your projects, experiences, thoughts or adventures with other interpreters? Send us a short report and some photos and we'll put it in the next newsletter.

**Deadline for contributions for our next newsletter:
15 June 2012**

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