

Newsletter

Summer 2020



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Dear members,

The past months required a lot of adaptation from all of us, and we hope that you found acceptable ways to cope with the challenges.

IE's first big challenge was to run its four-day conference online – and to get ready for this within a very short time. In the end, more than 160 attendees from 37 countries joined, and we were surprised how well it went. Thanks to all who helped to make this such a successful event! You can read some reviews of the event later in this issue.

Immediately post the web conference we published a lessons learnt brochure for organisations who found themselves in a similar situation, we also published comprehensive conference proceedings, and we published a brochure with case studies from the Western Balkan region, closing our initiative, 'Fostering heritage communities'. So, we really used that time when we were bound to our desks.

Our new initiative, 'Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation', is also adapted to the crisis. Tourism is one of the branches that is most battered and most ambiguous for many sites. Rather soon, funding might be made available at European level to relaunch tourism in a more sustainable way, and we want to offer support in achieving this. The initiative will continue until our next conference, which will take place from 1-4 October 2021 in Sigüenza (Spain).

In 2000, the IE network was founded, and on 14 July 2010, IE was established as an association. On the anniversary of that date this year, our Slovenian country team went to Cerklje na Gorenjskem where the assembly took place exactly ten years ago. From there they facilitated a little online celebration involving old and new members. It was impressive to see what we achieved together during those past years.

We are still in a state where travelling within Europe is not easy but we are also glad that, after three months of abstention, the first IE training courses could take place in Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro and Poland. We keep our fingers crossed that the situation in all countries will soon allow us to meet each other without limitations.

Thorsten Ludwig and Helena Vičič
Managing Directors

Tourism – Time for a change?

Sandy Colvine (France)

Tourism is an unusual sector of the economy in that it monetises assets (forests, coastlines, castles, historic towns) that do not belong to it.

We are familiar with mass tourism and the welcome democratisation of leisure enabling most sectors of society to aspire to, and enjoy, a holiday. Nevertheless, this has largely been driven by economies of scale whereby destinations become more financially accessible. This subsequently puts pressure on those same destinations as evidenced by striking images of visitors overwhelming national parks or the streets of cities such as Dubrovnik, Amsterdam or Barcelona. At the same time, a growing number of environmentally-focused actors in the tourism sector are bringing alternative, sustainable tourism products to the market that strive to generate lasting employment, greater, considerate engagement between visitors and local communities through immersive experiences while minimising environmental footprints.

The coronavirus lockdown has sharply illustrated an environmental reprieve from the pressure of tourism. Can we imagine a new more empowering model less reliant on exploiting economies of scale to their limit and the ultimate degradation, depreciation, even destruction of heritage assets?

The focus is not so much on combatting high impact-low value tourism by taking the moral high ground and pointing the finger at 'the wrong kind of tourists', but by contributing to an informed change in the culture of leisure while empowering communities to be actors of their tourism destinations. The sustainable tourism sector is still modest in size but growing and is, in many cases, closely aligned to the values fostered by heritage interpretation. There is the potential for greater partnership working here. Equally, through ongoing collaboration with strategic partners, such as UNESCO and the European Heritage Alliance, organisations like Interpret Europe continue to promote wider messages in the public realm about the value of heritage and meaningful engagement to foster appreciation and stewardship.

Tourism is a power for good. Reducing it in some locations may help to preserve them whereas other sites and locations need it as a matter of survival. Tourism sustains isolated island communities, wildlife in nature reserves and zoos, museums, artisanal

traditions and cultural practices, yet at present its force is not sufficiently harnessed to provide the positive, measured impacts for people and places that it is capable of. This process of change must be carefully managed to not result in leakage whereby negative impacts of tourism are simply transferred from existing 'honey pots' to future 'off-the-beaten-track' destinations.

We all need the discovery and fulfilment that well-considered leisure experiences provide. They bring us pleasure and learning. Through this, we grow as human beings, as individuals and as members of society. However, in the sense of the Brundtland Commission, the current model adopted by the majority of the tourism industry is nevertheless exploiting heritage resources that are ultimately finite to a degree that future generations may not be able to meet their own needs.

Indeed, this can be encapsulated in an observation made by Freeman Tilden as far back as 1975:

"For many years, our country, and to some degree the entire world, has been buying physical comforts on a credit card with the fond hope that the creditor might forget to render the bill. Not so. Nature is a lenient creditor of man, infinitely patient with his impertinent behavior, but insistent upon the ultimate payment. The bill has now come in".

We as individual interpreters and collectively as members of Interpret Europe can play a key role in facilitating change. This should encompass inclusive meaningful, immersive visitor experiences that place sites, hosts and people on an equal footing, promoting a shared responsibility for the conservation of heritage assets through value-based interpretation appreciable to all. This process must not be instructive but instead offer pathways to non-formal learning based on enjoyment and discovery, a process that we and Interpret Europe are ideally equipped to facilitate.

The challenge is sizeable and long-term but as with other global phenomena, such as climate change, action must be taken now to ensure that heritage assets which enrich our lives and leisure are safeguarded both in our lifetimes and for those of future generations.

Sandy Colvine is a member of IE's Supervisory Committee and a member of IE's Training Team. He lives near Avignon in France where he runs Mistral Translation and Consultancy. Sandy can be contacted at: alexander.colvine@interpret-europe.net.

Zooming from room to room – Fostering heritage communities online

Various contributors

Edited by Marie Banks (UK)

This year's annual conference had to take place in a rather different space to normal. How was it for you?

Firstly, we should recognise the effort over the preceding year of Bettina Lehnés, the previous IE Conference Manager, and the team from SALM – the Foundation of Haapsalu and Läänemaa Museums, who together had put in a lot of work to enable us to all meet in person in Estonia in May and had very little notice that the conference would need to be cancelled. With a pandemic sweeping the world and heavy hearts for everyone's suffering and the future of our profession, the decision was taken to attempt something positive and move the conference online rather than cancel altogether. For the effort it took to make this dream a reality, we should thank Nuria Mohedano, who took on the role of conference manager, and her team, especially Adi Kasumović, who built a bespoke web platform in just four weeks and managed all the tech complications throughout the four days to deliver a largely flawless experience.

So, what was it like for 160+ interpretation professionals to come together from their homes all around the world for four days packed with presentations, workshops, debates, chats, mini virtual field trips, shared meals, singing and laughter? Some of you said that moving between virtual rooms for the next presentation was somewhat like the mad rush between real rooms in the physical world, whilst others managed the virtual move in much faster time!

You can download the conference proceedings (<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/material.html>) to read the full papers of some of the excellent presentations, but we wanted to give a bit more of a flavour of the event so here's what some of you thought. First from Nuria herself, who was a little tired at the end of it all and still busy into the night long after everyone switched off their computers for the last time...



Becoming a Zoom pro (Image: Mohedano)

Nuria Mohedano (Spain)

I am always on the lookout for great adventures in life, so I could not resist joining the iecon20 crew. Being part of a determined and inspiring team, and fulfilling my willingness to keep on learning about heritage interpretation and new technologies, were my main motivations. Full attention was required not only before, but also during and after the event. The biggest challenge, without a doubt, was letting my creativity flow freely and losing the fear of leaving nothing ahead but creating an exciting, participative and meaningful online event. It felt like jumping for the first time into a swimming pool - I was expectant and nervous the night before, and it was blissful whilst in, but then came disappointment because it was all over too soon. I do feel super lucky being part of such a community though.

Simana Markovska (Bulgaria)

A revolution in the making! There is a well-known saying: When life gives you lemons, you should make lemonade. This was clearly demonstrated by the IE Conference 2020, which was first cancelled because of the current world crisis but then re-designed for web space. This was a real risk as it had never been done before with over 150 people from all over the globe. It all ran surprisingly smoothly despite the issues of "Oh, my microphone is not working" and "Why can't I turn my camera on?" That was, of course, extensively due to the tech-team who were amazing but I am sure the overall willingness of all participants to actually hear and see the others did also play a part. Nothing was lost from the delivery of information, visuals and experiences, and the opportunity to actually discuss the topics in real-time while presentations were still running was an unexpected bonus. For me personally, the efforts of the organising team to provide social communication and exchange despite the situation deserves the

greatest admiration. I loved it all – the evening events, the music, the option of inviting someone to your coffee table during breaks, and very much the special social platform designed only for participants on the conference website. As a first revolutionary attempt to handle such a massive event online, it exceeded my expectations manifold. I can't wait to see what might become of it with more experience and time!

Janja Sivec (Slovenia)

When I first found out that we were moving online, I was sceptical. I have been to quite a few IE conferences so far and the personal contact and the excursions were the best parts. But being in front of the screen has surpassed my expectations on all the ways we can interact, and I am amazed by all the wonderful special features that conference attendees sent in. I miss seeing all of my IE friends in person, but I am so proud and amazed by the energy and community spirit I felt during this conference.

Ivana Jagić Boljat (Croatia)

When I heard that this year's conference would take place online, I was really thankful for this opportunity because for me the option to attend the offline one wasn't possible this year. It was exciting, different and new even to discover what interesting facilities were going to be offered: games like the scavenger hunt, thematic food evenings, round table discussions, speakers' corner... It all sounded so engaging and motivating. And then it happened. Those four days ran so fast like we had the time of our lives! And I really mean it. Maybe it was exactly because of the lockdown that aroused the feeling of loneliness, and then all of a sudden you could see more than 160 familiar smiling faces drinking their tea or coffee from their favourite mug, while sharing with us a piece of their home. It was definitely a new perspective of meeting IE family members. During those four days I heard many inspiring presentations and in some of our many chat discussions, there were a lot of thoughts provoked, especially ones reflecting this time when we are rethinking life with our communities and putting heritage interpretation even more in focus.

Friederike Malisch-Johnigk (Germany)

I just wanted to say what an impressive job it was to turn this into an online conference in such a short amount of time. Thank you so much for everything! I truly enjoyed the talks and I was amazed by all the different ideas to add some social flair to the online frame. However, I would also love to meet all of you in person next time and to sit down and chat over a real cup of coffee!

Angus Forbes (Germany)

What a unique parallel experience this conference was ... to be in two places at once (your own home and online with colleagues) for four days...with input from both simultaneously! Thank you for going for it and for all your work and ideas to make it happen. With the unflattering lighting, technical unfamiliarity and internet glitches it could only work with bucketloads of good will... which clearly exist within IE! It was also great that we could return to the virtual venue after the conference to watch the things I missed first time around.

Peter Seccombe (UK)

I think many of us may have had few expectations for this conference. Replacing a 'real live' conference with something online might seem a less significant event, but then 160 people registered which is more than we normally get at the 'live' conference! And what did we get? We had presentations, just like we get at a normal conference, but this time we could comment and chat as the presentation progressed. We could ask questions, and the presenter could answer the questions and make further comments during and afterwards. We had discussions in groups and it was easy to contribute and to ask questions, and also to have more 'chats'. It seemed like all participants felt comfortable with the format and they were certainly happy to contribute and to join in with the discussions. We also got some really personal, and very evocative, videos of spring walks, fantastic recipes and special places. And what didn't we get? Of course, we didn't get the personal, face-to-face contact with 'real people', which often is what conferences are really about. We didn't get the conversations in the bar and during meals and we didn't get the site visits to see places and how they are interpreted. But somehow that didn't seem to matter as the videos seemed to make up for this loss. So, it could have been a 'lesser' event, but I think in many ways it was a 'greater' event, for the excellent presentations, the opportunities to interact with presenters and each other, and for the snapshots of the participants' special places and homes through their videos and their live presence from their houses. I don't think an online conference replaces a live conference, but it can be a really valuable alternative for sharing information and developing a different kind of meaning about people, places and experiences.

Dimitra Sidiropoulou (Greece)

The conference was really a first-hand experience of how important a community is. So much diversity and though so much in common. Emotion, reason, even senses (I still have the sound of the voice of some people in my ears) were there. It would be nice if each conference had a complementary digital part as such.

Sarah De Nardi (Australia)

Thanks so much to everyone for an inspiring event with lots of amazing papers, discussions and for such a fun, inclusive, supportive and friendly atmosphere. Sorry I missed the closing remarks because of timezones.

Zsuzsa Tolnay (Hungary)

It was a pleasure to be together like this. I would like to congratulate both organising teams. I felt really sorry when I learnt that the conference was to be cancelled, and I am sure that the Estonian team had put a great amount of work into it. I was really looking forward to visiting Estonia again – and of course meeting the IE community. Then life happened... but I am thankful that, after grieving the loss, others started to think about other ways to continue. And now we have just finished a four-day web conference! Lot of challenges (mostly technical), many more inspirations, and we did get to meet the IE community. Thank you all.

Athina Tsekoura (Greece)

As I closed all the windows at the end of the last day, I noticed a picture of a lighthouse was sending light from my desktop! I found it very symbolic, as the lighthouses show us the route we have to follow. I wish you all to spot your lighthouse for a safe route that will bring us all together again one day.



Mini field trips

Throughout the conference, we were taken around the world on virtual tours given by some participants to share their neighbourhood or local special heritage feature. We had some excellent culinary tips from Igor Ianachi in his kitchen and garden in Croatia and Abby McSherry from Ireland showed us how to make traditional soda bread, we visited local neighbourhoods in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Israel, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden and the UK, we saw some old objects from Annette Lyttle's grandparents in the USA, were taken to Romania and Poland via inspiring podcasts, and discovered some musical delights – both in terms of other members' local or national treasures and also the original offerings from some of our own members.

These little tasters of each other's lives and heritage helped us to make real connections with each other across the virtual divide. These two examples have been made available on YouTube so if you missed them or want to watch again, you can enjoy a little taster of some of the extra conference content here:

Janja Sivec's walk around her local area in Slovenia with a 'spring plate' of greens to enjoy:

<https://youtu.be/1BFLTyk4bH0>

Marie Banks's virtual tour of her micro museum in the UK:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP8f3UN3qFw>

Scavenger hunt stories

One of the evening activities organised by Athina Tsekoura, our social director for the conference, brought us together in fun and laughter whilst also reminding us of the power of interpretation. Participants were tasked with 'scavenging' different items of treasure from around their homes according to different categories: something used daily in the kitchen; something from your desk; the last item to enter your home, etc. After collecting something in each category and as soon as the last person had returned to their screen, we took it in turns to show our treasure to the group and explain the meaning to us. Poor Anders was joining online from a different building to where all his personal items were and had to keep running up the hill in the dark to find his treasures and bring them back to us. At the end of the evening getting to know each other a little better – as you do at all good conferences after the daytime programme ends! – Athina tasked us to write a short story about our particular objects. Here are some of the stories and the objects that inspired them.

Anders Arnell (Sweden)

I have been a bird-watcher since I was ten, and for my 20th birthday, my aunt gave me some beautiful (and now rare) coffee cups with Swedish birds, like the Pied Flycatcher, Blue Tit and Robin. Then the urge for travelling became stronger, and for the coming 15 years I spent time both sleeping on the beach in Barcelona, drinking New Zealand ginger beer and visiting the gorgeous Polish Tatra mountains from where I still keep a few small crystal glasses bought in Zakopane. This wanderlust I probably inherited from my parents, who did their share of hitch-hiking and youth camps in Europe in the '50s, and then took me and my sister to various places in Sweden and Europe in the '60s and '70s. One memorable journey was through the then for us quite secluded countries Czechoslovakia and East Germany, and I still keep my small souvenir pennant from Berlin DDR. But of course, in the long run and facing the situation we are in right now, it's always best to stick to your home and make use of your favourite egg slicer – one of the first household items I bought after moving from my parents. See, there's the connection to birds again!



Vida Ungar (Croatia)

My treasure basket

I took a basket for collecting my evening scavenger hunt treasure, and as I arranged it to take a photo, I thought that it could as well be a picnic basket. If I were to find it on the beach, what would it tell me about the owner? He must be an old natural historian, inseparable from his Warbug Pflanzenwelt, the Belle-Epoque botanists' Bible. He collected a Clypeaster fossil somewhere along the way, probably in a nearby cave – an item much older than him and his botanic book combined. After his long stroll along the beach, he sat down to rest. He had some olives from his special Portuguese Azeitonas/Caroços bowl with separate parts for olives and olive-stones. He washed the olives down with a bottle of beer, that he just bought in a nearby store. Then he played his little ocarina, a precious gift from a dear friend,

who sent it to him all the way from Bolivia... And the little glass bird? It's his family treasure, passed on from generation to generation. His great-great grandfather, the glass-maker, made it as a Christmas tree decoration. I wonder what it is doing in our hero's picnic basket... Well, maybe he just decided to take it for a walk...



Janja Sivec (Slovenia)

Since I am not cooking any IE trainings at the moment, this means that my trusty heritage piece that helps me do the exercise meanings in a nutshell is staying at home, just like me. But not all is bad, I see the situation as a possibility to dream where I will go with the voucher ticket I will get. I have to apply for a refund! Greece would do nicely, definitely on my bucket list. And this is also the time to give attention to your loved ones, even if you have to read the book over and over again.

Marie Banks (UK)

You're so far from home, surrounded by unfamiliar sights, sounds and smells.

So many new experiences filling your cup that you forget who you are.

Don't despair.

Light a candle, look into the flame, remember the stories your grandmother told you.

The same flame will burn around the world wherever you are and re-light those memories.

Your identity still beats inside.

Carla Silva (Portugal)

She was cooking when something happened. The walls started to shake and things in the kitchen started to wobble. She shouted: "It's an earthquake! I must save something before the whole house falls down!" And so, in under one minute, still with the wooden spoon in one hand, she managed to grab the one-metre measuring stick that was hanging over her head on the wall (before it fell down), her grandmother's pearls, the Polish souvenir bracelet she had worn the day before, her favourite book (she co-authored with her best/boyfriend)... not forgetting of course her new jeans, still yet in the bag, the only ones that will fit after this winter season of staying at home!

Catarina Magalhães (Portugal)

While preparing his favourite coffee, great-grandfather Américo was reading the great Portuguese playwright, Gil Vicente, trying to memorise a couple of beautiful lines to seduce a nice girl on that magnificent reveillon he was about to attend with his mate, Augusto. Right on time, Augusto rang the doorbell as a sign for them to leave. Once at the party, they realised it had a rather futuristic theme and, to make it worse, there was no live band, just a melodramatic tape by Jorge Ferreira! Augusto, who had a more flamboyant temper, stole the tape and broke it with a rock! But his move wasn't quite gracious as he hit his own foot! Having shouted "ARGH For Saint Catherine, MY FOOT!" an icon of the saint fell from the skies onto his foot.

What happened next? Only their photographs can tell you...

If you wish, check out Jorge Ferreira – Os olhos de minha mãe (My mother's eyes):

<https://youtu.be/rip9JGRwDS0>



Lessons learnt brochure

IE compiled findings from its web conference in a brochure to support organisations that also need to turn their conferences into online events.

This 28-page brochure includes experiences on how IE increased the attractiveness of the event, met technological challenges, built the team and managed the budget, and how it communicated the conference.

Since this was the first time that IE had run such a complex event online, the brochure cannot claim to be a comprehensive recommendation on how to organise online conferences. However, it offers a quick résumé to share some of the lessons IE learnt during the preparation and running of its web conference 2020.

You can find the brochure at

www.interpret-europe.net/material.

Please feel free to share it with all who might benefit from it.



Never lose heart – Community interpretation for post-pandemic recovery

Lisa Brochu (USA)

It was a pleasure to deliver a keynote at the IE web conference. Please enjoy this edited version expressing the main thoughts.

Aloha from the island of Hawaii. There is an oli, or Hawaiian chant, unique to our surroundings here in Kona, which expresses some of the things that make this place special. Called O Eka Kamakani, it describes the gentle Kona breeze that we know as Eka, the line of clouds that hang just above the calm ocean horizon on the leeward side of the island, and the traditional chants of children in Kona. It is used as a way to ground us in this place, and as are all the oli or chants, a way to connect with our heritage here on this island as we ask permission to enter a space for learning.

I use the word 'heritage' in its most liberal sense, to include all the intertwined elements in the worlds of nature and culture. It is an inclusive word – heritage here, or wherever you make your home, in your communities, does not belong to any one people. It is to be shared with all because heritage is that which connects us all, to each other, to our community, to our country, and to our world. And it's not just about the human component, but perhaps more importantly, it's about our connection to the natural environment that shapes how we live, no matter where we live. So, it's a big concept and a much more complex one than many people might suggest.

When I talk about heritage resources, those could be specific natural and cultural elements like an active volcano or ancient temples. They might also be more modern interpretive venues like parks, nature centres, museums, or botanical gardens, places that house some of those natural or cultural elements, where people can visit them in person.

And when I talk about heritage communities, I mean the combination of all of those things - places that value and want to share their natural and cultural heritage. But here comes the tricky part. My husband (and coauthor of *Put the Heart Back into Your Community*) and I have travelled around the world and we see great examples of heritage communities everywhere. We also see places that don't quite seem to have things together. Almost universally, what seems to make the difference is not the heritage part of the equation, but the community part. The business community doesn't always talk to the

tourism community, and the marketing community that promotes tourism doesn't always talk to the residential community. With everyone looking out for their own interests, it becomes more challenging to find ways to foster heritage communities.

With that said, I acknowledge that we are living through something that hasn't occurred in a very long time – a global pandemic of enormous proportion. Certainly, parts of the world have undergone tremendous difficulties – famines, disease, economic downturns, environmental disasters – but this far-reaching virus that has shut down whole nations at the same time is something else entirely.

We all know and are experiencing some of the ramifications, particularly for our field. We, as heritage interpreters, are certainly no strangers to budget cutbacks. We've almost always been considered the icing on the cake in times of economic hardship. But this is different. And I think that may be a good thing. This thought from Barack Obama sums up what I hope to leave you with: "Hope is the belief that destiny will not be written for us, but by us, by the men and women who are not content to settle for the world as it is, who have the courage to remake the world as it should be."

This pandemic has handed us the opportunity to step up and become more than just the stewards of heritage resources – we can help people come together to develop a new paradigm, to put the Heart back into our communities.

For those not familiar with my work, the Heart concept is based on taking an interpretive planning approach to community development. HEART stands for the five components that we think are important for planning communities that not only value their heritage resources, but also actively work to protect them: Holistic, Engaging, Appropriate, Rewarding, and Thematic. The book describes how those elements can be woven together in community planning.

In looking at types of heritage communities around the world, we found that a community that knows itself well enough to unify its diverse interests around a common theme is usually a place that people want to live and people want to visit. It honors its residents and welcomes its visitors without sacrificing either. In the best of circumstances, it has a commitment to a triple bottom line approach to development – considering planet, people, and profit over the long-term and as equal pieces of the pie – rather than letting short-term gains alone dominate development discussions.

So how can this Heart concept help to foster our heritage communities in the post-pandemic world? I wish there were an easy answer to that question, but I don't think it's as simple as filling out a form and ticking boxes. Every community is different and there's not just one way to get this right. But we all know that change is on the horizon and you, as the stewards of heritage resources in your communities, may be some of the most important people on the planet. Certainly, we honor those frontline workers actively saving lives, but you have a different role and it may be just as important in a different way, because you are in the position to take the lead on redefining the way we function as heritage communities.

A headline in our local paper made me think that a '2.0' version may not be enough. The Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) has largely been comprised of marketing specialists. They don't have any authority in a regulatory sense. Their mission statement seems like something most of us would aspire to: "To strategically manage Hawaii tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires and visitor industry needs."

The HTA website claims that it is guided by four pillars: natural resources, Hawaiian culture, community, and brand marketing. Ideally, these four pillars act as equal legs supporting a table. However, my experience is that the brand marketing is the tallest pillar and so the table is lopsided. They seem most interested in how we can position the brand to get more people here and put more heads in beds so that more revenue is generated. I suspect that HTA has been taken a little off-course by mission drift, by which I recognise that it's easy to drop back into thinking that revenue is the only way to measure success.

The day after I saw that headline, I joined a seminar cohosted by HTA that brought together representatives of island states and nations throughout the Pacific Region to discuss how the pandemic is leading to a re-think of the implications of tourism on island resources. Almost everyone agrees that islands are particularly vulnerable to overtourism. And certainly, we've seen that here on Hawaii Island. HTA and the Hawaii Convention and Visitors Bureau have done such a good job of branding the island as a desirable place for vacations, weddings, conventions, etc. that the natural and cultural resources that make it unique are taking a beating. Populations of Hawaiian spinner dolphins and sightings of humpback whales with their babies are down. Coral reefs are dying. Cultural sites have been overrun and damaged by ATV tours and disrespectful visitors who may or may not know better. Noise levels from helicopter and low flying

plane tours over our national parks are impacting the experience for people on the ground.

One of the comments made by an HTA representative during that seminar was particularly striking. He said that before we do anything, we need to ask the communities whether they are ready for tourism to begin again and how that should happen. That approach definitely more accurately reflects their mission, so I hope is what actually happens.

But, in an article just a few days after the tourism article appeared on the front page, another writer suggested that we would be foolish to return to tourism as a focus for this island. Instead, he argued, we should be framing Hawaii Island as a place to bring industry. Right now, we don't have 'industry' as such. Agriculture, largely in the form of cattle ranching, macadamia nut production and coffee farming, as well as tourism, have been the economic drivers for decades. Infrastructure is somewhat limited with only two airports, two shipping ports, and about 180,000 people on the island, so the kinds of industrial mass production factories that the writer proposed aren't realistic. And as a small coffee farmer who relishes the relatively sleepy, quiet atmosphere here, that's okay with me. But it does point out an interesting conundrum that suggests a problem facing every heritage community.

If the tourism people drive the process for creating whatever 2.0 version of development is coming, or if the business people drive it, or if the kanaka maoli (the native Hawaiians) or any special interest group drives the process, we run the risk of yet another lopsided table. We have to avoid falling into the same silos that we've seen in the past, where each competes with the other interests in the community. Instead, the best of all possible worlds is for collaboration within the community that brings all interests to the table so that any decisions made are thoughtful and well-planned with measurable objectives that look beyond the revenue line to embrace positive impacts and minimise negative impacts to people and our heritage resources. Coming together with many hands and many heads in a spirit of cooperation is called *laulima* in Hawaii. It's what we must do as we reimagine how our communities can move forward in the future.

Some museums, parks, and other interpretive venues are already exploring new methods for reaching their audiences. Forced into shutdown, creative people are running virtual tours and providing access to collections through the magic of the internet. And while that approach is likely a great solution to keeping in touch with audiences now, it isn't likely to have the kind of long-lasting impact or relationship building that we know is

necessary for continuing support. I expect that some sites and some communities will fall into the model of putting everything online because it may be less expensive than having a full-time staff. Certainly, it protects the resource if no one can get near it. But I would respectfully suggest that just because you can, doesn't mean you should.

Think about the things that you missed during your 'stay at home' situation. As great as it is to be able to talk to people online, I want to be there in person. I believe the same is true of how people experience heritage resources. I can certainly watch a TV programme about the African savannah or Macchu Picchu, but having been to both, the actual experience will always be my preference. We've had this discussion in the cultural history field for some time – Is it better to have the actual artifact or a reproduction on display? Is a costumed reenactment of an event "good enough" or does it have to be so authentic that stomachs churn at the sights, sounds, and smells of an historic farm? While there are always reasons to choose one over the other, I think most people prefer the real thing when they can get it. Cultural traditions and connections to nature are important in the best of circumstances. In difficult times, they are the touchstones that people rely on to maintain some sense of normality in a world that's gone off the rails.

So that brings me back to you and the role you can play in getting past this pandemic. Why I think you and the work you do are so important. Someone must step up and be the one who suggests bringing diverse interests to the table. Someone must take the lead in thinking transformatively. That someone could be you, speaking on behalf of your heritage resources.

I like the way Arundhati Roy put it in an article entitled The Pandemic is a Portal: "Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it."

Those of you who are looking for ways to return to 'normal' are probably going to be disappointed. I know it's easy to get bogged down in feeling a sense of loss for the way things were, but I hope you won't lose heart. I hope you are already thinking about what you can do next to start something new in your community.

The response of stakeholders in your community at pivotal points like these is an opportunity – if you will take the lead, if you will step up in the spirit of *laulima*, you may be the one that makes the difference between fostering our heritage resource communities or seeing them fall back into the models that weren't working all that well before.

It's a big ask, to think differently, to be the one who begins to pull your community together. Barack Obama said that, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

It may not happen quickly, but it can happen. When we chant the *Oli Aloha* in Hawaii, we say *Ahonui a lanakila*, "with patience comes victory". Never lose hope, never lose heart. As Jane Goodall tells us, "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

Lisa Brochu has invested over 40 years in the protection of natural and cultural heritage through training, writing, and facilitating complex community projects that require careful communication between partners. In 2002, she became the full-time Associate Director of the USA's National Association for Interpretation (NAI), expanding the certification and training programme she had previously created, facilitating the Definitions Project to create a common vocabulary for the profession, and working with focus groups to develop NAI's first published Standards and Best Practices documents. In 2012, she returned to freelance consulting, working as Heartfelt Associates with husband, Tim Merriman. Lisa's textbook on interpretive planning is often considered the foremost text on the subject, and she has co-authored five other textbooks on natural and cultural interpretation, as well as the book on sustainable community planning, *Put the HEART Back in Your Community: Unifying Diverse Interests around a Central Theme*. Lisa can be contacted at: lisa@heartfeltassociates.com.

Western Balkans inspired interpretive community

Helena Vičič (Slovenia)

This seemingly challenging region surprised us with many good examples of heritage interpretation. See for yourself!

One of Interpret Europe's strategic goals is to develop heritage interpretation on a regional level. For achieving that in the Western Balkan region, our aim was to appoint IE country coordinators in all countries, bring together stakeholders, enable exchange, promote good examples across its borders, and thus add our bit to the development of heritage interpretation in the region.

Back in 2018 we chose the Western Balkans and now here we present the publication, *Fostering communities through heritage interpretation* – the result of two years' work of the region's country coordinators and other contributors from Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia.

Despite its geographic coherence and abundance of natural and cultural heritage, the Western Balkans appeared challenging in political terms and due to its contested heritage. Interpretation has been only partly well acknowledged with Slovenia and Croatia being two of the most represented countries in IE. On the positive side, EU pre-accession funds were flowing in, which meant we could offer our training programme as a valuable ingredient of project applications. The IE conference 2019 was held in Sarajevo, which helped us to create synergies and enhance our visibility in the region.

The key challenge – lack of involvement of locals in the management and development of heritage sites – was identified by IE country coordinators from all eight countries. The action plan was clear: to identify good practice examples and promote them through various means.

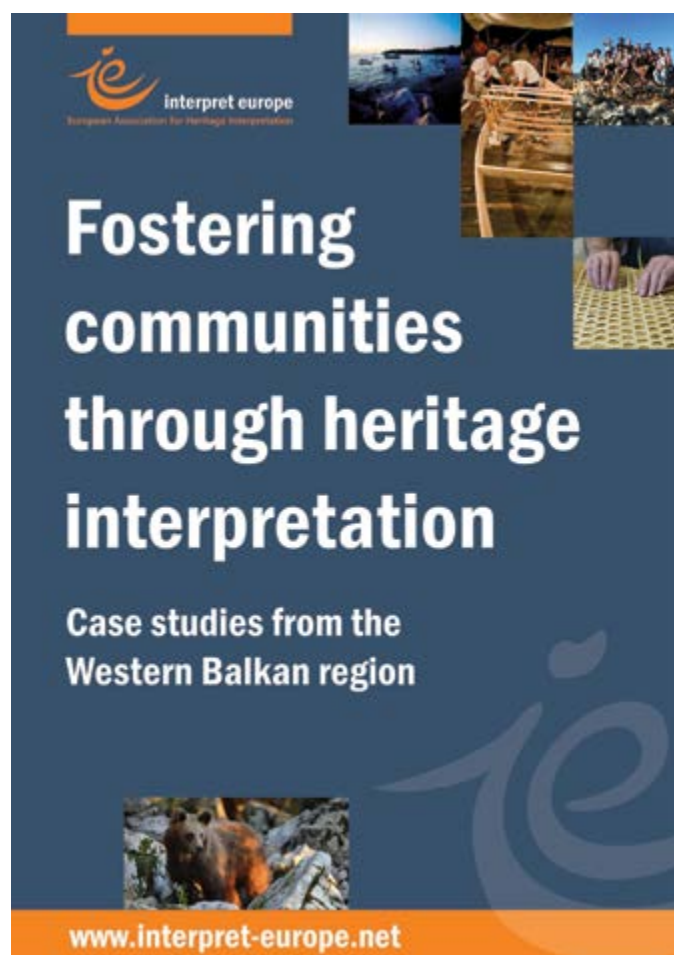
Involving people in interpretation of heritage, moreover empowering them to interpret for themselves, has been at the heart of our advocacy work since the European Commission awarded a prize for our Engaging Citizens paper in 2017. Involving local communities also became a leading principle in the Western Balkans study. However, case studies were evaluated according to all other principles of heritage interpretation. In the first round, only several examples were identified that corresponded to all criteria and we presented them at the conference in Sarajevo. However, in the second

round, thorough research by Helena Tolić from Muses, our institutional member from Zagreb that agreed to make an extensive research together with country coordinators, found 17 heritage sites that fulfilled all the criteria, while five projects excelled in one area of their work. There were other sites or organisations that also do great work, but not all could be included due to the limited resources for the initiative.

Fostering communities through heritage interpretation happened to be a valuable compilation of interpretation of very different heritage phenomena, from a painful history, such as war childhood, to controversial natural assets, such as brown bear. They have one thing in common: Local people interpret their own heritage. Moreover, many of the projects were initiated by local communities.

The publication can be downloaded here:
www.interpret-europe.net/material

Helena Vičič is an IE Managing Director. She can be contacted at: helena.vicic@interpret-europe.net.



New IE initiative: Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation

Thorsten Ludwig (Germany)

In May, IE launched its new initiative to support the development of transition hubs towards more sustainable tourism.

When tourists experience heritage sites, their own experience is often rather shallow and might also have a negative impact on the site itself. Through this initiative, heritage should become more meaningful for tourists, and tourists should become more mindful towards heritage.

Many points that have been discussed during the previous initiative, 'Fostering heritage communities', will flow into the new endeavour, especially concerning:

- the role of local communities in co-creating heritage interpretation;
- the role of 'the interpreter' that should be more framed as a facilitator.

IE intends to align its initiative to the activities of those who have already been working for more sustainable tourism for a long time. We, therefore, started to liaise with European stakeholder organisations, including Europarc Federation, European Travel Commission and European Cultural Tourism Network, who all welcomed the initiative and assured their support.

Together with our coordinators and trainers, and especially with our Tourism Team, a concept paper has been developed which will now be turned into a small publication to be handed over to those who might be interested. This will also include some examples where IE courses triggered changes towards more mindful tourism development.

But what do we mean by transition hubs? We are basically searching for communities that:

- have notable heritage;
- are big enough (or have sufficient outreach) to implement IE courses;
- are not too big so that the focus would get lost;
- have an organisation for touristic development.

Furthermore, it would be an advantage if they already:

- have a profile linked to local heritage;
- are familiar with the storytelling approach;
- are already linked to an IE member through contacts with their stakeholders.

We should also liaise with tour operators, hotels, restaurants,... who proclaim that it is an advantage if visitors stay longer, experience deeper and reflect upon their experiences, and who could imagine to organise IE courses for their own staff and the staff of others.

We would like to offer two levels of engagement:

1. Becoming organising partners and organise an IE course

Partners can use the label of IE organising partner for the particular year.

2. Becoming IE members and official partners of the initiative

Partners join IE as institutional or business members and based on an agreement stating that they promote the ideas of the initiative, they receive a declaration to be displayed on the wall for two years. Within this period, partners would be expected to organise an IE course and to develop their own case study that shows what impact this course had. Case studies that are available in October 2021 will be presented and published at the IE conference in Spain.

Regions that depend on heritage tourism and are now suffering from economic breakdown will be among the first regions to receive EU funding after the crisis. This might be especially true for rural regions. Most likely, funding will be linked to requirements that support the goals of the initiative. We intend to encourage local governments and public institutions to take advantage of this, to apply for such funding and also to become institutional members of our network. We count on our country teams to detect funding that is distributed through the nation states.

Please help us to search for potential transition hubs. If there is a country team in your country, inform your country coordinator. (Coordinators can be found at www.interpret-europe.net/contact). If this is not the case, please address office@interpret-europe.net.

Thorsten Ludwig is an IE Managing Director. He can be contacted at: thorsten.ludwig@interpret-europe.net.



Visitors flooding Dubrovnik (Image: Ludwig)

IE turns ten!

Marie Banks (UK)

On 14 July, an online party celebrated our history and successes and looked to the future of IE, with cake and singing.

Now that we are all used to Zoom, it made it much easier to gather together members past and present from across Europe to celebrate the first ten years of IE.

The party was hosted in Slovenia – at the site of the first conference where IE was officially ‘born’ – by Helena Vičič, one of our Managing Directors, and Janja Sivec, Country Coordinator Slovenia, both of whom happened to be there ten years ago too.

Janja moderated a relaxed chat session in which we heard a little of the history of the development of the organisation from some of the founding members and original Supervisory Committee, she asked questions of some of our current coordinators and then Thorsten Ludwig, Managing Director, shared some thoughts on the direction we are heading together.

In what can only be described as an assault on culture, we attempted an unrehearsed live singalong of the Ode to Interpretation – words which Michael Glen had crafted to the tune of the European anthem, Ode to Joy. This element of the celebration definitely needs to be repeated at next year’s conference as the delays over the internet didn’t do us any favours!

If you missed it, keep an eye on IE’s YouTube channel where we will post a summary of the event.

As for the cake – they enjoyed it in Slovenia and didn’t share with the rest of us!

Marie Banks is IE’s News Coordinator and works as a freelance interpretation specialist, copy writer, editor and proofreader. She can be contacted at: marie.banks@interpret-europe.net.



Send us your IE memories!

IE News Team

Do you have any memories or photos of the last ten years of IE? Please send them in for the next newsletter to help us celebrate.

Whether you’ve been a member since the very early days or have only joined the organisation more recently, we’d love to hear some of your stories and experiences to help make a celebration of IE’s first ten years in the next newsletter.

- Did you join IE because of a great training course?
- What was your favourite IE conference?
- Has IE made a real difference to your career?

We’re looking forward to hearing what impact IE has had on our members all across Europe!

Send us your thoughts and photos by 30 August to make the next issue.

Marie Banks, News Coordinator
news@interpret-europe.net



Images from top:

Ode to Interpretation (Words: Glen)

Zoom celebration screenshot (Image: Banks)

Celebratory cakes in Slovenia (Image: Trepel)

A unique course interpreting natural heritage

Elvira Ruiz Viedma & Marc Martín Benito (Spain)

A vivid interpretation experience in the Peruvian highlands led 18 professionals to discover hidden meanings and treasures in nature.

This Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course ran from 28 February to 1 March and then 6-8 March, and was led by Evarist March. The surroundings of the university campus where it was held are a mosaic of different natural and architectural heritage – both modern and ancient – offering many phenomena to form the basis of training tasks and interpretive talks, as well as giving life and a pleasant atmosphere to this unique place.

The course teaches the basics of interpretation through practical exercises that are boosted every time by the interaction between the participants. Moreover, the participants are also taught the following: being oneself, contributing through their own (job) experience; time notion and control; how to adapt to the various incidents of guiding; and the interpretive critique as a tool to improve.

A highly remarkable aspect of this course was the diversity of participants from so many nationalities (which included Spain, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and Chile) as well as the generations and the different job positions (including tour guide to agricultural engineer). This diversity enriched the training for all of us due to the different points of view, knowledge and experiences coming together.



Taking up the circumference of the tree
(Image: March Sarlat)

These are two examples of the interpretive talks developed by students.

"If you wanted to use this bush in the Middle Ages, you could end up dead by hanging".

This interpretive talk led us to discover the uniqueness of the broom shape of the shrub, *Sarothamnus scoparius*, transporting us from its magical medicinal uses to witch hunting, as the first documented femicide, this being related to the Day of the Working Woman that coincided with the same day of the interpretive talks' exhibitions. The talk ended up with the delivery of a purple bracelet as everyone's personal commitment to equality between women and men.



The broom shrub (Image: Ruiz)

"The marble has an enormous multi-skilled talent" consisted of interpretatively generating a consciousness in the audience of the relevance and essence of marble and its multi-functional forms and uses in their daily urban life.

In summary, the interpretive talks provided the participants with several emotions and senses by touching, smelling or interacting with the used resources or even hearing and profoundly feeling natural sounds, such as the wind.

As two of the participants, we would like to share our personal views on this course:

Elvira: "This training has given me a broad vision of guiding, giving me practical tools to start guiding and learn from my own mistakes as

continuous improvement in this profession. I was also pleasantly surprised that they made us walk through the field of human emotions, personal growth, self-criticism and personal self-knowledge. It was great that the training was so practical as we could see ourselves as future guides."

Marc: "The mutual understanding and the self-confidence that we gained or improved was really worthwhile, as well as the respect shown by the public every time, and the learning of so many techniques related to brightly explaining the natural and cultural heritage of the area."



Course participants in the Bellatera
(Image: March Sarlat)

Elvira is an agricultural engineer specialised in medicinal and edible plants. She is also a therapist and performs therapeutic guides in nature. Now as an IE CIG she wants to guide natural, ancient architectural and intangible heritage. She collaborates with Piulet to edit heritage guide books. Elvira can be contacted at: elvira-rv@hotmail.com.

Marc Martín Benito is passionate about wildlife and nature and is about to finish studying a postgraduate course in Ecotourism and Nature Guide, having already got a degree in Tourism as well as other feats and certificates within this context. You can contact him at: marben4753@gmail.com.

Congratulations to newly certified members

Certified Interpretive Guides (CIG):

Daisy Angeles Barrantes, Peru
Laila Asterhag, Sweden
Adolfo Baca Espinoza, Peru
Bosse Bergenholtz, Sweden
Róża Brytan, Poland
Clorina Nicolasa Cacya Cárdenas, Peru
Hilda Callañaupa Gonzales, Peru
Núria Carreras Roca, Spain
Lea-Marija Colarič-Jakše, Slovenia
Gerard Costa Orriols, Spain
Bára Dvořáková, Czech Republic
Carina Eriksson, Sweden
Elvis Maycol Flores Paicompá, Peru
Sandra Francés Alcántara, Spain
Maria Teresa Fusté Coch, Spain
Alba Giró Carol, Spain
Edgar Huamán Mandortupa, Peru
Rolando Huamani Zevallos, Peru
Laura Izaguirre Castillo, Spain
Katerina Kappatou, Greece
Tatjana Kmetič Škof, Slovenia
Karel Konopka, Czech Republic
Tim Koprivc, Slovenia
Lenka Kopřivová, Czech Republic
Branka Krianić, Croatia
Inmaculada Laborda Mas, Spain
Valeria Lozano Miranda, Perú
Thomas Magnusson, Sweden
Aldo Martín Málaga Cari, Peru
Gabriela Maraví Chumpen, Peru
Klever Marca Coronel, Peru
Marc Martín Benito, Spain
Walter Mejía Justiniani, Peru
Joanna Milanković, Croatia
Justyna Milewska, Poland
Lotta Möller, Sweden
Blanka Mouralová, Czech Republic
Franziska Lena Munz, Peru
Mallku Negre Rossignoli, Spain
Emil Nilzon, Sweden
Åsa Norrman, Sweden
Dario Olrom, Croatia
Agneta Olsson, Sweden
Gabriel Ignacio Olivares Vidal, Spain
Nina Požun, Slovenia
Marija Prosenik, Slovenia
Jordi Ribas Garces, Spain
Elvira Ruiz Viedma, Spain
Manuela Rumbea Sauleo, Spain
Victor Sanchez Loayza, Peru
Ana Claudia Silva Farinazzo, Brazil
Laura Salvà Garangou, Spain
Michal Skalka, Czech Republic

Jana Švaříčková, Czech Republic
Anna Svobodová, Czech Republic
Fabienne Taranne, France
Bernardino Tupayachi, Peru
Yanina Valenzuela Saire, Peru
Andreja Vesel, Slovenia
Kamil Żołądek, Poland

Certified Interpretive Writers (CIW):

Živa Bobič Červek, Slovenia
Nina Buh, Slovenia
Barbara Kalan, Slovenia
Urška Karer, Slovenia
Anja Poštrak, Slovenia
Katarina Žakel, Slovenia

Certified Interpretive Trainers (CIT):

Dubravko Fijačko, Croatia
Igor Ianachi, Croatia
Ivana Karanikić, Croatia
Dragana Lucija Ratković Aydemir, Croatia
Marko Trupković, Croatia

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 take place later in the year. Keep an eye on the website for the latest information. ****

Date	Language	Location	Trainer
Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG)			
04-06/09/2020 12-13/09/2020	Croatian	Motovun, Croatia	Ivana Karanikić
04-06/09/2020 10-11/10/2020	German	Freiburg, Germany	Thorsten Ludwig
18-20/09/2020 26-27/09/2020	Croatian	Kastav, Croatia	Ivana Karanikić
19-23/09/2020	English	Tirana, Albania	Valya Stergioti
28/09-03/10/2020	English	Athens, Greece	Valya Stergioti
Certified Live Interpreter (CLI)			
09-13/11/2020	English	Split, Croatia	Mark Wallis

Upcoming IE webinars

IE webinars are free for members and are conducted in English. Some webinars are for professional members only.

Keep an eye on the website for upcoming webinars:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/events/ie-webinars/>

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

The third time is already a tradition

Eyal Mitrani (Israel)

The National Interpretation Conference in Israel was held in February this year for the third time bringing 150 participants together.

Having been to IE's annual conference several times, the influence of Interpret Europe leaders led us four years ago to establish a forum in Israel to promote interpretation in protected areas by government and public organisations, including the Nature and National Parks Authority, the Council for Conservation of Heritage Sites, the Israel Antiquities Authority, the Forest Authority, Jerusalem and Heritage Ministry and Haifa University.

This year is our fourth year of activity. In February we held the 3rd National Interpretation Conference. The theme of the conference was 'interpretation in open areas', such as national parks, reserves and forests. We dealt with the benefits and challenges

that managers and professionals must pay attention to. The conference was attended by 150 people. It began with a study tour to raise questions at the Beit Govrin National Park and then proceeded to a hall at the National Police College where participants enjoyed presentations, including one from Professor Nir Orion on natural learning and the open environment, and split into small working groups to discuss themes. The end of the conference was a guided visit to the Israeli Police Heritage House.

The booklet we distributed to conference participants explained the Hebrew word for interpretation, translation of the ICOMOS Convention of Interpretation, and the first chapter of Freeman Tilden's book.

In 2019, we began "Behind the curtain" tours at various sites in Israel. This was inspired by the excellent tours experienced through Interpret Europe. These tours continued this year up until the global pandemic.

Dr. Eyal Mitrani is the visitor and community unit manager at the central district of Israel Nature and National Parks Authority, and one of the founders of the National Transmission Forum in Israel. You can get in touch at: e.mitrani@npa.org.il.



Beit Govrin National Park (Image: Mitrani)

Family heritage lives through art

Petra Večenaj Živičnjak (Croatia)

The rich legacy of the peasant-painter, Ivan Večenaj, lives on today through his family – my family.

My grandfather would have been 100 on 18 May this year and we celebrated. He dedicated his life to his family, nature, the traditional customs of Prekodravlje, brush and pen – talents that he took full advantage of – he believed in himself and his abilities to the end. Despite his illness and old age, just before his departure in February 2013, at the age of 93, my grandfather finished his eighth and last book. I watched it and witnessed his greatness, as an artist and a man. My whole family and especially my father, Mladen, who was his right hand, lived his art and was part of that world. From birth I was part of an artistic family – part of the naive born here in Podravina. I visited countless exhibitions and met many interesting people. His life's work also determined my life, he engraved his character and spirit in his family, so today we can preserve his legacy for ourselves and our visitors in a representative way.



Ivan Večenaj (Image: Večenaj)

Until 2006, my grandfather Ivan and grandmother Katica lived together in the house that is now the Ivan Večenaj Gallery in the village of Gola in Prekodravlje, near the Hungarian border. A rainy morning in May 2006 took my grandmother away from my grandfather just before they were supposed to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary later the same year. Time stood still for my grandfather after that, they had raised two sons, Mladen and Josip, in that house. After World War II, they began their toilsome and hard peasant life with one acre of land from my grandmother and 1,000 grabs of land inherited from Ivan's father and mother. Their sons were growing up and my grandfather was still taking paper and pencil on Sundays or when it was raining and there was no work in the field or around the

house. So he entertained the children and enjoyed painting. He had seen from a young age that it was something he was good at. He painted what surrounded him: the yard, roosters and chickens, working in the fields, neighbours going to pasture with cows, poverty and death, weddings, etc. The happiness of these simple scenes smiled to an employee of the municipality when he saw his works in the mid-1950s and asked Ivan to paint a picture to take to Koprivnica instead of goods such as grain or pigs for taxes. And just like that their world began to change slightly from that moment.



Ivan and his wife Katica in the 1950s (Image: Večenaj)

Ivan had his first exhibition in 1954 and the rest just followed. He painted and painted, he advanced in the art of painting on glass and nurtured his recognisable style. In the future he will become known as one of the greatest masters of color and a naive painter who placed biblical motives in his homeland, his beloved Gola. During 60 years of creativity, my grandfather exhibited throughout Yugoslavia, Milan, Turin, Paris, St. Petersburg, San Francisco, Florida and more. He met and socialised with a world jetset, like the Hollywood actor Yull Brynner who visited him twice in Gola, Princess Margaret of the UK, and he was twice in an audience at the Vatican with Pope Paul VI and once with John Paul II. But he never forgot who he was, he was never ashamed to say in anyone's company that he was only a peasant-painter. It was the influence under which our whole family grew – its greatness grew in its simplicity.

Today, the Ivan Večenaj Gallery gives visitors an insight into the painter's work from the earliest beginnings of painting (the gallery also has drawings from 1934, when Ivan was only 14 years old). A large number of paintings on glass and canvas adorn it, as well as many drawings and watercolours of museum value that Ivan preserved for future generations and a large number of photographs from his life. As part of the Gallery, the studio/atelier of Ivan Večenaj, in which he continuously created and painted, has been preserved. In addition to a rich artistic legacy as a representative of the Hlebine school, Ivan Večenaj left a rich legacy in the written word – he wrote and published eight books, eight of his songs were set to music and awarded at festivals and over many years with his son, Mladen, he collected more than 700 ethnographic objects, which are located in the Ethno-house Večenaj, that today is a protected cultural legacy of the Republic of Croatia.

On my part, it was a privilege to live and share life with him. He was extremely clear-minded, sometimes sharp-tongued but always fair, and always greeted me with some childhood story, an injustice from children who were richer than his family, or with travel stories of his times with other naive painters. As a girl, I came daily to his atelier window where I would see his smile on his face with glass and a brush in his hands. I would shout: "Grandpa, I'm here!" That smile and exclamation is always with me, and now that he is gone I remember his voice: "Oh my little one, come! Let's drink coffee!" I would spend hours and hours by his side and even though he was busy (painting on glass requires extreme dexterity, concentration and skill) it was never difficult for him to answer my questions or to evaluate my art plays on paper at the time.

The childhood years passed, but the closeness never ceased. Until the very end, the conversations over coffee did not stop. He dreamed all his life, and he wanted his dreams strongly. His thoughts were in line with his dreams and that is why he made most of them come true. His dreams are today in our Gallery, the Ethno-House, on the pages of his books and the memories we spent with him.



Me with grandfather Ivan (Image: Večenaj)

Please don't hesitate to send me an email if you have any questions about our work or would like visit our Gallery or Ethno house. We love to share our family heritage and my grandfather's legacy with others.

(Some images of some of Ivan's work can be seen on the following page)

Petra Večenaj Živičnjak has lived most of her life in Gola near the Hungarian border, in so called Prekodravlje. Today she lives with her son and husband in the city of Koprivnica near Gola. Petra works for the Tourist Board of Koprivnica Križevci County as an office assistant and also helps her parents run the Galley and Ethno house, the legacy of her grandfather, Ivan Večenaj, preserved. Petra is an IE Certified Interpretive Guide. She can be contacted at: petravecenaj@gmail.com.

Paintings by Ivan Večenaj

Left: The Fog

Right: Four horsemen of the Apocalypse,

Bottom: Depature

(Images: Ivan Večenaj Gallery)



The ABCs of cultural heritage tourism

Elizabeta Milanović Glavica (Croatia)

This project for school pupils in a rural area of Croatia provided a basis in cultural heritage tourism throughout the school year.

An interesting project called 'The ABCs of cultural heritage tourism' was delivered to the school, Professor Franjo Viktor Šignjar, in the village of Virje, Croatia. It was developed for pupils aged 11 to 15. The project was conducted as an extracurricular activity for pupils who picked this as a subject of interest. The activity was held once a week during the school year lasting one hour and a half. The starting point for the project was that creating an experience is the foundation of the success of any business and any destination and that every destination relies on its people. Pupils learnt about cultural heritage tourism, starting with basic concepts and building up to the final activity where they were due to promote what they had learnt throughout the school year. Unfortunately, they had no opportunity to show the result of the project because of the lockdown during March and April.

Throughout the school year they learnt who runs tourist destinations and who works in the tourism sector, they learnt about typical jobs in tourism and created a questionnaire for the locals to find out about their knowledge on tourism. Every week they had a different guest from the tourism sector. They learnt about gamification in tourism and how to create a gaming experience, they learnt the difference between DMOs (destination management organisations) and tourist boards, what a local museum is and what it should offer in terms of tourism, what is a tour guide, why hotels might hire an entertainment team, what is their main job and what a day in the life of an entertainer looks like. They learnt the value of traditional skills in creating tourism products, learnt about the souvenir shop, which message should be presented through tourist souvenirs and why it is important to the tourist destination. The project also included the importance of filming and photography in tourism and information about rural tourism: who is an interpretive guide and the importance of natural and cultural interpretation, why it is important to create tourism with local people, the importance of local stories, folk tales, folklore, legends, local customs and more for building the authenticity of the destination, can a little village be a tourist destination? All this and many more questions were considered.

The pupils used many different materials and many

tools to learn about their destination. When they just started to learn about the ABCs of tourism, they had the opinion that the village had nothing to offer in terms of tourism, they had a basic knowledge about famous people of their region, about local history, customs, about local heritage and local stories, and they thought rural galleries and museums were less attractive and important, compared to larger, urban ones. During the year they talked to their neighbours, their grandparents, they visited local crafts people, and gradually they felt more engaged with and connected to the local traditions. One of the tasks was to detect the important points which could be attractive to tourism. At the beginning they had trouble finding any attraction, but later they learnt that many things can be important. They enjoyed learning about interpretive guides and they built a new attraction for the village out of Lego bricks.



Pupils collaborated to build a new visitor attraction for their town out of Lego (Images: Milanovic)



The Covid-19 pandemic stopped the activity before it was complete so we never had the opportunity to see the results of everything they had learnt, but the idea was to promote the project to all parents, visitors and tourists through a game they had created during the year, where guests can learn about the destination, discover places of interest and be entertained, and after the game they will come to the souvenir shop, a school cooperative, which offers souvenirs based

on the local traditions. We entered this project to the ERASMUS scheme and hope we will be able to continue to develop it in the future.

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 Interpret Europe and is an IE Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) and IE Tourism Coordinator. She can be contacted at: elizabeta.milanovic@interpret-europe.net or elizabeta.milanovic@gmail.com.



Recording group discussions (Image: Mali)



Group learning with a tutor (Image: Mali)



Group dynamics (Image: Milanovic)

New book on nature interpretation published online

Eva Sandberg (Sweden)

Nature interpretation in the Nordic countries – experiences, learning, reflection and participation when people and nature meet.

The SLU Swedish Centre for Nature Interpretation has recently published a book on nature interpretation in the Nordic countries in close collaboration with colleagues in Denmark, Norway and Finland. The production was funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers. There has been a Nordic cooperation in 'naturvægledning' nature interpretation since the 1990s and the editorial group has cooperated for the last ten years. The textbook/ anthology gives a 2020 overview of the practice and theoretical development and examples of heritage interpretation from all countries. The production has given the opportunity to gather educators and professionals in all our countries, to inspire each other, share reflections and to put into words our common theoretical and practical development. The book has been published in Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish and English.

From the back cover of the book:

Nature interpretation in the Nordic countries is a book about communication between nature interpreters and their participants in our landscapes. It's about first hand experiences of nature and the importance of paying attention to what is inspiring and fascinating, especially valuable or threatened. And about possibilities to reflect over the relation between human and nature. Educators, researchers and interpreters contribute with articles about nature interpretation in theory and practice.

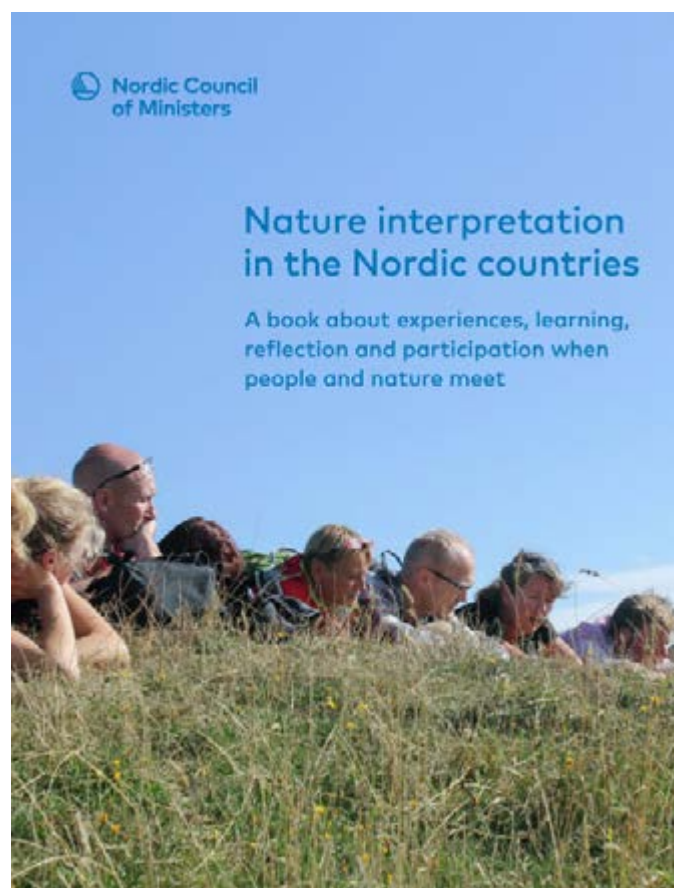
The book is written for everyone who is interested in how interpretation can contribute to a sustainable future, nature conservation and areas in society like public health, democracy and the right for all citizens to visit and experience nature. The purpose is to inspire nature interpreters to offer more and even better experiences and learning in the Nordic nature and cultural landscapes.

There is a very limited edition of printed copies in English but you can download it as a PDF for free from the Nordic Council of Ministers:

<http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1426533&dswid=-2561>

If you have any questions – contact me!

Eva Sandberg is the Director of SLU Swedish Center for Nature Interpretation at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and also the editor of this publication. She can be contacted at: eva.k.sandberg@slu.se.



Journey to the Beginnings

Árpád Böczén & Zsuzsa Berecz (Hungary)

This project is about a journey to the beginnings of smuggling interpretive evaluation into archaeological heritage projects.

How can an interpretation expert contribute to the development of a heritage programme other than on the content level? What if the expertise for content is already given, but other questions are not clarified? We followed an entire cooperation project and used interpretive evaluation to help achieve its aims.

Archaeologists can make a significant cultural impact by discovering lost phenomena and related meanings or creating new meanings in connection to specific sites. Inherently, their work may disrupt the already established ways of engagement people had towards heritage; this may rejuvenate existing connections, confront others and create new ones. A number of questions go hand in hand with this work: By whom and how far are certain locally occurring phenomena considered significant? Who should care for them and why? In other words: Whose heritage are we talking about?

This is when the role of interpretation comes into the picture, enabling site managers and other stakeholders to create meaningful links between the people and the given place. Its success lies in providing first-hand experiences, while also enabling individuals to live through different types and qualities of experiences. At the same time, through interpretation a communication channel opens, through which past and present realities meet and collide. This latter point we find important, as providing clues – or referential points – for individual and collective identities is central to the concept of heritage. Based on this, one should underline that interpretation is much more than experiential presentation. It has a mission – just like heritage sites do. Interpretive evaluation is partly about the investigation into how far this mission is fulfilled. On the other hand, it is instrumental for getting to know the potential 'heirs'. In order to appropriately consider them in relation to any particular place, one has to value them, to know who they are, why they come to visit, and what experiences they would take home.

The 'Journey to the Beginnings' project (journeytothebeginnings.eu) was an international cooperation, running between the autumn of 2018 and February 2020, funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Commission. The main outcome of the project was a prehistoric theatre-

adventure game, designed also for digital mobile platforms to promote sustainable, art-based heritage tourism at four sites along the Danube (Gârla-Mare, Lepenski Vir, Vučedol, Vátya), presenting prehistoric archaeological cultures and archaeological research in the context of a joint narrative.

One of the challenges in similar projects is, that the local site managements mostly expect to have the attractions presented in experiential, entertaining and attractive ways, beyond dry scientific facts, in order to help their visitors develop an affinity to certain historical periods or cultures. In our opinion, however, approaching the projects this way implies two problems. On the one hand, the potential of interpretive practices is underestimated, as they can go far beyond developing an affinity to something. On the other hand, the outcomes of such projects are very difficult – if not impossible – to measure, as it is hard to tell whether the (real or imagined) positive feedback is due to visitors being entertained or if there is, indeed, an educational experience.

Another challenge is that this kind of collaboration starts from a situation where the project participants have not – or only barely – known one-another, and basically had no previous experience in working together. Representatives of different professional fields need to find a common language and create a joint product. Thus, the task is both product development and experimental cooperation, where the process is just as important as the final product.

For us, members of KÖME, the challenge was to bring in the interpretive approach to a process where it had no pre-assigned place. To bring the approach closer to the site managers, archaeologists and the artistic team responsible for the content development. We took the opportunity to follow through the collaboration in its complexity and to apply interpretive evaluation in order to create a platform to realise the common goals of the project, to introduce a common language and to synchronise different motivations, needs, mind-sets and work methods. Interpretive evaluations by a third-party can really progress or even provoke the consultations between project members. Also, due to its holistic methodology, the evaluation process carried out throughout the project can help the participants in consciously considering their goals and opportunities right from the beginning.

If you want to know more about our one-and-a-half-year long journey, about the methods we used and some of the main learning points, you can find our full paper in the 2020 spring edition of Hungarian Archaeology e-journal at the following link:

http://files.archaeolingua.hu/2020TA/Upload/Boczen_E20TA.pdf



The cover story connecting the sites is about an archaeology professor – time traveller – who lost his tablet in the past. The players of the game have to retrieve this object and take it to the right place in order to re-establish the order of the universe. This cover story allowed for showcasing not only the Bronze Age environments and objects (reproductions), but also digital tools (Image: Szekér)



The theatre game – adapted to the four sites – is based on reasonably prehistoric activities, some elements of which are, however, not easily implemented in the digital application (Image: Szekér)



In the first stage of the adventure game the visitor (i.e. the time traveller wearing VR goggles) meets a Bronze age Vatya woman (Image: Szekér)

Árpád Bőczén is a Hungarian architect and heritage expert working on various projects as the president of KÖME (Association of Cultural Heritage Managers – heritagemanager.hu). He can be contacted at: arpad@heritagemanager.hu.

Zsuzsa Berecz is a Budapest-based dramaturg and curator. She has been active in artistic and community-based projects and is the vice-president of KÖME Association of Cultural Heritage Managers.

What's going on elsewhere

The impact of COVID-19 on museums in Europe

IE News Team

NEMO, the Network of European Museum Organisations, launched a survey to help work out how to adapt to the new normal.

Museums have experienced unprecedented economic and social consequences in the last few months due to the coronavirus pandemic. To better understand the status quo and what might come next, NEMO launched a survey to map the impact of COVID-19 on the museum sector.

The report analyses and documents a sector that, although it is experiencing financial setbacks, is agile and able to adapt to the new (more digital) normal.

Between 24 March - 30 April 2020, almost 1,000 museums in 48 countries contributed to the survey, a majority of them from Europe. As museums in Europe start to re-open, we need to listen to the community and learn from this crisis in order to effectively respond, mitigate and adapt.

Directed at stakeholders at all levels, this report includes recommendations urging for immediate action, for mid-term considerations and for long-term strategy with regard to:

1. Economic support for museum operations;
2. Investment in digital cultural heritage; and
3. Making museums fit for crises.

The full report is available here:

https://www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/NEMO_documents/NEMO_COVID19_Report_12.05.2020.pdf

Visit this page on NEMO's website to find more relevant material dedicated to museums during COVID-19:

<https://www.ne-mo.org/advocacy/our-advocacy-work/museums-during-covid-19.html>

Use this handy page to see which museums across Europe are open again:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=17-4zW7VeebnCetu54fNo-wukxY6KcrgG&ll=52.493534879770834%2C14.278045999999978&z=3>



The 'old' way of visiting a gallery – who made the most meaningful connection? (Image: Colvine)



A 'new' way to interact in museums using touchless tech (Image: Banks)

Calls for proposals

We will publish details of any new calls here when we are aware of them.

**** Some deadlines are being extended due to the coronavirus pandemic so check websites ****



IE announcements

Welcome to our new members

Professional members

Thomas Bech Lillelund Andersen, Denmark
Alexandru Andrasanu, Romania
Ajla Bajgorić, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Christine Baker, Ireland
Sarah Court, Italy
Maria Karina Garilao, Philippines
Serena Grassia, Italy
Alice Johnson, Switzerland
Selma Karacevic Kapic, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Victor Manuel Lopez-Menchero Bendicho, Spain
Lesley Machiridza, Zimbabwe
Friederike Malisch-Johnigk, Germany
Milena Milošević Micić, Serbia
Diana Nola Zivkovic, Croatia
Gabriela Plumasseau, France

Individual members

S. Marisol Asselta Castro, Puerto Rico
Renate De Backere, Netherlands
Sarah De Nardi, Australia
Mirjana Fijolić, Croatia
Michalis Foustanos, Greece
Alma Henic Strahinja, Montenegro
Ante Ilić, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Alma Kaurate, Latvia
Marina Krivosic, Croatia
Ajla Livnjak, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Sanja Mitrovic, Montenegro
Nerys Lloyd Mullally, United Kingdom
Vlatka Pehar Matic, Croatia
Ivan Percobic, Montenegro
Anna Pietrusza, Poland
Jelena Pujić, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Tomislav Radic, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Patrik Rzezwicki, Poland
Katarina Šolčić, Croatia
Magdalena Sowińska, Poland
Fabienne Taranne, France
Laura Alexandra Time, Romania
Cristina Toma, Romania
Isabelle Trinquelle, Greece
Ewa Wiatr, Poland
Dijana Zorić, 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!**

General Assembly 2020

As we announced in the last newsletter, the rules around IE's annual General Assembly have been changed to allow us to hold it online.

We will notify members as soon as we have details of the date and joining instructions.

IE conference 2021: Save the date

Nuria Mohedano (Spain)

'Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation' is the theme for our next conference to be held 1-4 October 2021 in Sigüenza, Spain.

After such an inspirational and fulfilling web conference this year, we could not stop thinking about next year's gathering, where the magic of interaction and spontaneity can happen again and where we will feel the revealed power of the community towards its heritage. After all, aren't we interpreters agents for change within communities? How can we build stronger relationships among the diversity of communities that come into an exchange within heritage sites?

Under the theme 'Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation' we will merge heritage interpretation with sustainable tourism in order to offer unique opportunities along the tourist service chain to both locals and visitors.

We are very pleased to announce that the next Interpret Europe conference will be held in Sigüenza, Spain from 1-4 October 2021. Everything you have come to expect from an IE conference – inspiring speakers, hands-on workshops, study visits related to our theme, parallel sessions, a very eye-catching venue and an incredible heritage to discover – can be taken for granted! Will you be ready to spread your wings and join us in a very promising gathering?

Very close to Madrid, and among narrow valleys in the region that Don Quixote lived his best adventures and misfortunes we find the small town of Sigüenza, in the province of Guadalajara within the Castilla-La Mancha region. A mixture of medieval, renaissance, baroque and neoclassic essence where a fortress-palace in the form of a castle will hold us: the Parador de Sigüenza.

Our venue is surrounded by heady and uplifting cultural landscapes. The "black architecture villages" so-called for the use of slate creating unique constructions, the rural Alcarria district or the aromatic views of lavender across acres and acres of countryside are just a few brushstrokes of the whole picture. A land of shepherds, hook-men, fishermen and traditional agriculture and textile industry form a vibrant location together with Alto Tajo Natural Park and its extensive system of canyons and river gorges declared as a Geopark by UNESCO.

We will keep you all informed in the following months regarding the call for papers, how to register and other important information to plan your attendance, such as where you can stay or how to arrive. Soon the website will be available and we will be ready to bring the best out of it to the back of your backyards.

The countdown is on, and we would love to receive any of your suggestions or comments on the IE Conference 2021.

You can find out more about the location and conference venue here:

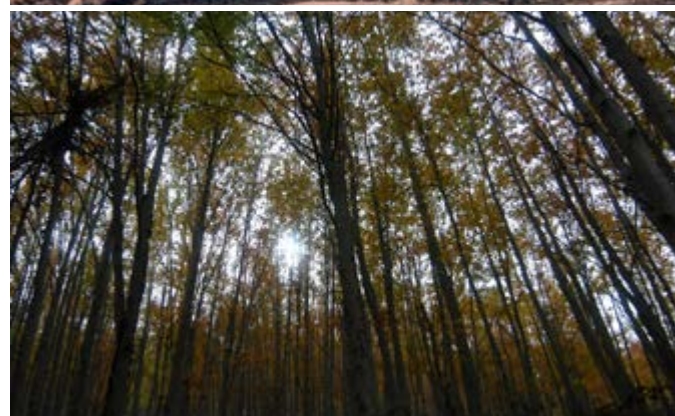
<http://en.www.turismocastillalamancha.es/patrimonio/siguenza-82231/descrpcion/>

https://www.parador.es/es/paradores/parador-de-siguenza?utm_source=GoogleMyBusiness&utm_medium=linkgoogle&utm_campaign=paradordesiguenza&utm_term=organico&utm_content=ficha

and watch a video about Alto Tajo Natural Park here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK3XB1ZsHbo&feature=youtu.be>

Nuria Mohedano is IE's Events Coordinator, having previously acted as the Tourism Coordinator. She can be contacted at: nuria.mohedano@interpret-europe.net.



Come and enjoy this stunning region of Spain
(Images: Provincial Deputation of Guadalajara)

Join and support the IE teams

Growing the IE freelancers' network

The IE Freelancers' Team is creating a network of freelancers and consultants who earn at least some of their income through contract work. You may be self-employed, employed seasonally, or just do occasional freelance jobs to supplement your existing income. If you do any of this, please get in touch! In the short term, we want to create a network of freelancers who will be able to share resources and experience. Then longer term, we are hoping to create a guide for freelancing and share opportunities that will help recovery from the difficult situation in which many of us now find ourselves. Contact us and we will just add your name to our mailing list – we won't fill your inbox!

Madison Leeson, Freelancers Coordinator
madison.leeson@interpret-europe.net

Architects Team needs building up

Angus Forbes from Berlin took over the coordinator's position for the IE Architects Team in spring. If you are interested in exploring how interpretation can be applied to architectural and landscape design and networking with other like-minded people, you can join his team by writing a short mail.

Angus Forbes, Architects Coordinator
angus.forbes@interpret-europe.net

Want to join the IE Geological Heritage Team?

We are happy to announce that we have established a new IE Geological Heritage Team and Cristina Toma will be its coordinator. You can read more on our website:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/feet/home/interpret-europe/our-structure/executive-management/subject-coordinators/#c1747>.

The Geological Heritage Team will share IE's interpretive approach among geologists, connect with geoparks and search for ways of interpreting geological heritage. Get in touch if you would like to be a part of it.

Christina Toma, Geological Heritage Coordinator
christina.toma@interpret-europe.net

Other announcements

Upcoming events

For up to date information on other 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>

**** Due to the current coronavirus pandemic, many events have been cancelled or postponed and some have been moved online. Please check individual event websites ****

And finally...

Thank you for your contributions.

**Sunny 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), Iva Klarić Vujović (Croatia), Abby McSherry (Ireland) and Sarah Wendl (Austria).

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 autumn 2020 edition: Sunday 30 August 2020

Are you following us on social media? Please also engage with us on Facebook and LinkedIn.



<https://www.facebook.com/interpreteurope>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/1227939/>

As a member you can also join our closed Facebook group or our Facebook country groups for more regular, informal interpretation chat.

Greek:

www.facebook.com/groups/2321657604719839/

Norwegian:

www.facebook.com/groups/1762975210676357/

Slovenian:

www.facebook.com/groups/297902914389813/

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
mail@interpret-europe.net
www.interpret-europe.net

**Serving all who use first-hand experiences
to give natural and cultural heritage a deeper meaning**

