

Fall/Winter 1992  
Diamond Jubilee

# Interpretation



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Our 75th Anniversary is almost over. It's been a good year, I feel. This issue of *Interpretation* reflects upon the past, the present, and the future of NPS Interpretation. The articles have meaning, of course, beyond our Anniversary Year. They were compiled by Andy Kardos of Harpers Ferry Center and Lea Murray of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Division of Interpretation, co-coordinators for this issue.

As you read these articles and as we go into a new year together, remember what good things happened for NPS Interpretation this year:

- The first year of the NPS educational outreach program known as Parks as Classrooms completed its first year, and began a second cycle. More than 80 educational outreach programs were funded through Parks as Classrooms in two years. The NPS is back in the business of educational outreach.
- The NPS began the difficult but necessary process of looking at its workforce, and changing its structure to enable various disciplines, including NPS Interpretation, to upgrade positions and recognize professional work.
- The NPS 75th Anniversary Symposium in Vail called strongly for increased interpretive and educational outreach services throughout the System. It validated concepts from *The Interpretive Challenge* (1988) by including them in the Symposium recommendations.
- The US Congress, Office of Management and Budget, Department of the Interior, and National Park Service seriously considered requests for increased front-line interpretive and educational outreach services in the 1993 Fiscal Year Budget. The 75th Anniversary Symposium recommendations were cited often in justifying such requests.
- The National Park Foundation refocused its mission to support NPS interpretation, education, volunteerism, and employee development. It began soliciting grant requests from parks in these four areas.
- Over 200 NPS Interpreters joined 700 others at this year's National Association for Interpretation National Workshop in Vail. A month later, 25 more NPS interpreters gathered in Honolulu with nearly 500 delegates from 46 countries to discuss worldwide interpretation and its importance to the travel and tourist industry at the Third Global Congress of Heritage Interpretation International.
- Wilson Hunter, Jr, from Canyon de Chelly NM was awarded the tenth annual Freeman Tilden Award during the NAI workshop. All ten national Tilden Recipients (1982-1991) gathered for this event, and recorded their thoughts about the importance of NPS Interpretation for a future training video.

As we begin our next 75 years together, may we grow, improve, and excel in our interpretation for visitors and students throughout the System. Happy Anniversary.

**Michael D Watson**  
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# Regional Information Survey

## Alaska

The waves of the 75th Anniversary did reach the outer shores of the National Park system. The 75th Anniversary events in Alaska were under-reported but significant. In addition to events in parks that ranged from community parades to quiet barbecues we created a milk carton panel for Anchorage that celebrated our birthday and a limited edition art print sold through the Alaska National History Association. A lecture series was hosted in Anchorage with special presentations on the NPS. We participated in national 75th celebrations by donating a cultural art object for the August 25, 1991 auction in Washington, DC. Several employees received awards at these ceremonies. Finally, we sent nine NPS employees to the 75th Symposium in Vail. The recommendations from the working sessions of this gathering will guide us into the next century. The reality of the work of the Symposium will be measured in this decade.

## Pacific Northwest

A major cultural event, SAPATQ'AYN: An Exhibition, Twentieth Century Nez Perce Artists, is taking place November 16, 1991,—January 12, 1992. The exhibit features an excellent art book on the show and is available from the park. In other recent activities, a Skills I Course was held in Port Townsend, Washington, with three agencies attending. On the horizon are the planning for new visitor centers at John Day Fossil Beds NM, North Cascades NP and Crater Lake NP. Leslie Spurlock has joined the Regional Office of Interpretation as the Interpretive Assistant and Kathy Fuller returns to the office after a summer detail at Craters of the Moon and Ranger Skills.

## Midwest

The Region's 75th Anniversary celebration was successful because of the creativity and hard work of people in every area. Many parks sponsored photo contests, developed publications, presented special exhibits and film shows, hosted open houses and picnics, and even featured Mather's favorite, rhubarb pie! Without slighting any park, here are some unique programs and activities from MWR parks: Hoover's historical conference and "The President Outdoors" exhibit; celebrations honoring Indiana Dunes 25th anniversary, Wilson Creek's 130th battle anniversary and St Croix's joint celebration of Minnesota's State Parks 100th anniversary; the return of Perry's replica flagship *Niagara* to Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial; and Ozark's Diamond Art Fair. Thanks to Superintendent Secretary Debbie Wisdom, local businesses donated over \$6,000 in prizes and nearly 2,100 1-4th graders from twenty area schools submitted entries. The community support and good public relations from all these efforts should pay great dividends for years to come. Thanks!

## Western

This year, we put on a very successful and well attended education training class, Developing NPS Education Programs, which was held on August 4-9 in Alamo, California. The course was coordinated by Rick Smith, Interpretive Specialist for our division. The agenda included teachers from local schools who talked about how they feel about education programs and curriculum and what they would like to see the Park Service do. The course also included two trips to "onsite" education programs where the participants observed the programs being presented and then participated in the programs. Many helpful handouts on education programs were distributed to the course participants and new ideas and creative ways to start/update a program were shared.

## Rocky Mountain

Bill Sontag, formerly Rocky Mountain Regional Chief of Interpretation, and for the past year the NPS 75th Anniversary Coordinator, has recently been selected as the Superintendent of Chamizal National Memorial. For his nearly ten years of distinguished service and contributions to NPS interpretation, Bill was selected by his peers in October to receive the Sequoia Award.

Another Rocky Mountain Region interpreter recently recognized by her peers for the Sequoia Award was Linda Olson of Grand Teton National Park. She was recognized for her outstanding work on the Interpretive Skills Team process as well as other contributions to NPS interpretation.

As a centerpiece of the NPS 75th anniversary, the National Park Ranger Museum in the Norris Soldier Station at Yellowstone National Park was dedicated August 25. This museum was made possible by a \$250,000 donation from Conoco, as well as the creative talents and hard work of park staff, HFC staff, National Park Foundation staff, and many others throughout the NPS, including the leadership of Bill Sontag.

## Southwest

Planning for an interagency visitor center for Grants, New Mexico, has heightened recognition of the nature of Native American consultation. It is a practice that calls for recognition of cross-cultural dialogue far beyond that stated in NPS-6. Consultation, in the Western sense, doesn't work. In the Western manner, planners expect to sit with total strangers and expect immediate expression of feelings and immediate decisions. But patience and courtesy are essential for Native American consultation to be effective. There must be repeated visits before individuals will feel comfortable in sharing their thoughts. Planners must go to the parties involved—not expect the groups to travel to distant meeting places. Changes in the planning staff may require bridges of trust to be rebuilt through renewed consultation. It's a process colored by 500 years of sometimes traumatic events between cultures.

## Service Center Report

### North Atlantic

### Mid-Atlantic

### Denver

Among the numerous activities planned in MAR parks to commemorate the Service's 75th Anniversary: ASIS celebrated its own 25th anniversary as well at a September 21 groundbreaking for the new Barrier Island Visitor Center, and other island developments. Former Secretary Udal was invited. A mobile exhibit (nautical theme float) carried messages to parades, conventions, boat shows, and other public gatherings in MD and VA. Rangers visited area schools to discuss the significance of the anniversaries. BOWA held a July 20 Farm Festival Day; an outreach program to local schools, including a puppet show and a costumed demonstration; and a TPIA project on August 11 featured major fence building and tree screening projects. VAFO featured an article highlighting the role of the Park Ranger over 75 years. A film festival featured the history, accomplishments and challenges of the Service. An August 16 open house exhibit on NPS and park accomplishments was held.

In November, the Interpretive Planning course was held, for the first time, at the Denver Service Center. This course was a joint effort of Mather Employee Development Center, Harpers Ferry Center and the Denver Service Center. This reflects the opening of the DSC section of the Interpretive Planning Division, the inclusion of interpretive concerns up front in the planning process, and the increased cooperation between the two service centers. Veterans of previous courses would recognize several changes. This course is now more than media planning. Trainees consider basic questions of visitor experience: What are the park purposes and significance? What are the key experiences and stories to tell? What alternative futures meet the congressional mandate, executive policies, resource characteristics, political realities and public concerns? Trainees also work with architects, landscape architects and resource specialists in preparation for participating in GMP and DCP teams. Is this a great course or what?

### Southeast

### National Capital

### Harpers Ferry

Thousands of visitors to Southeast Region parks enjoyed a full spectrum of 75th anniversary activities throughout 1991. Two prominent events were the Mammoth Cave NP Rededication Weekend and the Great Smoky Mountains NP Employee and Alumni Association National Reunion. Mammoth Cave celebrated its 50th anniversary as well, featuring a weekend of traditional Kentucky folkways. The event in the Great Smokies was in recognition of the Association's formation in that park in 1955. In addition to scores of visitor center receptions and speeches, activities ranged from a performance on the family piano at Carl Sandburg Home NHS to the formal recognition of the transfer of responsibility for Big South Fork NRRRA from the US Army Corps of Engineers to the NPS. Our thanks go out to those who made all the Diamond Anniversary events happen.

The National Capital Region has a "new" park, Monocacy National Battlefield. Although it was authorized in 1934, land acquisition did not begin until the early 1980s, and no visitor facilities were available until July 13, 1991, when a visitor contact station opened in a portion of the historic Gambrel Mill in time for the 127th anniversary of the battle. Within minutes of the erection of the NPS entrance sign leading to the contact station, visitors began to arrive. Now through interpretation, visitors can begin to discern the often invisible cultural landscape of the Civil War battlefield overlying the more visible cultural landscape of pastoral scenes.

Two other NCR parks with well-known cultural landscapes were proud recipients on the 1991 Potomac Heritage Award. Both C&O Canal NHP and Harpers Ferry NHP can be justly proud of the accomplishments of their interpretive staffs. The award carries with it funding for an extra summer seasonal in 1992.

HFC was pleased to have two respected and admired employees chosen as outstanding employees at the 75th anniversary celebrations. G Bruce Hopkins has a distinguished career in the Publications Division. As Chief of the Branch of Natural History, Bruce has been in the forefront of producing quality folders and handbooks for more than two decades. His success has been attributed to his sense of style and his engaging personality which has been described as "having the wisdom of Lincoln and the patience of St Francis." Angelynne Reeler, the versatile secretary in the Division of Interpretive Planning, was recognized for her professional skills and special work for the Center and the community. Angee has been active in organizing such events as Black History programs, our annual toy and clothing drives, and distributing NPS video programs to nearby nursing homes.



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As promised in my article in the last issue, I assembled a work group in early Fall to address Interpretive Work Force issues. The work group is made up of nine members and represents a variety and diversity of interpretive backgrounds. The members are: Jane Schmidt, Chief of Interpretation at Fort Necessity NB; Russ Smith, Regional Chief of Interpretation in the Mid-Atlantic Region; Larry Waldron, Chief of Interpretation at Sequoia and Kings Canyon NP; Caroline Keinath, Chief of Interpretation at Adams NHS; Joe Zarky, Chief of Interpretation at Badlands NP; Barb Maynes, Interpreter at Olympic NP; Gail Hazelwood, Chief of Interpretation at Martin Luther King Jr. NHS; Reid Miller, Interpreter at Agate Fossil Beds NM; and myself. We met here with representatives of WASO and Department Personnel and OPM and spent three days working through what turned out to be some very complex issues. I am currently attempting to synthesize what we discussed and put it into a form that will be distributed for review and comment early in 1992.

I am currently looking for people who are interested in serving as informal sounding boards to review draft proposals, and other documents relating to this project, over the next six months or so. If you would like to participate in that role, please contact me directly here in WASO.