



Photo: Thorsten Ludwig

Newsletter

Spring 2016

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Editorial

Thorsten Ludwig
(Germany)
Willem Derde
(Belgium)

Dear members,

Spring has sprung in even the most northern and alpine corners of Europe. Buds are bursting and what could inspire us more to get in touch with each other and ignite our ambitions.

IE's approach to connect natural and cultural heritage and bring practitioners, suppliers and academics together is highly appreciated by its members. But, to make this happen, we need more members from different backgrounds. Remember? We did say we're getting ambitious:

This year, we'd like to double our members... to 420!

If you don't believe we'll reach the stars, just check how many new members we're welcoming in this edition of our newsletter. This is amazing. Please get in touch with them and spread the word to your colleagues and beyond that we need them as members too. We're sure we can achieve our ambitious goal if we all pull together.

Of course, networking will only flourish if we give it space to happen. We need opportunities to benefit from the vast field of interpretive experience from European parks, monuments and museums. IE's new social media platforms promote ideas from friends in other organisations, and with improvements to our news system, you can now find each of the following articles on a dedicated page on the IE website. What's more, your own articles can be directly linked with others. Articles are also tagged so users can sort them according to their own interests. So, do please send us your own articles and inspire others.

And if you really miss the old pdf version of the newsletter, you can still find it here. [www.interpret-europe.net/top/news/newsletter-archive.html]

So far, IE's main opportunity for exchange is its annual conference, and this year we might even top that on two counts. Firstly, we are looking forward to the first IE Conference with more than 100 events from keynote speeches and presentations to workshops, study visits and a market place including speakers' corners, Pecha Kucha sessions and an exhibition fair.

Secondly, we chose a theme taking us to the very heart of the European idea. While the relevance of heritage is increasingly accepted, one question remains unanswered: How can people all over Europe learn from our shared heritage in a way that encourages them to contribute to a collective European development? While there is no short-term solution, our long-term answer is clear: heritage interpretation.

This is one of the clearest reasons why Interpret Europe is needed. So get inspired by our conference and enthuse others to experience the contribution heritage interpretation can make for the future of Europe.

Thorsten Ludwig and Willem Derde
Managing Directors

Interpret Europe Activities

Michael Glen
(UK)

Call for Supervisory Committee nominations

Our next General Assembly will take place on 21 May in Mechelen, Belgium and part of the agenda will be elections for the Supervisory Committee. We are now seeking nominations for this role.

If you would like to stand, or know of a possible candidate, please write to mail@interpret-europe.net by 21 April 2016, with:

1. The name of the person nominated, with his or her signature to indicate his or her willingness to stand for election (That person could be you.)
2. The name of the member proposing the nomination, with his or her signature
3. The name of a second member supporting that nomination, with his or her signature

Please ensure that this information is sent as a pdf and not as a Word document.

Several of the current members of the Supervisory Committee have agreed to stand for re-election but we also need additional nominations. To help those deciding to stand, the Supervisory Committee and Management have set out below the qualities and qualifications for Committee members that are of greatest importance to developing the work of IE.

Since October last year, our Management has been working on a volunteer basis. Our membership numbers are increasing and so will the income from membership fees. However, it will take some years to reach the point where IE can be independently financed by its members.

Fundraising is the most critical requirement we have. We are not talking about applications for EU project funding. We need members of the Supervisory Committee who can think of creative ways to address other sources of funding such as large companies; that have experience in such fields and who are highly connected to international networks and institutions which could support heritage interpretation at a European level and that through their connections are able to forge the alliances that are needed to make Interpret Europe the key European platform for stakeholders in heritage and interpretation.

If you believe you can meet help please ask to be nominated. If you know another member similarly qualified, please encourage her/him to stand for election to the Committee.

The general tasks of the Supervisory Committee are:

- To appoint the members of the Management
- To develop the strategy and the policy for the Management
- To supervise and support the Management.

The Supervisory Committee meets at least four times per year usually by Skype but at least once face-to-face. It reviews any policy matters that may arise and agrees the annual management plan. It also receives quarterly status reports of the Management and audits the annual accounts for presentation by Management to the General Assembly.

We look forward to seeing many of you in Mechelen.

Michael Glen is Chair of Interpret Europe's Supervisory Committee, Principal of Touchstone Heritage Management Consultants [www.touchstone-heritage.co.uk] and Jobbing Wordsmith at QuiteWrite [www.quitewrite.co.uk]. You can contact him at glentigstane@aol.com.



Rewarding opportunities from our management plan

IE's management plan for 2016 focuses on membership development. To deliver it, we want IE members to act as coordinators; check our tasks, join our circle and share our joy of nurturing IE's blossoming and growth.

Looking for a job opportunity? Not necessarily a paid one, but one where you have the chance to make a highly-valued contribution and play a key role in Interpret Europe's future? Membership development is one of our strategic goals and to achieve it, we'd like to develop management units that are driven by dedicated members.

In March, we signed our first volunteer contract with Valya Stergioti from Greece. Valya stepped forward and agreed to act as our training coordinator for the next two years. You can read about her activities in this newsletter. So, what else do we have on offer?

Our first key objective is to ensure IE is not dependent on external funding. This means doubling the membership numbers in 2016. Sounds simple, doesn't it? Perhaps, but it can only be achieved with your help.

There are various ways to do this:

1. We want to set up country teams to act as national contact points and commit to recruiting new members in their countries. Do you want to be part of this in your country?
2. We want to increase the number of organisation members and individual members connected to such organisations can play a key role here. Can you coordinate this for us?
3. Are you a university student? Would you be willing to persuade your faculty to become an IE member? We have some ideas on how to do this. Would you like to play a coordinating role?
4. We want to increase corporate member numbers by inviting our suppliers for panels, costumes, apps, etc. to become IE members. Would you like to take responsibility for this?
5. All training certification course participants become IE members, but to have participants we first need certified trainers. How about joining our summer course for guide trainers?
6. Communication is key and we work on a news system to extend our channels. Ten members are involved – but we need experienced coordinators. Are you willing and able to jump in?
7. Are you familiar with Wikipedia? As one step to increasing our profile, we want to publish our English Wikipedia article in more languages. Can you take this on?

There is much more besides and we will tell you about this at our General Assembly. There are lots of smaller jobs too that need done, and there are few other organisations like IE where members are as responsive and committed as you. However, to grow IE's volunteer management, we need reliable coordinators, members taking care of our different units and this is what these seven points highlight.

Do please get in touch with us if you think you can help out and coordinate one of the areas mentioned above. Send us an email or talk to us in Mechelen (and ideally pre-arrange a date and time). Let us share the joy of making IE bloom and grow.

Willem Derde and Thorsten Ludwig are the Managing Directors of Interpret Europe. Willem works for Herita, in Flanders (Belgium), while Thorsten runs Bildungswerk interpretation, in Germany. You can get in touch with them at wderde@interpret-europe.net and tludwig@interpret-europe.net.



IE Conference: the glue that unites us!

Each year we gather together to inspire one another with our experiences and examples of heritage interpretation from around the world. This year we will meet in Mechelen on 21-24 May and we are really looking forward to welcoming you!

You might already have heard that we have more study visits, presentations and workshops than ever before. But, we also have three fine keynote speakers for you too:

- Peter Debrine from UNESCO World Heritage Centre
- Mike Robinson from Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage
- Ignace Schops, President of the EUROPARC Federation.

Do you want to miss that?

Another reason might bring you to Mechelen this year: We think our conference theme 'Heritage interpretation – for the future for Europe' is more relevant than ever. We selected five subjects to work with because we think they are key to your work, to your personal involvement and to Europe. But, still, you may ask?

- What does heritage interpretation have to do with peace? Following the experience of Flanders Fields, where fierce battles took place during the First World War, we will discuss this on site at a workshop during our pre-conference tour.

- When does participation with your heritage community really lead to active citizenship? At the Burgundian Palace in Mechelen, where a new museum is planned, you'll be part of it.

- How can a winter garden teach us something on reference frameworks and what does this mean for learning experiences in our multicultural world today? You'll experience it in an old Ursulinen school.

- Are cultural and natural heritage two different subjects, with different target groups and ambitions? Use all your senses during an interpretive walk in the Hoge Kempen National Park – sustainability scrutinized.

- How is the refugee crisis related to heritage interpretation and human rights? At Kazerne Dossin, Memorial, Museum and Documentation Centre on Holocaust and Human rights, you'll find out.

So come to Mechelen and join our discussions on these topics and debate with us how interpretation could be the glue that unites us and enables our fellow citizens to team up and take action!

You'll find the full programme and an overview of the parallel sessions at: www.interpreteuropeconference.net/programme.

Please make sure you register for the conference by 6 May 2016. We are convinced this conference can contribute to the debate on our common future. Je suis Bruxelles and I know you are too. I'm looking forward to welcoming you to Mechelen in May!

Laila De Bruyne is Conference Manager of the Interpret Europe Conference 2016 and Event and Sponsoring Manager at Herita (Flanders Heritage Association), Belgium. You can get in touch with her at laila.debruyne@herita.be.

Art nouveau swallow,
winter garden
Photo: Laila De
Bruyne



Tracing out new paths for our communication

In January 2016, the IE communication team held a meeting in Austria. The main goal of the meeting was to define communication objectives and resources for the year 2016, focusing on the communication plan running up to the conference in May. As a result, a new list of goals and responsibilities was set up, to be distributed as tasks among the members.



*Dijana, Kaja, Markus and Katja at the communication team meeting in the Austrian Alps.
Photo: Thorsten Ludwig*

From 15 - 17. January 2016, the IE communication team held a meeting in Admont, Austria. The meeting was hosted by Markus Blank from the Gesäuse National Park, which kindly supported the team's endeavours by providing its conference room and technical equipment. Other participants were Thorsten Ludwig and Katja Winter from Germany and Kaja Antlejš and Dijana Pita da Costa from Slovenia.

The main objective of the meeting was (while keeping in mind two key strategic goals of IE for the period 2016-2020) to define communication objectives and resources for the year 2016 focusing on the communication plan running up to the conference in May.

The following tasks were discussed and defined:

- what other people are needed in the communication team and for which roles,
- corporate identity and corporate design,
- IE's existing communication channels and how to approach the new channels (such as social media),
- how to promote IE training and how to approach the target audiences.

The meeting's resolutions

During the meeting these tasks were attributed to the existing members of the communication team and remaining tasks and needs for personnel to carry them out were defined. Volunteers were identified for, and accepted the roles of, technical officer and social media editor. Meanwhile, candidates for the position of Editor-in-chief of the Newsletter and the Editor-in-Chief of Website are yet to be found.

As for the corporate design, it was agreed it is necessary to prepare a corporate design manual and strengthen the presence of the colour orange in the design. The tasks of optimizing the logo and preparing it in different versions, uploading the corporate colours and fonts to the cloud and uploading a PPT template were distributed.

The most time and energy was spent to define a corporate members initiative. Attracting companies to the conference and winning them as corporate members is crucial to the future of the network and also for increasing IE's income and for finding potential sponsors. Therefore three approaches to achieve this goal were discussed:

- to approach members to promote the initiative in their own countries with the help of a promotion kit.
- to focus on attracting companies especially from the following regions: Netherlands, Belgium and France.
- to develop a message tailored for companies to tell them about the value they get for attending the conference.

The tasks of collecting the addresses from companies and preparing the text for the initiative were distributed.

Internal communications were also discussed. The pros and cons of existing channels (our website and newsletter) were explored and the idea of spreading IE's presence to other channels, particularly social media was debated. The goal of this action would be to raise the awareness of the organization and its work and to possibly develop contact with new audiences. Tasks distributed included:

- the optimisation of the website's categories,
- creation of the pages on Facebook and LinkedIn and



In the library of the Admont Monastery
Photo: Thorsten Ludwig

- creating a template for sending html emails to the members.
- Due to limited resources it was decided that brief pieces of information/articles which can be archived on the website and therefore directly linked-to were preferable to a comprehensive quarterly newsletter pdf.

A considerable amount of time was also dedicated to the topic of the promotion of IE training and approaches to get closer to target audiences. New ideas came up. The first was to develop an online training course and the second, to organise regional interpretive trips to provide focus outside of the annual conference, with the purpose to further connect members, and to attract new members.

Tasks distributed were:

- creating a proposal for a pilot study trip,
- creating an IE Press kit and promotional material,
- finding a sponsor and
- focus on student population as one of the target audiences.

How to proceed?

As all members arrived to the meeting very well prepared, many ideas came up during the brainstorming. All the topics from the list were addressed, and a new list of goals and responsibilities to be distributed as tasks among the members was set up. As mentioned earlier, the website and newsletter need to be edited properly, thus, a member willing to dedicate him/herself in order to contribute to the mission of the organization is needed. If you are interested, contact: communication@interpret-europe.net.

Dijana Pita Costa is an archaeologist and a doctoral candidate in Heritage Studies in Ljubljana, Slovenia. You can get in contact with her via: dijanapitacosta@gmail.com.



Markus Blank
Austria

A novel meeting place for the IE training team

It was all peace and no war for the training team's first meeting near the battlefields of Austerlitz, where the team hatched exciting plans for a new range of IE training products.

Kaprálův mlýn, the scout education centre close to Brno (Czech Republic), was the ideal place for the IE training team to meet. The old mill (mlyn), is surrounded by magnificent nature and close enough to sites steeped in history, which makes it the perfect setting for IE's first international summer courses [<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/training/ie-summer-courses-2016.html>] for Certified Interpretive Guides (CIG) and for Certified Interpretive Guide Trainers (CIGT).

Training team at
Kaprálův mlýn
Photo: Markus Blank



The training team includes Valya Stergioti (Greece), Sandy Colvine (France), Evarist March (Spain), Michal Medek (Czech Republic) and Markus Blank (Austria) and its first task was to find the right places for the above training exercises. Historic places, like the battlefields of Austerlitz, which are part of the world-famous novel "War and Peace" by Leo Tolstoy, museums about the history of mankind, like the Anthropos Pavilion, the Spilberk Castle with its exhibition on kasematy (old prisons) and the various caves in the Moravian Karst landscape around Kaprálův mlýn are just some examples of places the training team visited to find the perfect spots for the upcoming training courses.



Training team at
Kapraluv mlyn
Photo: Markus Blank

The other task of this meeting was to think about a training strategy for Interpret Europe over the next few years. Building up membership numbers is one of Interpret Europe's major goals and training should also play its part in this. So, the training team came up with the following ideas:

- A one-day course for managers:

The aim of this course would be to contact site managers and convince them to send people to CIG courses. Furthermore, this would be an opportunity for IE to introduce managers to the notion and principles of interpretation so that they accept ideas and methods.

- A course for interpretive agents:

The focus of this course is convincing people about the value of interpretation

whilst also enhancing their communication skills to promote interpretation and gain support.

- Additional training modules based on needs and opportunities, e.g.

- o Interpretive writing
- o Live Interpretation
- o Museum guiding
- o New technologies and interpretation
- o Interpretive Hosts
- o Environmental Stewards
- o Media
- o Interpretive planning

Other important points to discuss were fundraising and establishing 'quality criteria for courses endorsed by IE'.

This very intense weekend filled with discussions, new ideas coupled with Markus' wine, sausage, endless cups of tea and sweet treats from our different countries culminated in a highly memorable car ride to make the waiting train at Brno station and get back home.

Markus Blank is member of the Supervisory Committee of Interpret Europe. He works for the Gesäuse National Park in Austria in the department of environmental education and interpretation. You can get in touch with him at markus.blank@nationalpark.co.at.



Cherry Blossom
Photo: Thorsten
Ludwig



Member Activities

Åsa Pokela
(Sweden)

Introducing wild Sweden - in boots or ballerinas?

What do you wear when exploring a Swedish forest - hiking boots or ballerina shoes? The typical Swedish outdoor-person dresses up in hiking boots, some kind of Gore-Tex clothing and probably has a backpack. That's pretty much the way I used to dress for work as a nature guide at a visitor centre in a protected forest area where I guide and help our visitors to enjoy and learn about Swedish nature.

Working as a nature guide means constantly evolving as a human being. New perspectives and horizons open up when meeting visitors from all kinds of backgrounds. I'll tell you about such an encounter that changed how I see of my role as a nature guide and what to wear when exploring a Swedish forest.



The bear hide
Photo: Agneta Arnesson
Westerdahl

I had been asked to guide a group of young women from Somalia, aged 15-20. They were refugees and lived in one of the larger towns not far from where I work. Their teachers wanted them to learn about the forest and to feel safe being there, so I had planned to take them on a short hike and to play some outdoor games in the forest. One beautiful day in May, I found myself face to face with twenty young women, totally different from myself, at least visually. They wore long skirts, hijabs, ballerina shoes and were clutching handbags. I remember thinking that they looked like lost exotic birds. Clouds of doubt began to appear above my head. Was this really a good idea? Long skirts and ballerina shoes? But, despite my doubts, into the forest we went. For two and a half hours these young Somali women followed me with great enthusiasm. They pulled up their skirts and climbed,

jumped, crawled and played their way through the forest. We looked at birds and plants, drank coffee in the sun and my doubts were proven utterly wrong.

New perspectives opened up for me that day and these young women taught me two important things. First, you can actually explore a Swedish forest perfectly well wearing a long skirt and ballerina shoes. Secondly, what signals do I, as a nature guide, send out when wearing my outdoor clothing? That nature is accessible to everyone? I don't think so. For me it has become more and more important to show that everyone can explore Swedish nature regardless of your background, or what you wear. I also think it's an issue of equality. Hiking boots and Gore-Tex clothes are expensive; not everyone can afford to buy them, but that shouldn't be an obstacle to enjoy nature. So, nowadays I wear jeans and sneakers when sharing and exploring the forest with our visitors.

Of course in really bad weather or on a long wilderness trek, hiking boots and outdoor clothing are probably best. But then again, there is always someone to prove you wrong. A friend of mine walked from Kebnekaise mountain station to the town of Nikkaluokta. That's a 19-kilometre trek in alpine countryside in the northernmost part of Sweden. Guess what she was wearing on her feet? A pair of ballerina shoes... That's quite a story in itself, but I'll tell you some other time.

*Siljansnes nature reserve
the meadow*
Photo: Ann-Sofie Lindin



Paul Hibberd
(UK)

*Below: Busy beavers at
Knapdale, and Interpretation
on the Beaver Detective
Trail.
Photos: Paul Hibberd*



*Below: Kylerhea Otter Hide
and Mull Eagle Watch
Photos: Paul Hibberd*



Nothing to see here: new guidance for interpreting wildlife

Forestry Commission Scotland has been working with Scottish Natural Heritage and interpretation consultant Susan Cross, to draw together some simple new guidelines to help anyone interpreting wildlife:

Know your audience

Although Scotland attracts many dedicated wildlife watchers, the majority of visitors watching wildlife are not experts. So it is really important not to overestimate existing knowledge about wildlife. We might need to tell visitors things which are obvious to experienced wildlife watchers. This is not 'dumbing down' our interpretation – just making it friendly and helpful.

So where is it?

Wildlife can be elusive; we cannot guarantee that visitors will see it. We realised that often the experience we offer is one of looking for wildlife rather than watching wildlife. This makes good interpretation even more important. Interestingly, visitors to the Scottish Beaver Trail and the Kylerhea Otter Hide told us they enjoyed their visits, even though they didn't see the wildlife. At the Beaver Trail site, we interpreted what visitors would definitely see – the work of the busy beavers. At Kylerhea, the interpretation helps visitors to know where to look, and what to look for. Good quality images have worked well for the many international visitors - there is no need to read English to understand what to look for.

Enjoy the journey

The process of discovering more about an animal's habitat and habits can actually be more engaging and enjoyable than just seeing some very obvious wildlife. So try to avoid a 'success or failure' approach to wildlife watching, and instead nurture this sense of discovery and an appreciation of the uncertainty involved. If you can do this, your visitors (and staff) may well have a more relaxing and pleasant time.

The full guidelines are available to download at:

www.snh.gov.uk/policy-and-guidance/heritage-interpretation/good-practice-guidelines - or just Google 'wildlife interpretation guidelines'.

Paul Hibberd is the Interpretation Officer for Forestry Commission Scotland, with a particular interest in wildlife watching. This article is based on a talk given to the Association for Heritage Interpretation 2015 conference in the UK. Contact him on paul.hibberd@forestry.gsi.gov.uk



What's Going On Elsewhere

Jonathon Eaton
(Albania)

*Engaging discussion on
interpretation principles,
Prizren:
Photo: Besart Dajçi*



*Sokol Belegu, a participant at
the 25th Regional Restoration
Camp, gets ready to film oral
histories in support of the in-
terpretation of the historic
fortress in Prizren, Kosovo.
Photo: Besart Dajçi*



How Interpretation Restores Relations

Cultural Heritage without Borders first developed the Regional Restoration Camps as a means of providing hands-on experience for young restorers and conservators of historic buildings. However, as the project developed, it became a means of restoring not only buildings but also relations — relations between the people of the oft-divided nations of the Western Balkans and relations between people and their heritage. In this process, interpretation is playing an increasingly important role, becoming an integral component of the camps, as well as a training platform in its own right.

It's a hot summer's day, but Arben and Milica don't notice. They're examining the wall in front of them - a structure made of ancient stones, shaped and placed skillfully by a craftsman long ago. As they focus on the wall and on the problem of restoring it, the fact that Arben is Albanian and Milica is Serbian hardly crosses their minds. From this moment on, they are colleagues in protecting and preserving heritage.

This is a fictional account of a scene that has played out in reality hundreds of times at the Regional Restoration Camps. Cultural Heritage without Borders started the camps in 2007 as a means of building ties among the countries of the Western Balkans and providing students and young professionals with practical experience in heritage conservation. Now in their ninth year, the camps

have grown from hosting a few students in Gjirokastra, Albania, to training a total of 652 participants from 26 countries at 6 locations across the Western Balkans. The intensive two-week programme of the camps involves morning lectures on topics related to heritage conservation, interpretation, management and the like, along with hands-on work on a restoration/conservation project in the afternoon.

At CHwB, we have come to realise that heritage conservation efforts must be accompanied by interpretation. Interpretation is crucial for helping people to discover the value of heritage and encouraging them to play a role in preserving it. Therefore, as the camps developed, interpretation slowly began to take on a larger and larger role. Under the guidance of Dr. Diana Walters, the interpretation component of the camps grew from a single lecture into a daylong workshop. During these workshop days, participants take a break from their other activities to practice interpreting their site for various audiences.

The feedback from participants was encouraging. They approached the interpretation workshop days energetically and produced some very creative interpretive solutions for the places where they were working. By the end of the activity, many of the participants wanted to dig deeper. We answered this need by holding the first Regional Restoration Camp focused entirely on heritage interpretation, which took place last autumn in Prizren, Kosovo. During this camp, participants were guided through the process of developing interpretive trails for the historic city of Prizren. As is the case with the conservation-related camps, the results of the Interpretation camp in Prizren are being used to support a real project, which will result in an interpretive trail for Prizren Fortress.

This year, CHwB is organising seven Regional Restoration Camps - a record number. These camps will focus on themes of building conservation, museum artefact conservation, historical arts and crafts, heritage management and, of course, interpretation. Every camp will contain an interpretation component, but the upcoming camp in Shkodra, Albania, to be held July 9-20, will focus entirely

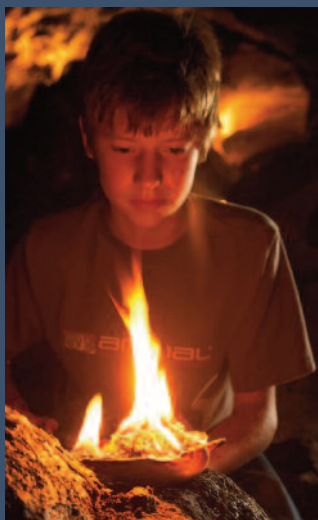


Kristina (from Serbia) and Alban (from Kosovo), at Rogljevo, Serbia work together to sketch out an interpretation panel during the interpretation workshop day. Photo: Nedi Petri

Participants at the 9th Regional Restoration Camp map out potential interpretation trails at Antigonea Archaeological Park in Albania. Photo: Anduena Dragovi

Katrin Hieke
(Germany)

Kents Cavern Prehistoric
Caves
Photo: Author



on the twin themes of heritage interpretation and management. Through these activities, we are highlighting interpretation as a critical component of overall heritage management and preservation efforts. Interpretation is how we make heritage relevant for people; it is how we reach our goal of both restoring heritage and building relations.

Jonathan Eaton works for Cultural Heritage without Borders-Albania (CHwB), based in Tirana (chwb.org/albania). Currently, he is involved with projects involving heritage interpretation, historical dialogue and the development of a regional museum network. You can contact him at jonathan.eaton@chwb.org.

To learn more about the CHwB Regional Restoration Camps, visit chwb.org/albania/rrc or email rrc@chwb.org.



Ice Age Europe - The Story Of A Europe Without Borders

Ice Age Europe is a young network of renowned archaeological sites of Ice Age heritage and affiliated museums or visitor centers. It tells the story of Ice Age people in Europe and our shared cultural heritage in space and time. The independent network was founded in 2013 to raise awareness about the conservation of Ice Age heritage, and to exchange best practice and foster collaboration in many different fields among its members - including research and science, management and governance, along with tourism as well as education.

The Ice Age is one of the most fascinating periods in human history. The foundations of our culture today were established over more than two million years and its relics are among the key testimonies of our cultural heritage and of human development. Some of the most important Ice Age heritage sites are located in Europe, where human remains and rock art have been revealed, as well as campsites and living areas containing many exceptional finds. The importance of the sites is reflected in the fact that an increasing number of them have been declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Today, the network consists of 20 members from Gibraltar to Croatia, including the Neanderthal Museum in Germany, Museo de Altamira in Spain and Pôle International de la Préhistoire in Dordogne, France.

Who were Neanderthals, and how are we related to them? How do bone flutes sound? What was it like to live in caves? And how do archaeologists find answers to all these questions when there are only so few traces left? Telling stories of times long past and explaining scientific research results to a broad audience is a shared challenge of the



Neanderthal Museum
Mr. 4%
Photo: Author

network members. Many programmes for all ages have been developed and the exchange of tips, tricks and ideas is an important part of the networking. Hugely popular are the hands-on activities and Stone Age Schools, where fire is made, spears are thrown, flint tools are carved or cave paintings replicated. At the Neanderthal Museum, a Neanderthal mannequin in modern business suit mingles with the museum visitors, often discovered only at a second glance, and a photo booth generates self-portraits of visitors morphed with Neanderthal features.

Yet what makes the network and its members truly unique and most fascinating, is the direct link to an archaeological site - from the Neander valley, where the name-giving Neanderthal bones have been found, to the caves with magnificent paintings in Spain and France. Here, visitors can immerse themselves in authentic surroundings and truly travel back in time. Wherever, for conservation reasons, a visit to the original sites is not possible, replicas have been created as close to the original as possible. Equally important are the landscapes that surround the sites.

These tell stories about hunters and gatherers, mammoth herds passing by and the many changes that led to the way Europe looks today. Where research is still ongoing, even archaeological digs can be observed.

To visibly connect the network members and to spark the interest, especially of young visitors, a Virtual Ice Age game was created, running on interactive touchscreen terminals at the member sites. It takes visitors on a tour through Ice Age Europe and Europe today on the throw of a dice. The game highlights the differences and similarities as well as the location of the most important Ice Age sites along the way. Visitors may also chat with other sites, and because of the many different languages involved, they can do so with the help of emoticons.

If you would like to know more about the network and its members, please visit www.ice-age-europe.eu.

Katrin Hieke is an archaeologist and museum professional and head of the Ice Age Europe Network Office. You can get in touch via office@ice-age-europe.eu.

Archäopark Vogelherd
Photo Marc Steinmetz



From Environmental Guides To Heritage Stewards

New strategy for Italian guides

In attempt to involve communities to take ownership of the Italian natural and cultural heritage, the richest in Europe, and working to spread Interpretation far beyond nature and parks, a new proposal for a national strategy was presented during a specific workshop at the assembly of AIGAE, the most important Italian professional association of environmental guides.

Coming from a memorandum of understanding between AIGAE and CURSA (University Consortium for the Socio-Economic Research and the Environment), it is the objective of this new strategy entitled "Heritage Stewardship" ("Custodi del Patrimonio" - in Italian) to include the heritage interpretation in the training of the environmental guides with the aim of improving this profession in valorising the huge Italian cultural and natural heritage.



A storyteller performing during the workshop
Photo: Angela Tavone

On March 12, in the charming though gloomy setting of the Majella National Park (Abruzzo, Central Italy), the workshop aimed to illustrate the multiple aspects of heritage interpretation, and how these can be used by the environmental guides to professionally improve their work. The themes presented investigated the history and the emotional suggestions of heritage interpretation, its basic communication techniques (such as TORE model, the creative writing etc.) and the use of 'storytelling' as a tool for improving the interpreter's performance. Case studies based in Italy were explored, where heritage interpretation has been used for managing natural parks, historical gardens and villas.

The workshop audience was very interested in the event and demonstrated to appreciate both these "small windows" on the heritage interpretation facets, and the presentation of the "Heritage Stewardship" strategy. This success of the workshop suggests that the time is ripe to design a specific training path dedicated to the professional world of environmental guides, as it was noted in an evaluation questionnaire distributed at the end of the workshop, participants wish to become better stewards of their cultural and natural heritage.

The event in Majella National Park was the first step of such a good future collaboration amongst AIGAE, CURSA and all the Italian protected areas that wish to promote the professional growing of heritage interpretation.

Angela Tavone works in the field of environmental education and interpretation as a member of CURSA team "Rete DNA" (Network for the Italian National Didactics for Environment) through specific training projects mostly carried out in Italian natural parks. If you wish, you can contact Angela here: angelatavone@hotmail.com

The crowded workshop audience
Photo: Angela Tavone



World of apps at the 2016 AIP Conference

The AIP conference sessions took place this year in Barcelona, focusing on the interesting and controversial issue of, "Heritage Interpretation in the app era". Various experts were there, discussing a range of topics.

Firstly, we saw how different applications are dominating, especially those designed for closed spaces, such as art museums, interpretation centres, castles and archaeological sites. The focus then turned to open spaces, especially natural areas.

Among the many applications used since they first appeared, we need to add video game technology and highly spectacular virtual reality techniques to things like map-ping.

It appears that new technology could follow the principles of Tilden, albeit with some limitations to their use in open spaces and for flora and fauna.

The biggest advantages of apps are:

- easy access to information and applications to interact with the general public in real-time, without the need of materials (maps, labels, etc.);
- new generations, born and raised on apps, using them to interact with the language and knowledge;
- the enjoyment they bring to exhibitions and events once they are over, or to see more elusive perspectives and dimensions, such as, for example, the different layers of paint in a painting, internal structures of objects, the passing of time, or how something was done;
- supplementing a live experience in many way, such as, for example, showing an altarpiece or original construction that no longer exists.

However, it also reveals some limitations too:

- the need for good network connections throughout a visit, or easy downloads and the importance of being user-friendly;
- the difficulty to create a good app isn't in the technology but ensuring they have good content. Many disappear quickly;
- being clear about how to show what makes something unique rather than just applying a standard method or technique;
- the limits of accessibility. Natural limitations exist for people with disabilities such as the blind or deaf, as well as for those with different abilities to understand the technology, or the content itself, such as the elderly;
- the need to assess if the tool (or app) is not the most important feature at the end of the experience, that the resources display and divert our attention only in terms of the technology used. This is especially relevant for a younger audience who has learned to use the technology.

The conference concluded with a field test in the Born Cultural Centre, where participants could test a new application and how suited it was in relation to the interpretive principles. It was an interesting meeting that opened up new perspectives on the use of technology in the world of interpretation.

Evarist March is Director of Naturalwalks, a company focusing on nature guiding in Catalonia and Spanish speaking countries East and West of the Atlantic. You can get in touch with him at info@naturalwalks.com.



“Kia ora!” from the 2016 NAI International Conference

“Tihei Mauri Ora – The Story Begins!” Through the lens of the indigenous perspective we found ourselves seeing with new eyes with each discussion and session experienced in New Zealand.



Above: Te Papa National Museum ceremonial hall with traditional Maori greeting
Below: Gallipoli exhibit
Photos: Jeffrey Aarnio

Te Papa marae or ceremonial hall.

Kia Ora, or Hello, and welcome from Wellington, New Zealand where the National Association for Interpretation (USA) held its 2016 International Conference from 3-7 April, in partnership with Interpret Network New Zealand. The conference theme was Tihei Mauri Ora, or The Story Begins. It focused on the diversity of culture and nature of this almost mystical group of islands and, more specifically, on its indigenous Maori heritage and living culture.

Entering the wonderful windy city of Wellington like any other tourist, we were completely unaware of the depth of the rich and vibrant Maori voice infused into the heartbeat of the city. The conference began with an indigenous forum of Pōwhiri, or Traditional Māori Welcome to Aotearoa New Zealand, held at the national Te Papa Museum. Joe Harawira, a renowned storyteller and Director of Strategic Partnerships at the Department of Conservation and as well as descendant of the Ngati Maniapoto, Ngai te Rangi and Ngati Awa, led the discussion on how to interpret indigenous heritage & cultures as they continue to evolve. Some issues highlighted include the utility of suggesting a larger, more inclusive global discussion of indigenous issues related to interpretation. This important discussion was followed by a traditional Haka (often seen as a warrior dance more widely known through the New Zealand national All Blacks rugby team) by Joe after lunch and a deeper explanation of the Maori culture with the coming together of guests (manuhiri) with hosts (tangata whenua) through song and traditional touching of noses with forehead, in the

There was a clear emphasis on cultural interpretation at this conference that was reinforced with the second keynote speaker, Puawai Cairns, Curator of Contemporary Culture. It was very inspiring to learn of the importance of ensuring that the indigenous voice be present and interpreted on labels or subtitled in video content. This was most evident when discussing the temporary exhibit on Gallipoli, the New Zealand involvement in the April 1915 battle in Turkey that is today commemorated by Australians and New Zealanders every 25 April as ANZAC Day. The Gallipoli exhibit used 1.5 life-size people with the most technologically accurate depictions to tell the story of six Kiwis during the war. This was perhaps the most effective use of props to support the telling of stories of war and tragedy done anywhere.

Although only about 130 participants came to Wellington for the 2016 International Conference, this was a very successfully organised and implemented event. It culminated in a global alliance of interpreters' forum that hopefully took this great idea forward, with more to be revealed in the near future. A post-conference tour of the South Island included whale watching, wine tasting and some really spectacular landscape of natural beauty, ranging from Mount Cook and fur seals, to cultural revival among Christchurch's post-earthquake devastation.

Wining, whaling and wowing in Windy Welly – Bravo to all who organised this great conference!



Tonia Herndon, Volunteer coordinator of the San Diego Zoo, will graduate in May 2016 from the University of San Diego with a Masters in Nonprofit Management. Jeffrey Aarnio is Deputy Director of Interpretation & Visitor Services with the American Battle Monuments Commission in Paris, France.

Mt Cook visitor centre
showing some of the
Maori gods
Photo: Jeffrey Aarnio



Detail of stained glass
panel, Segovia
Photo: Kev Theaker



Education and Training

Ronia Anastasiadou
(Greece)

*Discovering a Roman villa in
central Athens*
Photo: Ronia Anastasiadou



Becoming part of Interpretive Guiding.

I was looking forward to it.

The CIG course was very inspiring, practical, demanding, pleasant, interesting, and useful. We learnt a lot and had fun at the same time! For me it was a breakthrough for one more reason: It offered some theory to my practice! One of the special features of this experience was evaluating the course itself. This isn't usual in Greece (!) and no one expected any follow-up. But... surprises happen all the time!

One of the comments commonly heard at the end of the course was that we need this training to continue, expand and develop. And guess what ? It did! When the invitation appeared on my screen I was thrilled!

Hey, they did it! They listened to our "request". We will meet again. Refresh. Different ways to see and do things

This time the schedule was different. It lasted the best part of two packed days (exhausting!!) but was run at a relaxed pace. First, one of us used all the knowledge from the course to do an Interpretive Walk through Athens central "national" park. During the walk we were able to remember all the tools, the principles, the themes and the terms we had learnt.

Then there was time for inspiration, such as different ways of guiding (by the volunteer guides of the "This is my Athens" initiative), different ways of feeling, by using all our senses (at the "Shapereader" art project), different ways of approaching environmental and social issues through games, and ways to get in touch with children (at the innovative kindergarten "παιχνιδαγωγείο"). "Different ways to

see and do things" could have been the title of our meeting.

We experienced how you can describe things to blind people, how you can guide them through paths and at the same time we realized how powerful and detailed touching can be. We grasped how "personal" a guided tour can get, how many different aspects of life it can include and how it is another way to make guiding a full and memorable experience even when you omit historical events, names or dates. We even became children for a while. We had the chance to think about alternative ways of teaching kids, having the verb "play" as our basic rule.

This 2-day workshop was built up to inspire and not to "teach". But, after all, isn't that the real way to learn?

The conclusion

We met again! The connection between us, the friendships and the nice memories help our job. We met with guides from all over Greece with the same ideas about guiding and a common communication code. We exchanged and supplemented each other's thoughts.

We revised all the things we had learnt months ago. "Revising is the mother of learning" says a Greek proverb.

We felt, realized, understood that the Interpret Europe CIG course wasn't just another course but a different approach that will be with us... forever! It is not something static that only happens once, but an improving and long-lasting process that can go on as long as we want it to.

We met interesting and funny people doing their job differently yet successfully - people with ideas close to our own. Guiding children and guiding tourists is not that different!

Discovering the fun side of art
Photo: Ronia Anastasiadou





Discovering the sense of touching at Shapereader art project

Photo: Athina Tsekoura

The final evaluation was one of my favourite parts! We talked about what we did, what we liked and what we didn't. We made comments, expressed feelings and thoughts about what we would have done differently this time, and what we wish to do next time.

We all agreed in one thing: Once is never enough! We want more, even if this means we have to wait till next year!

So... I am still looking forward!

A note: Last year 2 CIG courses took place in Greece. This "reunion workshop" was open to all those who took part in them. We met in Athens to make it easier for everyone to attend. Our visits and activities took advantage of the qualities

and availability that each one of us could offer. That way the cost of the meeting was kept to a minimum and its preparation and planning was a team effort: OUR TEAM's effort!



Congratulations to our newly certified guides

Despina Alexiou, Greece
 Rodopi (Ronina) Anastasiadou, Greece
 David Fornés Mas, Spain
 Héctor Galera, Spain
 Penelope Gkini, Greece
 Georgia Kanellopoulou, Greece
 Sofia Stara, Greece
 Athina Tsekoura, Greece
 Triantafilia Tsiataltziali, Greece
 Elissavet Tzovani, Greece
 Paris Zografos, Greece

Do you want to learn how to make heritage tell its stories?

Do you want to improve your practical interpretive skills in front of an audience?
 Do you want to train other heritage guides?

If so, the answer is just one click away.

Interpret Europe's training team is preparing its first International course for guides and guide trainers. The two courses will run in parallel from 13 to 20 August, at Brno, Czech Republic – in the heart of Europe. Click here [<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/training/ie-summer-courses-2016.html>]



Forsythia
 Photo:
 Thorsten Ludwig

Funding

Dijana Pita Costa
(Slovenia)

Are you in charge of a castle? Someone's looking for you...

Eurodite is preparing INNOCASTLE, an Interreg project proposal to revitalise historic castles, manors and gardens. If you manage one of them and are considering regional development, this might be your opportunity.

The INNOCASTLE Project seeks to involve partners from different European countries in knowledge exchange about preservation, but also developing the cultural and tourism potential of magical sites such as castles, manors and gardens. It intends to address the challenge of how to adapt these heritage sites in today's world to secure a sustainable future rooted in their own stories. Public authorities, public law bodies or private non-profit organisations are eligible as partners and if you are interested, please read the abstract at Eurodite [www.eurodite.com], or get in touch with deroo@eurodite.eu or vandrunen@eurodite.eu.

Dijana Pita Costa is an archaeologist and a doctoral candidate in Heritage Studies in Ljubljana, Slovenia. You can get in contact with her via: dijanapitacosta@gmail.com.

Announcements

Welcome to Our New Members

Organisation members

Abbaye aux Dames, France
Cairngorms National Park Authority, UK
De Bardijnen, Belgium
Hohe Tauern National Park Tyrol, Austria
Karavansera, Belgium
Museum Geelvinck, Netherlands

Corporate members

mimesis.architecten, Belgium
Karavansera, Belgium
OnSpotStory, Sweden
Past Pleasures, UK

Individual members

Rodopi (Ronja) Anastasiadou, Greece
John Boeren, Netherlands
Noel Buttigieg, Malta
Annegien Canoy, Netherlands
Willem Derde, Belgium
Wendy Deyell, Belgium
Mirna Draženović, Croatia
Anne Fletcher, UK
Daniela Gamper, UK
Christopher Garthe, Germany
Ana Gasparovic, Croatia
Marc van Hasselt, Netherlands
Jürgen Heinritz, Germany
Saskia Hornikx, Netherlands
Marc Jacobs, Belgium
Ivana Jagić, Croatia

Margitta Jendrzewski, Germany
 Krum Kaishev, Bulgaria
 Georgia Kanellopoulou, Greece
 Anne Ketz, USA
 David Ketz, USA
 Iva Klarić, Croatia
 Marc Kocken, Netherlands
 Aggeliki Konstantinidi, Greece
 Petr Kulíšek, Czech Republic
 Magdalena Kuś, Poland
 Greet Luypaert, Belgium
 Athanasios Manologlou, Greece
 Brian McDonald, Netherlands
 Irina Elena Mereoiu, Romania
 Erin Meyer, Belgium
 Eric Mielants, USA
 Elisabeth Nübel-Reidelbach, Germany
 Karla Oder, Slovenia
 Åsa Pokela, Sweden
 Ladislav Ptáček, Czech Republic
 Ruth Rubin, Finland
 Ans Rossy, Belgium
 Tomáš Růžička, Czech Republic
 Matthias Schlote, Germany
 Elisabeth Selvaggi, Italy
 Ana Sladojevic, Serbia
 Sofia Stara, Greece
 An Stofferis, France
 Rachel Sutherland, Belgium
 Johan ter Beek, Netherlands
 Jana Urbancikova, Czech Republic
 Daniel Vanden Broecke, Belgium
 Monique van den Dries, Netherlands
 Helena Vičič, Slovenia
 Ondrej Vitek, Czech Republic
 Lydia Vroegindeweij, Netherlands
 Lucy Walker, UK
 Sašo Weldt, Slovenia
 Paris Zografos, Greece
 Tina Zoubou, Greece



Welcome to our new volunteers

Valya Stergioti
 Photo: Colvine



Valya Stergioti

is our new IE Training Coordinator. She is a freelance interpretive trainer and planner and founded Alli Meria (meaning the “Other Side”) to promote her-itage interpretation in her country. Valya lives with Giorgos Catsadorakis and their two sons in Volos, Greece.

“When I was young, I loved stories and tales of all kinds. Later, I learned that telling stories is even more fascinating than just listening to them. By now, I have understood that helping others to create and communicate their own stories is what I love the most.

As Interpret Europe’s training coordinator, together with a great training team, my goal is to help Interpret Europe offer a range of inspiring and effective training courses to its members, so they can create and communicate their stories too, whatever they may be.”

Upcoming Events

Upcoming events

21.05.- 24.05.2016: Interpret Europe Conference 2016, [www.interpreteuropeconference.net]

Mechelen (Belgium)

12.08.- 20.08.2016: IE certification courses for guides and guide trainers, [www.interpret-europe.net/top/training/ie-summer-courses-2016.html]

Brno (Czech Republic)

29.08.- 02.09.2016: Eurorural Conference 2016 – European Countryside, [www.arl-net.de/events/5th-moravian-conference-rural-research-eurorural-16-european-countryside-and-its-perception]

Brno (Czech Republic)

05.09 - 09.09.2016: IMTAL Europe Conference 'Wake the past with a kiss', [<http://imtal-europe.net/events/2016-09-05/imtal-european-regional-conference-2016.html>]

Micheldorf (Austria)

Watch out for CHwB Conservation and Interpretation Camps

[<http://chwb.org/albania/building-conservation-interpretation>] at Cultural Heritage without Borders.



On behalf of Interpret Europe, this newsletter has been produced by Kaja Antlej (Slovenia), Anna Carlemalm (Sweden), Elena Kragulj (Bahrain), Dara Lynne Lenehan (Ireland), Verena Perko (Slovenia), Abby McSherry (Ireland) and Kev Theaker (UK).

Any news, projects, invitations, thoughts or adventures in interpretation that you want to share? Send us a report and some photos for the next newsletter.

Please follow the guidelines for newsletter authors at the Interpret Europe website [www.interpret-europe.net/top/news.html]

**Deadline for contributions:
Friday 31 May 2016**

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