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interpreters
information
exchange

IN TOUCH

produced
by and for
nps people
concerned with
interpretive
and visitor
services

August 1974



Memorandum

To: ALL NPS INTERPRETERS

From: Alan Mebane, Chief Park Interpreter, Yellowstone National Park

Subject: Membership in Professional Association

We say that interpretation is an art and a profession, but it seems to me that the Service does not encourage much professional interchange with interpreters other than those in the National Park Service. In fact, sometimes we seem to encourage parochial and inbred thinking. There is much to be gained and shared by getting together with practicing interpreters who work for Federal, State, Municipal, and private organizations, as well as universities. Students interested in interpretation are very stimulating with their ideas and skills.

Specifically, I think many more of us should belong to a professional interpreters organization where this interchange takes place. There are among others, two excellent organizations of this type, the Association of Interpretive Naturalists, and the Western Interpreters Association. I think it would be appropriate for the Service to endorse and encourage membership in such organizations. We are probably the largest employer of interpreters, but the National Park Service is poorly represented at the national and regional meetings compared to the U.S. Forest Service and other organizations. I think we are missing a good bet by being too "in-house" at times.



R. Alan Mebane

Right on, Al! The Division of Interpretation enthusiastically supports and endorses your suggestion. Thanks for stating it so well.

Regional Chief of Interpretation. He will be glad to help you and we should all benefit from the increased participation and professional interchange.

All you interpreters out there who are interested in increasing your professional contacts and associations - join and participate in the professional interpreters organization of your choice. If you need information on the various professional interpreters organizations available to you, check with your

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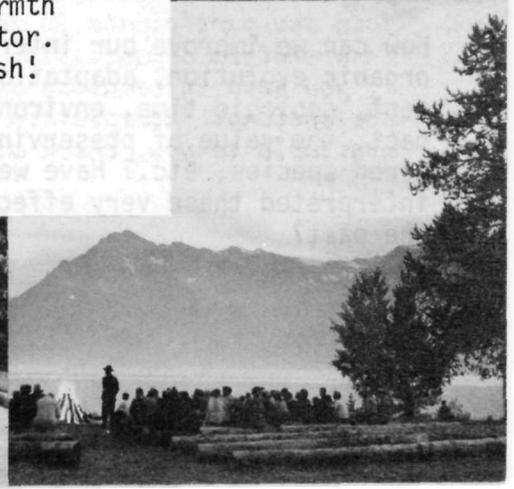
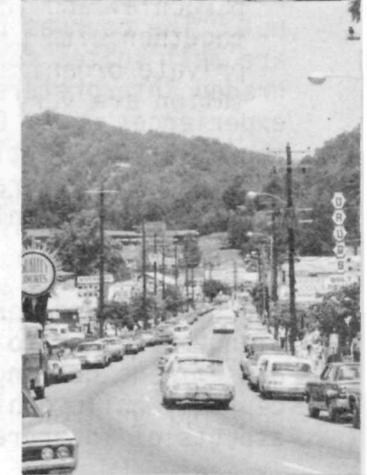
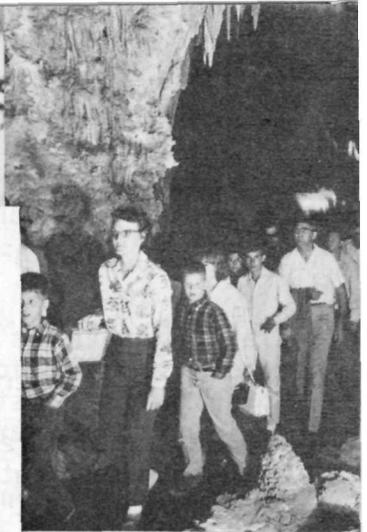
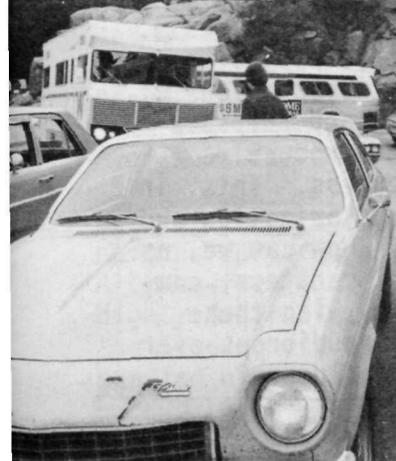
It never seems to fail. The buildup of enthusiasm among park interpreters as a new season starts, the shaping and smoothing of those first slightly ragged programs, the peaking to a high plateau of interest and quality of our presentations which usually lasts through early August in the summer-season parks. Then it happens. The end-of-the-season doldrums set in.

Maybe it's the same questions that you've answered a thousand times at the information desk. Maybe the talk or tour has become all too familiar. Or perhaps your thoughts are turning toward "back home." Whatever the reason, too many interpretive programs begin to take on a worn look: slides in the automatic program becoming faded, the self-guiding leaflet boxes less regularly attended, formal programs beginning to sound canned, the interpreter behind the information desk appearing weary.

If any of this sounds familiar, it's time to take stock. Remember, visitors have travelled just as far to reach your park in late August as they did back in June. To these later-comers your area remains a very special place - possibly it's their first visit to any park - and they deserve the best you can give.

Look for ways to recapture the early summer edge by continuing to vary your presentations or even overhauling them, by resolving to maintain a fresh appearance to the park's interpretive media, and, above all, by consciously striving to project an attitude that conveys warmth and concern for each and every visitor. Let's end this season with a flourish!

Bill Dunmire



INTERPRETIVE TRAINING - DOES IT GO FAR ENOUGH?

Training continues to be a hot item of concern among National Park Service interpreters. Most agree that the training centers are doing a good job - as far as they go. But the question is often asked, "Are we going far enough with interpretive training?" I think not. The courses presently available are well suited for the newer lower-graded interpreters: up to 2-3 years experience; up to GS-7-9 levels. But there is very little, if anything, offered at the "graduate level" for the experienced interpreter at the GS-11-13 levels.

One step toward correcting this deficiency would be to develop a program of seminars dealing in-depth with conceptual, philosophical, and managerial aspects of interpretation. For example:

Interpretive Media, Their Optimum Utilization

Some media are more effective than others for communicating certain information, concepts and values. Which media are best suited for which messages? Do we ask for exhibits when we should be asking for films? Do we attempt to use films when publications would do the job better? Do we select the proper medium for the intended audience?

Interpretation of Complex and Abstract Subjects

How can we improve our interpretation of organic evolution, adaptation to environment, geologic time, environmental impact, the value of preserving an endangered species, etc.? Have we really interpreted these very effectively in the past?

Executive Management of Cooperating Associations

Most of us are not accountants or bookkeepers, much less auditors. So, how can we interpreters who serve as executive secretaries of the larger associations best achieve effective managerial control of programs and assests without becoming excessively entanged in day-to-day operational detail? When business management and sales operations are properly delegated, what are the critical checkpoints for the executive secretary to monitor?

Effective Communications with Antagonistic Audiences

Interpreters and managers frequently communicate with persons and groups whose views are in opposition to those of the National Park Service, i. e., timber, mineral, and grazing interests, proponents of dams or more extensive park developments, etc. Discussions of our respective interests and purposes too often lead to counterproductive confrontation and bitterness. This, in turn, leads to further polarization and unrelenting commitment. How can we, as interpreters and as park managers, communicate more effectively with these "opponents" and with the audiences over which they have strong influence?

These are but a few of the subjects which come first to the writer's mind that would make good subject material for concentrated seminar sessions. No doubt the reader can come up with many more which will be even better.

Seminars of this type will be most

effective if participation is limited; perhaps no more than 10 trainees. Facilitators should be of the very highest professional status from universities, private business, other agencies, and from within the National Park Service. These seminars should be conducted in parks where the subject problem is especially relevant and can be readily observed. The stilted classroom atmosphere of lecturer and listener must be avoided. Freewheeling discussion should be the name of the game.

Another training opportunity of outstanding value to interpreters would be simply the provision for official visits to other parks to observe various interpretive programs in action, and discuss them with their colleagues on their own home grounds. The visiting interpreters might even get personally involved in their host's program.

At the present time, about the only way an interpreter can get this valuable experience is to take annual leave and go at personal expense. Not many of us are fully free to use our leave or personal finances this way. Official time and training funds should be made available for such a program.

Both of these proposed programs should be considered on a Service-wide basis. A cross-fertilization of the Regions is highly desirable. This suggests that the funding and coordination should be handled by the Washington Office - perhaps Mather Training Center.

Doug Evans
Interpretive Specialist
Southwest Regional Office

Doug has focused on a subject, and a need, that is presently of great concern to both Interpreters and Managers. Tom Thomas, Chief of the Branch of Training, is working with the Training Center staffs and the Division of Interpretation toward developing ways to meet the need for advanced interpretation training and also career developing thru interpretation training. He would appreciate hearing from any of you who have ideas or suggestions which could be applied to this project. Write directly to Tom Thomas, Chief of the Branch of Training, National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C. 20240.

ON THE OUTSIDE

ARE WE HELPING OR HINDERING THE HANDICAPPED?

In an effort to show a new idea which comes from outside the NPS, I would like to report on the recent "Interpretation - Many Things to Many People" conference at Asilomar. This conference was cosponsored by the Western Interpreters Association, and the Association of Interpretive Naturalists. One session in particular stands out in my mind: the special needs of the handicapped.

Ms. Jacque Beechel of the Univ. of Washington College of Forest Resources has been studying the facilities available to handicapped persons across the nation. Several conclusions have significance for the NPS.

FACILITIES SHOULD BE DESIGNED WITH AND BY THE HANDICAPPED

FACILITIES SHOULD NOT BE SEPARATE BUT SHOULD BE USED AND USEFUL FOR ALL VISITORS

BRAILLE SIGNS ARE A WASTE OF MONEY

THE PROBLEMS OF THE DEAF HAVE BEEN IGNORED

Too often facilities have been designed by non-handicapped persons, and thus we have not been aware of their needs and wants (such as not wanting ropes for guidance; dislike of cement trails; needing less than an 8% grade for wheelchairs; needing signs and

water fountains at wheelchair height.) We have often put trails and facilities for the handicapped off in a special area, not recognizing that these people need to be part of society rather than isolated as they are most of their lives; if a trail will not be useful to all persons - and require use of all senses by everyone - then it will not be used by the handicapped either.

Braille signs are generally a waste of money, because 5 to 10 percent of the legally blind can read braille; most legally blind can read large print. Over half the blind people are over age 65, and they can't use braille because they lack finger sensitivity and have a high fatigue level.

Our ignorance of sign language - even to say "hello" - has meant that the deaf often are left out of interpretation. Their word vocabulary is small, and thus our written publications are often of little use to them; nearly 30 percent of the deaf are illiterate. Communication is the thing they need most, and the majority of deaf persons depend on sign language; this is due to the fact that only 26 percent of most speech can be lip read accurately. Those persons who have translated interpretive talks into sign language have learned that it is tremendously appreciated. It is also very tiring, physically

and mentally; thus, interpretive talks must be cut and completely re-thought in order to get major points across both rapidly and in very simple words.

As a stimulus, I would like to describe a project being done in Illinois - Giant City State Park outside of Carbondale. The naturalist decided he should have a trail for the blind, and he had some ideas of what it should contain: cement trail, rope for safety, and where there were few hazards. He decided that a local blind group could give him some assistance, and asked for advice. What he was told was: don't put up a rope; use several different kinds of trail material for interest and variety and warning; put the trail along the edge of a 50 foot bluff. The only safety element the blind wanted or needed was a "kick plate" about 4 inches high on either side of the trail. They designed a trail using cement, cinders, bark chips, pebbles, etc., and steel plates before such changes in the trail as bridges, etc. The trail is used by both handicapped and other visitors. The interpretation began as naturalist-guided walks, describing the vegetation changes in terms of the birds which inhabit the specialized cover areas. In time the blind began leading their own walks, having learned bird calls in special class. The naturalist is now planning on having several of the blind lead guided walks for sighted visitor!

We have much to learn from others outside the NPS, and perhaps services for the handicapped is the area of greatest need. If others of you are interested in learning sign language, please get in touch with me for some suggested material, or contact the American

Foundation for the Blind (or your local library, county health department, etc.)

Marion J. Durham (Mrs.)
Administrative Clerk
Walnut Canyon National Monument
Route 1, Box 790
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

In relation to Marion's comments, we are including a paragraph from a memo written by John Hunter, Supt., of Stones River National Battlefield concerning his program for blind persons.

"In our communications with the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped we have learned that only about 90 persons out of 6400 blind residents of Tennessee can read braille and those were persons who were born blind and had the opportunity to attend school. A much more used service is their cassette library in which the blind can listen to the materials on tape decks. This would be a much more effective means for those in the Service to serve this segment of our society."

* * * * *

This section of In Touch features information about what is happening in the field of interpretation outside the service that might be of interest to N.P.S. interpreters. Keep your eyes and ears open for good things that are being done outside and keep your fellow interpreters informed through this section.

COOPERATING ASSOCIATIONS



1974 BIENNIAL CONFERENCE - COOPERATING
ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES
DENVER -- NOVEMBER 11 - 15

The official announcement for the Executive Secretaries Conference has been mailed and tentative reservations are being returned. If you have not received an invitation, contact the Coordinator's office immediately. Firm reservation forms will be mailed September 1.

The response to the Conference has been overwhelmingly favorable and we are looking forward to a great attendance. Previous conferences have not had a 100% association representation. This time we are shooting for at least one person from each association. There are a number of program features that will interest every association. Here are a few of the highlights:

Role of the Regional Cooperating
Association Coordinator

Relationship with Concessioners

Representatives from Concessions

Representative from Concession
Management Office

Role of the Business Manager

Role of the Board Directors

Role of the Executive Secretary

Activity Standards

Guidelines -- Accounting Procedures

Quality Printing

Field trip to Printing Plant

Films

Publications and the Interpretive
Prospectus

Division of Publications, NPS

Publications Design

Several Denver Design firms

NPS Design Office

Marketing

Book marketing consultant

Denver store managers

Publishing house representative

Shoplifting

Small store operations

Manager, Denver Art Museum Store

New Sales Aids

Insurance for associations
 Sale of Living History products
 IRS and non-profit associations
 Inventory control
 Association loans
 Associations and taped recorded tours
 Selection and training of Association employees
 Recycled paper
 Publications Competition Awards Banquet

As you can see this is a full program. Some subjects have never before been discussed at these meetings. Everyone is important and we will use as much time as is needed. The Conference is scheduled for five days but every effort will be made to adjourn the afternoon of the 15th to enable you to return home by Friday night.

If you are located in a park or association with limited travel funds, you are urged to consider this as an important part of your future program and to give serious consideration to attending. This is your conference, tailored to your needs. Suggestions are invited.

PUBLICATIONS COMPETITION

Official announcement has been made on the Cooperating Associations Publications Competition and entries are now being submitted. Reception has been most favorable. We are hoping for a great response from all associations. If you have not received a copy of the competition rules and entry form, contact

the Coordinator's office. Deadline for all entries is September 30. Awards will be presented at the Executive Secretaries Conference in November.

COLORING BOOKS

One of the most popular sales items in National Parks is children's coloring books. Most of those now being sold are association produced. Several are outstanding but for the most part they leave something to be desired. (This is a personal observation for which you may take me to task. J.M.) This office has been looking for publishers in this area and we have found two that are particularly good. After discussions and viewing their publications we would like to pass on the following addresses. There is every evidence that both publishers make a sincere effort to present their art accurately, one of the most important criteria. Both already have subjects in stock that apply to National Parks, and both will tailor coloring books to fit your needs. You should deal directly with each, but this office will be delighted to get the ball rolling for you.

Mrs. Ellen Knill
 Bellerophon Books
 153 Steuart St.
 San Francisco, California 94105

Mr. Gregory T. Frazier
 Troubadour Press
 126 Folsom St.
 San Francisco, California 94105



SCHEDULE B. AID TO NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

RECOMMENDATION

Total

Integrative Program....	An excellent book to assist you in the management of association financial affairs is FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING GUIDE FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS by Malvern J. Gross, Jr., C.P.A., and partner in Price Waterhouse and Co. Some of the topics discussed are as follows:
Developmental Education	
Special Activities.....	
Library Activities.....	
Research Activities....	
Press Publications.....	
Fund Donations.....	
Equipment Donations....	
Other Donations.....	
Scholarships in Other Or	
Admin. Aid to Servicewi	Accounting Distinctions Between Nonprofit and Commercial Organizations
Admin. Aid to the Super	Cash Versus Accrual Basis Accounting
Other.....	Fix Assets -- Depreciation
TOTALS.....	Cash Basis Financial Statements

SCHEDE

NET WORTH--End of Prior

Net Profits From Operat
(Loss).....

Donations Received Duri
Adjustments Increasing

TOTAL.....

The Importance of Budgeting

Federal Tax and Compliance Require-
ments

Federal Tax Forms

State Compliance Requirements

LESS: Donations to Nati
*Special Purpose F
Adjustments Decre:

Consult your local library or the
publisher:

The Ronald Press Co.
79 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10016

NET WORTH END OF YEAR.

*Expenditures not classifiable as exp. National Park
Service, such as expenditure of donated funds pursuant to the donor's
wishes. Such expenditures should be fully explained in a footnote to
Schedule C - Statement of Net Worth.

DANGER IN THE NATIONAL PARKS

All official NPS publications are now carrying a safety message. "Danger in the National Parks" is of great concern to the Director, as it is to all of us. When possible, and where appropriate, Cooperating Association publications should carry a similar safety message. It is suggested that all associations check with parks for which they are publishing material. Appropriate messages should be provided by the park staff who will be in a position to advise on the "highly visible" placement of such information in future books and folders.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Last issue of In Touch we gave you an address for Mockingbird Books in Atlanta, Georgia. On the very day of publication we received notice of a change of address. Please note the following:

Mr. John Egle
Mockingbird Books
P. O. Box 110
Covington, Georgia phone: 404-787-3484

EDITING BY DESIGN

If you are an independent association actively participating in the design of your own publications you should be aware of a new book published with just you in mind. Although this office encourages you to seek outside design assistance and professional skills, you should make every effort to familiarize yourself with at least the basics of good publications design. EDITING BY DESIGN, by Jan (pronounced Yahn) White, published by R. R. Bowker, is an excellent book well worth a \$17.50 investment. We feel that it is so well done and so valuable for your needs that we plan to use it as a textbook for the design seminar at the Executive Secretaries Conference and for all future training sessions. As a matter of fact, we have purchased two copies for your immediate use, which puts us in the "lending library" business. Both copies are available to all associations on a first come--first served 30-day booking basis. Let us hear from you.

Incidentally, we will have a review copy and promotional literature on this at the conference in Denver.



FORUM



LIVING HISTORIANS REPLY

We have received several responses to Bob Utley's article on Living History published in the June issue of In Touch. The following four statements are representative of the general feelings expressed.

We, the Seasonals of Fort Davis NHS, are flabbergasted with some of the comments made about living history. We are not Park Historians, but we do have differences of opinion and strongly feel that some of the statements made here need to be placed in their proper perspective. We are really concerned about Assistant Director Utley's remarks involving the use of original equipment, reconstruction, and appropriateness.

We will not attempt to correct Mr. Utley who has a right to his own opinion, but as interpreters who are in contact with people daily, we have certainly made some observations during our tenure in the Park Service. We are teachers, undergraduate students, and graduate students. Because our experience ranges from one to three years as living history interpreters, we are therefore qualified to voice our opinion in the matter. We hope that our comments, like Utley's will be published in something similar to his write-up on living history, so that everyone can relate to the differences of opinion, as we don't really think that the majority of living history interpreters, or more important the "Visiting Public", would agree with Mr. Utley's comments.

To perpetuate the memory of the frontier soldier, the buildings, uniforms, or others occurrences in our history books, there are many precautions and actions that we must undertake. Mr. Utley states, "Original weapons, uniforms, and artifacts should not be used in demonstrations, for that will inevitably cause wear and deterioration and increase the danger of loss through accident or theft". True, wear and deterioration will occur if certain items are mishandled, but we don't believe this frequently occurs. For example, we at Fort Davis are trained by the Park Historian to clean and keep up with our weapons. In other words, we are not issued weapons as if they were toys but as dangerous and real weapons that have to be cared for. Believe me, we would like nothing better than to use duplicate equipment, but we simply do not have sufficient sources from which to purchase such items. If we are going to have a good living history program, we need to use some of the original equipment until further sources for purchasing or making replicas are made available.

The second topic that needs to be clarified is reconstruction. Mr. Utley states, "But I am opposed to most full scale reconstructions of buildings or structures". We believe that reconstruction is a necessity for the safety of many buildings. If buildings or walls are not patched up, they will collapse, and we will lose many historic features. We believe that many people want to observe

buildings of the past, whether original or in duplicate form. They want to see it as a reality not solely in pictures. We do not believe that when people are told, "This is not a genuine article", that they will leave feeling that we are wrong. We feel, that if funds are available, we should proceed with reconstructions because people can better relate to this actual material evidence of our history.

The third topic is appropriateness. We believe that it is appropriate for living history interpreters to show visitors what life was really like in the past, be it positive or negative in present day standards. For example, here in Ft. Davis, we attempt to convey the two sides of the story involving the Indians and soldiers during the "Indian Wars." We show the feelings and attitudes of both people toward each other, for history is not just the major events of the past but also largely includes the day to day doings of the average persons. Granted, the major events are important but only when seen in context of the daily life. People want to find out about these things mainly because we are curious human beings who want to find out how people lived in the past. While Lee's surrender to Grant was very significant and should be interpreted, how significant would it have been without the years of suffering of the average persons of the country? At our site, we try to portray, not sensationalize, the life of the common man and show his labors.

To reiterate what we have said at the beginning, we are not trying to correct Mr. Utley. We are merely interested in putting things in their proper perspectives by showing that living history, as far as we are concerned, is not a Hollywood type production but rather an honest

attempt to recreate an atmosphere of a period of our history that is gone forever.

Billy Garcia
Fidel Granado
Andy Klingelhofer
Seasonal Interpreters

Note - Fort Davis Supt., Derek Hambly also submitted comments on Mr. Utley's article. While reinforcing much of what his seasonal employees said, he also added a few specific points of his own. For the sake of space we have not included his comments here, but have sent them directly to Mr. Utley.

The June issue of In Touch contained a Forum editorial by Dr. Utley which I had anticipated for several weeks. An associate who had seen the piece prior to publication warned that it spoke of Living History with something less than adulation, and it seemed likely that a warm debate would result. Having been deeply involved in Living History during an evolution from the felt-and-plastic days to our current frenzied rush toward homogeneity, I was prepared to find myself disagreeing with Dr. Utley with some frequency and enthusiasm. It just didn't work out that way at all.

His editorial spoke the truth as I see it. My only complaint is that he is perhaps naive in believing that "we probably cannot be seriously faulted" in the area of accuracy in objective manifestations. A glance at the most recent ENP&MA annual report reveals some embarrassingly casual costumes; it is particularly frightening to consider that the parks and ENP&MA were

each proud enough of the results to publish them on a national basis. A glance at the parks themselves might well be even more painful in many cases.

Living History has matured, and will continue to increase in effectiveness as we master the art. The job of park historians has been made much more difficult on an immediate scale, but much more successful with the visitors, where it counts, as a result of our efforts in Living History. Adherence to the contents, and particularly the spirit, of Dr. Utley's essay will augur well for our future.

Robert K. Krick
Recidivist

As "Living History" seasonals at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park we very much enjoyed Mr. Robert M. Utley's observations on living history in the June issue of *In Touch*. A subject of particular interest was Mr. Utley's observation that living history should not detract from the visitors' "understanding and appreciation of the momentous significance" which surrounds our National Historical Parks. This "significance" coupled, if we may borrow from Frank Barnes, with the "relevance" of the event to each visitor is why we are very proud to be interpreters in the Living History program at Appomattox.

The significant event associated with Appomattox Court House National Historical Park is simply, and yet profoundly, the reunion of our nation at the end of the Civil War. But what does that mean? Is it enough to say that in that building (a reconstruction) Generals Lee and

Grant signed a paper that for all practical purposes ended the American Civil War? Or as interpreters should we seek to illuminate the meaning of that lifeless statement in a way that would help each visitor find personal identification and meaning in what happened at Appomattox.

Our Living History program at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park is structured around the interpretation of the surrender. Upon entering the village visitors are given a pamphlet explaining that during their visit they will encounter park personnel in period costumes, and that these costumed people will answer questions as though the time was the summer of 1865. In our Living History program you will find no historical artifacts in use other than the reproduction clothing of the period. There is no cannon firing at 11:30, 1:30 and 3:30 nor will you hear a single musket fired. What you will hear are visitors discussing the events of 100 years ago with people out of time.

In order to have a program that is pertinent to all visitors we know you must have Living History personnel who are knowledgeable of the park story and who sincerely desire to portray, with dignity, the events of the time in question. While our program is still in the developmental stage, we think that some degree of success has been achieved, due largely to the qualifications of the seasonals (two history teachers, two college students majoring in history and an elderly lady who has lived in the area all her life).

With our five Living History characters (an ex-Confederate soldier, a Union soldier, a freedman, a lawyer, and an elderly village lady) we offer the visitor a wide range of the social, political and economic viewpoints of the period we portray. This gives our visi-

tors the opportunity to gain insight into events of the past through contact with people who "lived" those events. The visitor actually creates his own Living History program by selecting the Living History characters with whom he will talk and by the questions he asks of them. Thus, each visitor has the opportunity to explore the events of Appomattox on his own terms and to gain a new or strengthened awareness of the significance of these events as they apply to his own life.

As Mr. Utley notes, history cannot be recreated. We exclude "offensive sounds, odors, dirt, gore and human misery" and, as he points out, would we really want to include these elements in park interpretation? We might not be able to recreate the gut fear of a young boy going into battle, or want to inflict on our visitors the stench of a uniform worn for several months, but we can at least, evoke the emotions, attitudes and human experiences of the people who made history happen, such as in our American Civil War.

Our "Living Historians" at Appomattox believe that it is not a recreation of the sounds, the smells or even the artifacts and costumes of passing history that, in themselves, give meaning to places and events. Rather, that meaning will best be found and understood in terms of the people who were at a special place at a special time in history. What they thought and believed in is more important than what they wore or how they smelled.

The common element of history and interpretation is people, which is what a well-conceived living history program is all about. And using living people to evoke the past seems as valid a method of interpretation as a publication, a film or a museum exhibit. Al-

though Mr. Utley discusses Living History as mostly doing or using things, such as craft demonstrations or military activities, we think that demonstrations as an end in themselves make only a very limited, and sometimes inappropriate, use of a much broader and more challenging medium of interpretation. By allowing the visitor at Appomattox to visit with and get to know his peers of another era, we feel that he can truly find personal significance in "this is where our country reunited."

Harold Howard
George Morris

Hooray hurrah huzza and other shouts of pure unrestrained joy. Bob Utley has at last taken a hard look at living history and carefully dissected the whole concept, putting words to thoughts rattling around the Service. Oh right on, write on!

And having personally committed every sin mentioned, I feel qualified to agree with him and add a few random comments. "Living history" is but one of several bandwagons upon which the Service has leaped with gay abandon. Fortunately, through the presence of some mysterious modicum of sagacity, many of the living history programs have evolved to a level of appropriate quality. Unfortunately, this has often come only after the expenditure of time, treasure and irreplaceable resources. As future bandwagons arrive, we should slow them down and study them a bit before climbing aboard.

I am personally convinced that we still need areas in the Service that allow

visitors the freedom and privacy necessary to arrive at their own conclusions. If an area is in ruins; it is utter stupidity to believe that it can be "brought back to life" through the introduction of a tape recording or a bunch of people in costume. Must we adopt the premise that all visitors are incapable of comprehension unless we first get their attention with a two-by-four laid smartly across the bridge of the nose? Perhaps they'd prefer to walk with ghosts in silence for a change. We run the risk of losing the individual identity of our historical areas. Must I be forced to see the same uniforms and hear the same music in forts from the Mexican border to Canada? If these places are all the same, why do we have so many of them and not just one?

The number of small area superintendents who will willingly hand the reins of interpretation to their paid interpreters can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. Their names should be engraved in gold and their voices heard. Personal glory is impossible to prove, totally understandable, and yet ... Who can blame the superintendent who thinks "I've got to do something that will draw attention to my area and justify my existence"? We all do it, but it begins a process that too often leads in directions away from park objectives. As we rationalize our way through alterations of the dog-and-phony show we lose sight of the dubious justification for its establishment. It then becomes an objective unto itself on a plane equal to or higher than the original purpose of the park.

Interpreters must learn to develop quality programs in keeping with Utley's Theme, to defend these programs, to listen to constructive criticism and be flexible, and to resist the introduction of inade-

quate or inappropriate living history regardless of the level from which it emanates.

Nicholas J. Bleser
Tumacacori National Monument

* * * * *

WHY HAVE INTERPRETERS?

Most interpreters have an excellent intuitive philosophy of why the resource should be interpreted. However, difficulty is sometimes encountered when it is attempted to explain the rationale-for-existence of an interpretive program to a trainee or to one outside of the profession. Various justifications of some value have been offered such as: "Fulfilling a need to inform the visitor of the reason for preserving this particular property"; or "A need to educate the visitor". I suggest that it is desirable to base the interpreter's function on a more fundamental philosophy.

The modern interpreter of the National Park Service should recognize that he or she is a member of the leading recreation-oriented organization in existence. As such, the interpreter is charged with providing a recreational experience to the public that is not only compatible to the resource, but is enjoyable from the viewpoint of the visitor. The visitor's enjoyment of a site is heightened by an increased knowledge of the resource. That is, the more one knows of the significance of the historical events, natural features or what-

ever the dominant theme of the particular park may be, the more enjoyment he will derive from his park experience. For example, how many of us can match the excitement of an archeologist examining a newly discovered prehistoric trail network at Chaco Canyon; a Civil War military buff as he retraces an important skirmish of the Battle of Vicksburg; or the enjoyment experienced by a scholar of plant succession and climax species as he visits Muir Woods. Their specific knowledge allows these people to perceive these particular phenomena to a greater depth of enjoyment and satisfaction.

The challenge is set for the interpreter. Most visitors have a limited time frame that can be spent in the park and usually do not have a commitment to serious academic study of the area. The interpreter must be selective in the choice of information to be present and creating in the planning of the optimum method of delivery so that the reception of the information by the park visitor is, in itself, enjoyable and entertaining.

Gerald Swofford
Vicksburg, NMP

Glen Snyder, Visual Information Specialist for the Division of Federal, State and Private Liaison, recently attended an interpretation course at Mather in which a "total immersion" interpretive swamp walk in Everglades National Park was discussed in detail. Having never participated in such a walk, but possessing a lively imagination, Glen began to wonder what would happen to an interpreter assigned to give such a walk for a whole season. His curiosity turned to concern(!?) resulting in this pictorial warning to interpreters contemplating extended periods of "total immersion."



"He muttered something about interpretation immersing the whole person in the feelings of his surroundings."

RAP UP



Say Ranger, looking for something new in the interpretive game? How about art? Now hold on! Before you blast me for departing from the traditional, answer a question. Have you heard of Ray Harm, Don R. Eckelberry, Charles Harper, Richard Evans Younger, Charles Frace, Anne Ophelia Dowden, Arthur Singer, William Zimmerman, and Guy Coheleach? If you have, you know that art does have a place in the National Parks interpretive programs.

These people are the naturalists of the art world, and what artists they are! We know because during April and May, their work was on display in our visitor center at Great Falls Park, Virginia, a unit of National Capital Parks. The visitor to the park was treated to an exhibition of 50 framed, limited-edition collector prints of various wildlife subjects.

Based on sales (over 2,500 dollars worth of prints were sold through the local Parks and History Association) and based on visitor comments such as: "fantastic," "wonderful exhibit," "excellent," and more, the program was a great success.

The success of the program can be attributed to good publicity, to good art, to a VIP reception where National Park Service and the Interior Department officials conservation groups, and government officials met and talked with Ray Harm (one of the nation's best-known wildlife artists), and to a weekend of lectures open to the public by Mr. Harm.

Benefits of such a program are many. The casual visitor is treated to an excellent exhibit, and exposed to an art form he would not otherwise know or appreciate. The special interest visitor - the collector, and the artist - sees a display of some of the best wildlife art in the country. Many people are given an opportunity to meet and talk with an outstanding nationally known artist. An environmental message, the beauty of nature, is expressed by the art. A potentially new audience is reached and the artist who is interested in viewing the print as an art form is exposed to the park. Your local cooperating association is benefited through sales. And last, but not least, the program can be planned for your park at little cost.

Are you interested? Do as we did and contact the Frame House Gallery, Louisville, Kentucky. All you need is a willingness to expand your program offerings, a visitor center to display prints, and an auditorium for a speaker. Frame House will do the rest.

Ronald A. Wilson
Supervisory Ranger
Great Falls Park, Virginia

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A possible source of authentic 1860's friction primers has been located if a sufficient number is ordered. If your area has need for such an item in quantity please contact Chief Interpreter, Sandra Hellickson, Richmond National Battlefield Park.

PARK SERVICE REVIVAL OF TENT CHAUTAUQUA

As a vehicle for popular celebration of the birth of Herbert Hoover 100 years ago this summer, tent Chautauqua will be revived here for three days. An attempt will be made to merge period flavor--circa 1925--with a "here and now" reality as far as the performing arts is concerned. Chautauqua in its tent version was the brainchild of a Cedar Rapids, Iowa, man by the name of Keith Vawter and it was eminently successful in rural America. It uniquely blended popular entertainment of the day with less familiar performing arts and mixed the whole brew with American hoopla. Many prominent Americans spoke at Chautauqua (William Jennings Bryan was most popular in Iowa) and Herbert Hoover was one of these. Although the tent circuit version was not seen until 1904, Chautauqua itself had its start near Jamestown, New York in 1874 and the larger movement celebrates its own centennial this summer.

We have twenty performing groups appearing--all as volunteers--and the dispersion and heterogeneity of the programming represents the sixty year past format of a typical Redpath-Vawter Chautauqua. Two professors of speech are appearing as the Chautauquans--interpretive readers--and through oral drama will recount the "thrill of it all". Other performers include (1) professional and amateur theater troupes doing period drama and Shakespeare, (2) a concert pianist, (3) a concert basso, (4) several choral presentations, (5) NASA astronaut speaker, (6) Air Force concert band, (7) University of Iowa kilty band, (8) Junior Chautauqua complete with tell-me-a-story lady and Children's theater, (9) aerial derring-do vintage 1925, (10) Kalona, Iowa Bell Ringers, (11) Classical ballet on stage in the Hindu idiom, and much more.

The entire environment of the 200 x 80 performing tent and the three field art exhibits in their respective small tents will be kept circa 1925. The tent site was once the old Cedar County Fair grounds.

We hope for acceptance of revived Chautauqua here by the National Park Service with the ongoing assistance of the National Endowment for the Arts. If so, it can become an annual dimension of a performing arts interpretive venture--a permanent and unique undertaking in the interpretive-public affairs marriage that is vitally needed in many parks. And all with the risk of accusation of a P.T. Barnum approach to our profession.

George Davidson
Hoover Centennial Coordinator
Park Historian

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BEWARE OF ANIMALS

Most park signs in Japan, of course, are in the Japanese language. Now and then, however, one appears in English, with often amusing results. Assistant Director Bob Utley saw this one in the famed Deer Park at Nara:

CAUTION

Everybody; Take care of hind! It is the season Fawn is born about this time. It may be the case, if you approach him, his mother deer being full of maternal love gives you a kick with her forefeet.

* * * * *

CURATOR'S CORNER

THE CONSERVATOR

A conservator is a person who is trained and skilled at performing the tasks necessary to prolong the physical and aesthetic life of objects of artistic, historical and cultural importance.

Historically, he was called a restorer. But as the scientific knowledge of materials and their behavior increased, the restorers job changed. The importance of a controlled environment for the objects became apparent. Careful selection of the materials used in treating the objects became necessary. The use of "reversible" materials - materials which can be removed without harming the object - became an important factor. Scientific methods of treatment and analyses were developed. The restorer changed from artisan to artisan-scientist, and the word conservator was used to better describe his skills.

Today, the traditional apprenticeship method of training conservators is being replaced by academic training with internships. New York University started such a program in 1960 when they offered a diploma to students who had completed a 4 year program. In 1970 Oberlin and Cooperstown, N. Y., followed with a 2 year program leading to a masters degree in conservation. Conservators are having to specialize i. e., paintings, paper, textiles, etc. to keep abreast in their field. Paper conservators have taken the first step in "licensing". They must pass an exam and have five years experience in their field to qualify. Here at Harpers Ferry Center the Division of Museum Services employs 7 conservators with specialties in paintings, paper, metals, furniture, ethnological materials, textiles and archeological and excavated materials.

We are here to help you care for and maintain your collections and perform work on those items needing it.

The conservators will perform two types of treatment on your objects. First we will "stabilize" it. That is, perform any tasks necessary to maintain it and prolong its life. If it is to be used in your study collection we will stop there. Second, if the item is to go on exhibit, we will perform any tasks necessary to restore the appearance of the object, using carefully selected "reversible" materials. Restoration is not done routinely because it is time consuming and does not necessarily benefit the object. Careful records and photographs are made so a historian studying the object will know original areas from restored.

To get our assistance does not require any paper work. Just call Museum Services at (304)535-6371, ext. 352, and someone there will steer you in the right direction. Mr. Bob Olsen, Park Support, will aid you in getting the proper supplies for care and storage of your collections, and Herb Martin can help you design better storage areas as well as recognize and improve problems in the storage you now have.

You may also receive training yourself in care, handling and storage of your collections through the Curatorial Methods course offered each Fall at Mather Training Center. It is also possible for a limited number of people to come to the center with some of their objects and work along with a conservator. The Division Chief can discuss this matter with you and arrange for such training detail.

We don't expect to turn you all into conservators; we are having enough trouble keeping abreast ourselves and

it is our full time job. We do hope we can increase your awareness so you will be able to judge what you can do and when to come to us for help. Preserving our historic artifacts is our legal responsibility under many statutes including the National Museum Act of 1962 and our moral responsibility to future generations.

Fonda Randell

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DAY IN COURT

If you accept the assumption that children love to play-act different roles, then it is easy to see why students visiting Fort Smith National Historic Site enjoy "acting out" a courtroom scene. The judge's bench, jury chairs, witness stand, and other courtroom furniture making up the courtroom environment is a strong lure to the students. To be a student on a field trip at one moment and suddenly be asked to be a judge sitting at Judge Issac C. Parker's bench the next moment is a monumental transition, a case of mini-future shock. But children are quick to adapt and immediately the student-judge manages to walk to the bench in a judicial manner, radiating "dignified" airs appropriate to the new role. There is status attached to the other courtroom roles but the judge's role is the most coveted.

Before any roles are filled, a short discussion of the duties and qualifications of each role is conducted. It is generally agreed that judges should be fair, impartial, and well-trained in law; that jurors should be intelligent and observant; that lawyers should be intelligent, articulate, and well-trained in law; and

that the witnesses should be honest. Once all the roles are filled, the "trial" begins by discussing the functions of each participant in the courtroom process. The key idea toward which the discussion is nudged is the realization that a trial is a process which depends on the collective efforts of many people. Most students are surprised that the jury, not the judge, renders the verdict in the case. Another point emphasized is the pre-verdict status of the defendant; too often students assume that defendants are criminals during the trial. Another assumption made by students generally is the feeling that defendants' right are not too important, an outgrowth of the low esteem with which defendants are regarded. Given the hypothetical case of their own false arrest and subsequent trial, the defendant's rights become popular.

Although no trial is really taking place, the student-jurors insist on rendering a verdict; never has a student-jury exonerated a student-defendant. This courtroom process generates many interesting and varied questions regarding law and legal procedure. Hopefully, the process has opened minds to the "fact" that laws and legal procedure are evolving as society shifts its attitudes toward what constitutes a just and safe society.

The major advantage of the courtroom process is that the students have, for a limited time, "gotten out of their own identities" and experienced the world from a different perspective. To have "gone" to jail, stood on a reconstructed gallows, and sat in court is to have been exposed to three very different perspectives in a short time.

Contrary to frontier mythology, Judge Parker was interested in penal reform

based largely on education. He felt that the lack of education was a primary cause in a person becoming a criminal. One can only assume that Judge Parker would heartily endorse this new use of his courtroom today.

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One idea we are in the process of working with is collecting brochures (about 20 from each park involved) and slides (about 5 from each park involved) in order to put together a program on the Bicentennial areas of the NPS for our visitors. I'm sure this is not unique, but it's surprising how few of these we are familiar with and this goes for our own employees as well as the visitors. Most of us could probably name several of the Civil War parks but coming up with Bicentennial parks is a far different story. We would most likely run out of names before we ran out of fingers to count them on.

John L. Schippleck
Lehman Caves National Monument

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The Southwest Regional office recently circulated to all regional offices a manuscript, written by David M. Brugge, Museum Coordinator for the Navajo Lands Group, dealing with the subject of Interpretation and Minority Groups. Their cover memo reads ----"Attached is an extremely interesting and well developed manuscript treating with interpretation as it relates to various minority groups. Copies will be distributed to our seasonals at the upcoming training sessions in the Southwest Region in June. Navajo Lands Group suggested that this also be considered

for publication in a near future issue of In Touch, and I heartily concur. This along with Bill Brown's article in the first issue of In Touch, provides excellent guidelines for the Interpreter."

The manuscript is too long to be included in its entirety in In Touch, but we are including the last half, which sums up Dave's thoughts. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the complete manuscript, contact your Regional Chief of Interpretation.

Our national ideals emphasize both integration and tolerance of cultural and racial pluralism. Some nations have emphasized one or the other, usually with the disadvantages that either policy may have for minority groups. Whether we as a nation can find a workable compromise between the two policies in such a way that nobody needs feel discriminated against because of his cultural heritage (in either religious or "ethic" terms) or his biological ancestry still seems uncertain at times, but in view of the great racial and cultural diversity of our country and the problems this diversity necessarily brings, the effort to achieve solutions is not only worth making, but very much needed.

The essential problem in choosing between integration and pluralism is that of the conflict between individual rights and group needs, whether the "group" is viewed as the minority group, the nation, or even the world as a whole. The individual who wishes to transcend whatever might be the limitations of his group membership should be free to do so, but those who wish to preserve and develop a tradition that they feel is valuable should also have the right to do so. An ability to produce a system that will

accommodate both aspirations should be one of our national aims and Park Service interpretive programs can contribute to the advancement of this aim. This is particularly true for areas in which other ways of life are a subject of the Interpretive program. Areas that deal with prehistory, history, or cultures that still exist should be aware of their opportunities and of their problems.

Interpretive personnel should first of all devote time to learning as much as possible about the culture or cultures they find as subject matter, whether this be the culture of mid-19th century Anglo-Americans, a present-day Indian tribe or a prehistoric group whose name will never be known. At the same time it is important to consider what is known or postulated about the culture in terms of general anthropological concepts and in human terms. It is often necessary to present customs, past or present, that will conflict strongly with the values of the audience.

An Interpreter's first goal should be to impart accurate factual knowledge. His second goal should be to find ways to transmit this knowledge that lead to an appreciation of why the people of a particular culture live the way they do and the humanistic implications of his story. This is even more important than the first goal, but can not be accomplished without the first.

In the past the vast majority of visitors to parks were white Christians. A park interpreter could often get away with a presentation that included some ridicule or derogatory attitudes toward other cultures. The diversity of park visitors is increasing, however, and the level of understanding among them is improving as well. The problems encountered today

in trying to provide a program that will meet the needs of the new audience, not merely trying to avoid offending some, but to help them relate better to themselves and their fellow Homo sapiens, require some real work - reading, thinking, planning, practicing and inevitably some failures and experiences one would prefer to forget except that these can be invaluable for the insights they will provide for doing a better job next time.

Your audiences will include liberals, moderates, bigots, and people who so sincerely believe that they are far superior to most of humanity that to even consider otherwise has not occurred to them. Followers of these general philosophies will be found in all racial and cultural combinations. Minority group members will be particularly sensitive to minority problems, but not necessarily knowledgeable of historic facts. Some will want to deny their association with their own group. Others will want to glorify it. There will be all shades of opinion between the possible extremes. One approach cannot meet the needs of all possible varieties of visitors or be the best one to get the same message across to all people.

When dealing with smaller and less diverse tour groups, an effort to adapt the presentation to their abilities to understand, their interests, and their opinions is possible. You may not only have to find ways to talk about 17th century Spanish colonial culture to living Spanish-Americans and Anglo-Americans, but to Navajos, Blacks, or tourists from Japan, some with preconceived stereotypes and prejudices, others with well-based knowledge of the subject, and some who have never even heard of it before. For those with no prior knowledge it may be necessary to talk in such basic, broad, and general terms that you will risk supporting stereotype opinions among those

who are more informed. For those who have had closer contact with some aspect of the subject, more detailed and precise information that might be meaningless to a casual visitor will be needed. In either case, it will be your own attitudes that will make the presentation a positive or negative experience.

Finally, do not be discouraged when, after a particularly inspired talk, you get what you consider to be an unspeakably stupid question. You can lead a

visitor around the site, but you can't make him think. He has as much right to relax on his vacation as the fellow who hurried by without stopping on his way to Las Vegas. Visitors will, by the end of summer, have become another kind of minority group in your mind, and you will learn to be tolerant of their eccentricities. Like any minority group, they include good people and bad. You will have accomplished more in your work than you will ever be able to measure, but you will have to take that statement on faith.

