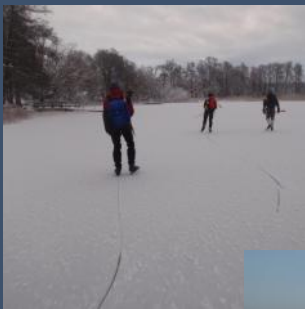




Newsletter

December 2012

International Conference on Heritage Interpretation 2013



From the joys of winter
on lake Mälaren ...

... to mild
mid-summer nights



Support by Grundtvig

Sigtuna – we are on our way!

While Sweden is enjoying fine winter weather, the preparations for our conference in June are hotting up.

We have received a most encouraging number of proposals for presentations and workshops from around the world and the programme committee is faced with the challenge of selecting the best.

The list of registrations of delegates is getting longer every day - we have already more delegates booked than came to Freiburg and Pisa.

As you will know, we had to set quotas for the number of delegates from each of the organisations involved and also to satisfy Grundtvig Programme regulations. As a result, we have had to open a waiting list for non-members. Demand is higher than expected and we recommend that members register as soon as possible if you don't want to miss the event of the year!

If you wish to take part but cannot afford to?

Try to get support from the Grundtvig Programme.

The Grundtvig Programme supports expenditure on travel, daily allowances and fees for conferences concerned with the whole field of adult education. Heritage Interpretation is eligible for Grundtvig support because the programme covers non-formal and informal adult education.

To be eligible:

- you must come from an EU country or neighbouring country that is a partner in the Grundtvig programme: [check here](#).
- you must work in 'adult education' (e.g. as a heritage interpreter) and explain how you intend to use the conference results in your work. This also covers managers of museums and heritage sites that offer heritage interpretation, master's degree students who aim for a qualification in adult education (i.e. interpretation) and volunteers. Ask your national Grundtvig agency.
- you must apply for a mobility grant at [your national agency](#) for Grundtvig before the deadline that applies to your country. Check your relevant deadline before filling in the application form.

If you are eligible, then find out more on the [Step by Step page](#) on the IE website.

Membership fees

Membership fees

As most of you know, we had difficulties with the SEPA banking system last year. That's why we didn't collect the 2011 membership fees until early 2012.

The system should work more smoothly from 2013 onwards, and we are collecting the 2012 fees within the next three weeks (which means early in January 2013). Those of you who issued a SEPA direct debit mandate do not need to do anything. If you are holding individual membership, your fee will be debited without further notice. For organisational and commercial memberships, we will send you an invoice for your fee.

Some members have already paid their 2012 fee and so we will charge only those who have not yet paid for 2012 membership. From 2013 onwards, we want to collect the annual fees in February or March.

Your membership fees help us maintain the work of Interpret Europe including the great – and rewarding – effort that goes into conference organisation.

Interpreters at work

St Albans, UK

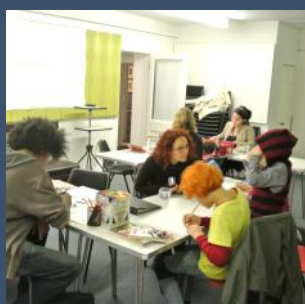
'Manga Carta': Participatory interpretation through art

2013 is a big year for St Albans: it was here that 800 years earlier the church and barons of England had the first of many meetings that would eventually lead to Magna Carta in 1215. The 'Great Charter' effectively subjected the king of England, for the first time, to the law of the land, a constitutional victory for 'the people' – or at least some of them. The town has celebrated this important heritage before with events and exhibitions. So for 2013, we wanted to find a different angle on the story. We wanted to create opportunities for people to get 'down and dirty' with this global heritage, and to really engage with the Magna Carta themes of injustice, equality and freedom.

Our Learning Officer, Adam Ditchburn, came up with what we thought was a great idea for a project: the 'Manga' Carta. We decided to use the format of Japanese Manga comics to re-tell the story of Magna Carta and invite members of the public to become part of creating the comic. Our objective for the project was to offer an alternative pathway into engaging with Magna Carta, which would complement our exhibition on the subject. We wanted people to give a creative response to what Magna Carta means to them, and also feel that they are contributing to sharing its history with a modern audience.

In a first step, we put the word out through Manga fan sites as well as the museum service's own web presence that we were looking for a visual artist to work with us.

Soon we appointed local artist Michael Profit, who developed a story board for the comic.





Fire devil



Reconciliation ladies

We then set up a series of free drop-in events around St Albans, where members of the public could come in and just draw something in response to the Magna Carta themes. To get them going, Michael had some of the artwork there that he had already created, and Adam was there too to talk to people about Magna Carta and its history.

We've had people of all ages participate. Some had come along out of an interest in Manga, while others joined us because they were excited about the way we are seeking to explore new ways of interpreting history. The idea of using themes to inspire drawing has proven to be popular with participants. It gives them enough space to be creative, which for us has

meant that we have received an amazing variety of drawings ranging from fairies and butterflies to more abstract images of emancipation and celebration.

An unexpected side effect of the project has been the interest it has received from other organizations, most of whom are not from the museums and heritage sector. This is opening up great opportunities for us to collaborate with others and bring in their expertise to engage with our public – visitors and non-visitors alike – in new ways.

We still have a few workshops left before we move on to the next stage of the project. When involving the public, we are always keen to build on their contributions. This gives them a sense that what they've done isn't just a one-off, but that it has meaning and is valued. For us, it also provides ideas for future events and programmes. With the Manga Carta, we're hoping to secure funding to print the comic and sell it in our shops. We're also planning an event in town, using large reproductions of the Manga Carta artwork. We will have interpreters there who will share the history of Magna Carta based on some of the characters in the comic. Besides providing yet another opportunity for people to engage with this part of their heritage, the event will also create a physical link between two of the Magna Carta exhibition sites in town: the Museum of St Albans with its 'The Journey Starts Here' exhibition and St Albans Cathedral, where we expect to have one of the original copies of the 1215 Magna Carta on display.

Adam Ditchburn is Learning Officer at St Albans Museums.

Nicole Deufel is the Audience Development Manager at St Albans Museums

Wandering through Scotland

A two week international Leonardo da Vinci Life-long Learning project – to exchange good practice in interpretation and sustainable tourism

In September, I travelled to Scotland with some other representatives of Inner Carniola – the Karst region of Slovenia. We made use of the international Leonardo da Vinci scheme to learn about forms of tourism in Scotland and about tour guiding and interpretive activities which encourage sustainable tourism.



Alenka Veber

The Slovenian company, Vitra Centre for Sustainable Development in Cerknica, organised our working group within the project 'International Practice of Tourist Guides' which has been, through different kinds of projects, co-operating with Scottish company Archnetwork, headed by Libby Urquhart, since the year 2000. Archnetwork was in charge of preparing the program in Scotland. Scotland is known for capricious weather, uncountable flocks of sheep, whisky, bagpipes, kilts, castles, museums and many other things. We, in our expectations, were not disappointed in any way. During our stay in Scotland, in this 78,782 km² Kingdom of Scotland, with more than five million inhabitants, the temperatures range from -8°C in winter to 21°C in summer. We moved between torrential rain and brilliant sunshine in just a few minutes – the weather was friendly, said our Scottish hosts! In two weeks, we visited many interesting tourist projects, on the one hand castles and museums and rich countryside and, on the other, protected forests, wild landscapes and rare species of wildlife.

We can share a few short moments with you.

Edinburgh

This is a city of festivals. Working with us was our enthusiastic tourist guide, Sergio la Spina, an Argentinian born in Italy. He brought to life this capital of Scotland, with its historic buildings and rich cultural heritage, and made a great impression on us, guiding us through this sunny, wet, grey city. The New Town, with many 'blind' windows (because of high taxes on glass in the past) was the 18th century answer to the overpopulated Old Town, built close to Edinburgh Castle, which houses a military museum and the priceless crown jewels of Scotland.

Robert Burns

On the west coast, in Alloway, we visited the Burns Centre, a tribute to world-famous Scottish poet Robert Burns. It includes his birthplace, still thatched with straw, where you can find about life of that time. In the main building, the museum displays many artefacts from Burns' time, including many of his personal belongings. Our meeting with the favourite son of Scotland was supported by the interactive museum and vividly conjured up by an experienced guide.

New Lanark

This settlement of former factories and workers' home grew up around the spinning and weaving of cotton. Today, it is largely given over to tourism. Our group visited the museum building, which presents life during the period from 1800 to 1825 and to achievements of Robert Owen, who introduced 'hope' into the lives of his workers. His 'social experiment' included basic rules of hygiene, education for all children, a minimum age for children working in factories and many other innovations. They were all part of Owen's vision of a better and a fairer society. We visited the 'Annie Macleod Experience', an provocative way of showing a little girl's life from her humble childhood to her hard labour in the mill. New Lanark is a World Heritage Site and operates as a non-profit organisation.



Damijana Skrlj (left) in the Tourist Office in Pitlochry, Scotland

Nature

Natural heritage in Scotland has a very special place in the country's life. Because of different attitudes in the past, particular attention is now given to rare species of animals. We were able to see how the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority carries out its objectives of protection and conservation of landscape, wildlife and the local economy.

In the two weeks that we spent visiting many interesting tourism initiatives, rich with castles and museums, we saw little deciduous woodland. Most forests were plantations, regularly harvested, and many wild mammals died out long ago. Today you can see a bear only in a museum – and stuffed! Stirling City has replaced its grass verges with 'edible borders' where prolific herbs and a variety of vegetables grow instead of flowers. These are picked at random by passers-by and this promotes thinking about home grown food. Aware of the problems of fast food, the city authorities want to make vegetable pathways on the routes between school and popular fast food chains. This is an adventure in sustainable community development.

The Bottom Line

It is difficult to summarise the impressions which we accumulated in our 14-day stay in Scotland and how much we have to learn from our counterparts. We gained a lot from new experiences, views and contacts which we can put to good use. We have seen many excellent practices that are not only important for us, as tourist guides, but also for our fellow-workers in the tourism industry. The Scots can fit a café or even a restaurant into the smallest tourist sites so that the visitor can enjoy a whole day out and get the very best use of it. In Slovenia, there are a lot of features that can be compared with the practice in Scotland, especially the great advantages we

have in natural features, but they are still not marketed effectively. And what did the man say about the ospreys at Loch of the Lowes? 'Congratulations to the Scots' on their ability to build a whole tourism industry around one bird.'

In the coming weeks and months we will give talks on Scottish Tourism through the eyes of Slovenian tourist workers from the Inner Karst Region.



Participants experiencing
'real' Scottish weater

Damijana Škrlić-Begunje, Cerknica, Slovenia, October 2012

Review - Parc interp manual

Standards for heritage interpretation in protected areas - Thorsten Ludwig's ParcInterp manual

The EU project called TOPAS (Training of Protected Area Staff) in 2008 spawned ParcInterp, a programme to improve the quality of heritage interpretation in national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks. ParcInterp is also recognised as a pilot project for integrating ESD (education for sustainable development) into heritage interpretation.

From this starting point, Thorsten Ludwig has produced the ParcInterp Trainer Manual which defines qualities, standards, criteria, competencies and certification processes for interpretation and transfers them into a practical training system for protected area staff. The German version of the manual can be downloaded from www.parcinterp.eu along with an extract in English, Quality Standards in Heritage Interpretation.

As I helped Thorsten with the publication in English, I cannot pretend this 'review' is entirely objective. What I can say, however, is that it is extremely thorough in its explanation of the background to the ParcInterp approach, the need for training of protected area staff interpretation and the systematic processes that he has developed over the years to provide for that training.

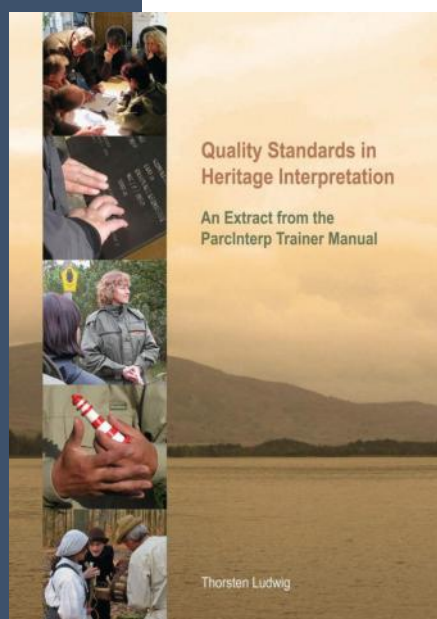
Thorsten sets out how the training system is built up and what is involved in, largely, out-of-doors, in-service, short courses. He first defines what he means by the 'qualities' of heritage interpretation which, he maintains, is committed to the universal relevance and protection of natural and cultural heritag ... relates to visitors' immediate experience ... integrates visitors in a participatory way ... and focuses on inspiring themes. The first of these qualities is one which could provoke debate – does ALL heritage interpretation have an underlying conservation ethos?

The quality standards are set as objectives to make them more specific and measurable and provide a framework for the results of training; to make the standards more manageable, quality criteria are used. They take each standard and define precisely what a trainee interpreter must be able to do to meet it.

Then there are also three levels of competence which an interpreter can achieve – they are combinations of knowledge, skills and behaviour and require collective and individual reflection as well as specific training activities. The three levels – basic knowledge, working knowledge and professional knowledge – are defined for each of the 20 topics that make up

the course. It may sound complicated but the whole process is both logical and practical and allows the managers of protected areas to build up the abilities of individual staff and well as a whole team and to encourage more experienced team members to develop and mentor the skills of their colleagues.

The thoroughness that I referred to at the beginning is manifest in the series of detailed tables setting out, for example, comparisons of ParcInterp standards for interpretation itself (at a site) and for interpreters (in four subject areas), the levels for interpretive training at the three levels of competence and the ParcInterp Basic Course with the standards and criteria for meeting them. Thorsten also gives examples of how to use a chosen topic to illustrate an ESD theme.



ESD underpins so much of Thorsten's work and in his introduction to this English extract he says that by following the path of continuous economic growth within free markets and in our efforts to outdo each other – and predicated on loans from people and nature – we leave our children 'a world in debt'. This is the title of a book written in the 1930s by Freeman Tilden and in it he recognised the tension between perpetuation and transformation. He suspected that a feeling of belonging is relevant to getting one's feet back on the ground. Thorsten says that this feeling of belonging in a changing world is key to heritage interpretation – and it becomes even more significant in the context of lifelong learning and education for sustainable development. And, I would suggest, in the need for all of us to take everyone's heritage, collectively, into a shared guardianship.

Michael H Glen

Companies reporting on their work

Dear friends! As this is my first contribution to Interpret Europe's Newsletter, I want to share with you all some of the key experiences we have had recently in the interpretation field.

My company is dedicated to cooperation for development in tourism worldwide, with a real specialisation in Central and South America; plus some experiences in Africa so far. We are closely related to heritage interpretation where it is understood as a development tool – as a key part of quality-assured and experiential rural tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism products.

Within this approach, during 2011 we designed an interpretation plan for the Belize archaeology authorities, including proposing the concept and contents for two visitor centres in the key Mayan sites of Xunantunich and Cahal Pech, close to Guatemala. This was done in collaboration with other environmental companies and local architects, as part of an integrated intervention in the sites. Our main aim in that job has been to involve the local population to regain and experience the ancient Mayan culture and, in parallel, to show it to visitors as a quality tourist experience. We propose to include in the near future the induction and training of key local people so they can become good heritage managers and interpreters and can join the tourism business from a professional and sustainable point of view. This project was financed by the IDB-Interamerican Development Bank.



Belize



Turkey

In Turkey we also developed in 2011 a training course on ecotourism and heritage interpretation for local tourism entrepreneurs. This was in a rural area in the Mugla province, as part of a more ambitious plan of rural development developed by my partners TECNOMA and T&T. This was a first step in integrating the concept of heritage interpretation in the rural tourism initiatives that are growing in the area.

The site is about one hour from the huge tourism resort of Bodrum, so part of our proposal was to start offering more quality visits to rural areas to selected segments of tourists who show a real interest in the interior of Turkey away from the beach and the sun.



Tunisia

In Tunisia, we implemented – at the end of 2011 – a study into the local heritage resources plus a training course on heritage interpretation, oriented towards local culture and tourism managers, tour operators, guides and handicraft makers. We did it in El Kef and Testour, places where you can see rich remains from many cultures, particularly Rome and Al Andalus. This is part of a combined intervention of the Spanish Cooperation and Fundesarte (Spanish Foundation for Innovation in Handicraft) in Tunisia and Algeria, oriented to develop the cultural and natural tourism in areas that are currently emerging as a result of the great changes in the Maghreb. Usually we combine in our interventions in heritage interpretation planning with the concept, design and development of tourism services and products; in order to make it directly profitable for the local population.



Santo Tomé e Príncipe

In Santo Tomé e Príncipe we developed in Autumn 2011 a training course on heritage interpretation applied to guided tours, with the participation of existing and potential local guides. This small country is emerging as a tourist destination (less than 10.000 visitors per year) but is a paradise for ecotourism in the middle of the Gulf of Guinea, Equatorial Atlantic. This course was part of a whole program we implemented, from 2008 to 2011, of tourism strengthening and promotion, oriented to both public and private sectors, financed by AECID-Spanish Cooperation. This course was also the continuation of the first interpretation and guiding course we gave in the island of Santo Tomé at the end of 2008. This time we got deeper into the heritage interpretation possibilities for both cultural and natural resources of these islands that we can call the African Galápagos.

I'm happy to supply further information regarding these projects and interventions.

2011 and 2012 so far have been very busy years for us regarding heritage interpretation, so other experiences and initiatives will follow in later newsletters. It was great to be with you all at our conferences in Ljubljana, Freiburg and Pisa, enjoying the time there and learning a lot from everyone.

José María de Juan, KOAN Consulting Spain

Companies promoting their offers

Keetje Hodshon requests the pleasure of your company at her 1813 Dinner and Ball to be held at Hodshon House in Haarlem, on the evening of 23th February 2013

You are cordially invited to a special evening at Hodshon House in Haarlem. This beautiful building will be the venue of a spectacular evening of dinner and dance. Revisit the year 1813 and dress yourself in the most beautiful Regency costume and experience the past!

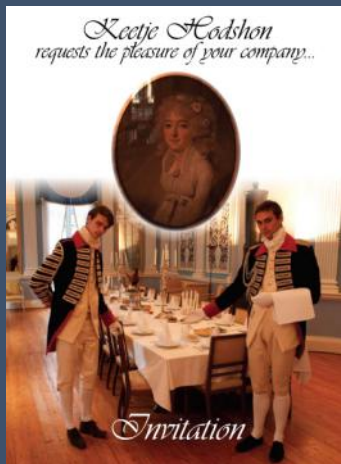
You will have the opportunity to learn the dances of the time and to dine in the beautiful neo-classical rooms of the house, alongside the river Spaarne. The state rooms include the finest interiors in our country, representing all major European interior styles from that time: the Etruscan Room, the Red Room or Library and the Blue Room or Music Salon.

After dinner you can join a dance evening in the neo-Gothic Aula. You can also enjoy a cup of tea and find entertainment in the various rooms. If you wish, you can have a portrait photograph taken.

Hodshon House was built in 1794, during the Batavian Revolution, at the command of 22-year-old (Cornelia Catharina) 'Keetje' Hodshon. Keetje came from a Mennonite family in England that became rich through trade in linen. She was orphaned at a young age but also inherited a large amount of money. This allowed Keetje to build this 'city palace' opposite the Teylrmuseum, overlooking the Spaarne and the Bavo Church.


Address: Spaarne 17, Haarlem, The Netherlands

website: www.beleefhetverleden.nl



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

Deadline for contributions for our next newsletter:
28 February 2013



"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature - the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter."

Rachel Carson

Warmest greetings to all members of Interpret Europe !

*The Committee and Management wish you a merry Christmas
and a successful and happy 2013 at work and at home*

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