

# *interpretation*

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## The Society

The Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage was formed in April 1975 to provide a forum for people engaged in studying Britain's heritage and in both planning and managing interpretive programmes and facilities which relate to this heritage.

It draws its members from a wide range of organisations - including local authorities, statutory and educational bodies and major voluntary organisations - engaged in interpretation of one kind or another.

Copies of the constitution, of the consultative document which led to the formation of the Society and membership application forms may be obtained from the Secretary.

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## The Newsletter

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Cover picture: Chief Seattle (see p.5)

### EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the final issue before handing over to a new Editor. Together with the change of Committee, this is likely to lead to changes in the Newsletter, which has recently kept much to its original format because it was felt that was what readers wanted: it is up to these same readers to make their views known to the new Editor. Meanwhile, your retiring editor looks forward to taking part in Society activities again in about a year's time after a sojourn in the Far East.

copies at 70p each.

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Next Copy Date will be 6th October, but it would ease the task of the new Editor if he could receive material (or at least notification of articles) before that date.

## Norfolk Conference

NORFOLK CONFERENCE 28 - 30 MARCH 1980

### VISITS

On Friday afternoon, we were taken by official "Norwich Guides" through Norwich to the Cathedral and its Visitor Centre, which interprets the different meanings of God over the centuries; to Colman's Mustard Shop where the decor and service is faithfully Victorian, and there is a pictorial display area; and to two of the Norfolk Heritage Sites with their plaques. Norwich Guides were formed in 1951 by the Norwich Publicity Association. There followed a reception by the Lord Mayor in the Castle Museum to view the new European Room, showing cultural connections between one part of Britain and Europe and financed by the EEC.

The Broadlands Visitor Centre at Ranworth (see newsletter No.7) was the next port of call - almost literally as it floats on the edge of the water and is reached by a broadwalk/nature trail. It was created by the Norfolk Naturalists Trust in 1976. We also visited Cockley Cley where Sir Peter Roberts took us round a restored Saxon church, a history museum in an old cottage, and a reconstructed Icenic village

### TALKS

Chris Barringer of Cambridge University Board of Extra-Mural Studies, gave an introductory talk, and also provided interesting commentary on the coach journeys.

### Geoffrey Weaver - Interpretation through television

Traditionally, ITV's regions deal mainly with local affairs, leaving controversial issues to the parent organisation. When he was asked to do a documentary on redundant churches, he realised that this was a subject for controversy. There were many entrenched and opposed views. So he decided to make a film that would refine and hold in tension the best arguments on both sides. (A section of the film was

then shown). How did the film argue? The commentary did not, but tried to elicit serious questions. The appearance of people putting forward arguments affects viewers. So do pictures - they are not neutral, but always loaded. Music can compound arguments and heighten visual images. He thought the film was least successful when most wordy.

Not all subjects are suited to this kind of treatment, which depends on equipoise. The film "No lullaby for Broadland" questions the whole idea of balance. He felt that conservation issues to date have merely been treated ecologically, but that ultimately all are political. Thus the film is deliberately committed with the argument seen from a political rather than a "middle" position. (the film was shown).

In comparison with the previous film, the stance was much more pronounced; instead of quiet questions, there was an aggressive position. There was an attempt not merely to listen to arguments, but to destroy them. They were questioned not just by words, but also by pictures - for example, juxtaposing a roaring melee of boats with the statement that everyone should have freedom to navigate where they liked. The music too is deliberately ironic with shots of committees dozing to "Sleep tight baby."

The criticism that resulted from taking such a powerful approach centred on the way the film was made. The use of photographic techniques such as a telephoto lens to exaggerate overcrowding was said to be unfair - mainly by the boat hirers who themselves use the opposite techniques in their commercials. Any form of communication involves selection, and he deliberately wanted to heighten the argument by using every method at his command. The film was said to be frenetic and twitchy. This was necessary in order to hold the audience - it was broadcast at peak viewing time.

Do television programmes do any good? Local comment is not the same as triggering action. It only comes about very slowly and depends on the generation of will. This, rather than causing direct action, is the proper function of a TV company.

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## Conference Preview

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### NOTTINGHAMSHIRE - AN ENIGMATIC COUNTY

If you extended the boundaries of all its neighbouring counties, you might not notice that Nottinghamshire had disappeared. As a county it lacks entity, though not character, despite Peusnerps allusions to its mediocrity. It became a unit for administrative reasons.

For example, in the North of the County, the dialect is recognisably Yorkshire-ish, and people look towards Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield for shopping and other services. In the West, the accents of the Erewash Valley, as portrayed in D H Lawrence's books, are really Derbyshire ones. There are fens in Nottinghamshire that merge into the Lincolnshire ones, and even the presently notorious Vale of Belvoir is shared with Leicestershire.

Nottinghamshire straddles that great historical divide, the River Trent and as such is neither in the North or the South. There is even less affinity with the Midlands, and the idea of being lumped in with the Birmingham area causes great resentment. In Nottingham itself, there is a hint of inward-lookingness and reserve, as criticised by Brian Clough more than once!

Remains of the past are not over-generous. Creswell Crags, on the Derbyshire border (see Interpretation No. 7) is the type-site for a culture 12,000 years ago, and is an attractive spot with its magnesian limestone cliffs, despite the closeness of an ugly coalmine (contrasts like this seem to abound in Nottinghamshire). Roman remains are scarce, although the area must have been reasonably well settled.

Saxon and Viking invaders made use of the Trent Valley, and Nottinghamshire was within the Danelaw, Nottingham itself being one of the five Danish burghs, a cliff-top site, overlooking the river valley. In medieval times,

most of the area was much like anywhere else, although Nottingham Castle had great strategic importance and was a 'second home' to many of our Kings, and a large area of poor land between Nottingham and Worksop became the Royal Hunting Forest of Sherwood.



Southwell Minster

Nottinghamshire continued to develop in unexceptional manner, although it played an important part in the Civil War. Robin Hood was not the only person at odds with authority; the Pilgrim Fathers set off from Scrooby, and several towns (particularly Mansfield) were the focus of later religious dissention. The County's contribution to the Industrial Revolution was significant, with Hargreaves and Arkwright both setting up mills here, because of the existing hosiery and machine industry. When coal superceded water for power, the County's industrial base was strengthened.

In the County, there are about one million people, about half of whom live in Nottingham. Hosiery gave way to lace (the Victorian factories cum warehouses clustered together on the site of the old saxon town form the Lace Market), and the clothing industry generally. As this declines, we are grateful to our other large employers - Boots, Raleigh, Plessey, Players and of course the N.C.B.

Mansfield, at around 58,450 population, is the next largest town, based on coal and textiles, while Worksop, Retford and Newark are essentially market towns, with some agriculturally connected industries, such as malting. The Cathedral town of the County is Southwell, with its superb minster and elegant Georgian houses. The great majority of the County is attractively rural, with red brick and pantile predominating. It is a pleasant County to live in, with my only criticism being that it lacks a coastline and some outstandingly beautiful scenery.

The County is well endowed with leisure facilities. There are a number of Country Parks: Clumber, owned by the National Trust, is the largest one. A plan to convert the old greenhouses into a Visitor Centre has been abandoned. Sherwood Forest Country Park, one of the few areas of old oak woodland left and containing the Major Oak, has a large Visitor Centre whose main exhibition is about to be replaced following a recent fire. Three miles away at Rufford Country Park, a major new Craft Centre opened on July 1st. Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre is surrounded by a Country Park, and across the river at Colwick, is another. Newstead Abbey, Byron's home, is surrounded by parkland too. The Forestry Commission owns large tracts of land in the Sherwood Forest area, many open to the public.

The best-known stately home open to the public is Thoresby, bought recently by the N.C.B.. It is one of "The Dukeries", a cluster of Ducal seats whose parks were carved out of Sherwood Forest. There is no countywide museum service but Nottingham has museums of folklife (Brewhouseyard), costume and textiles (Castle Gate), Natural History (Wollaton Hall), Industry (Wollaton) and Nottingham Castle (not a Norman ruin, as it was rebuilt as a home after the Civil War), which houses a general collection and art gallery. There are museums at Newark, Mansfield and Worksop, and in Eastwood, D H Lawrence's birthplace has been restored and opened to the public. The N.C.B.'s "National" museum is near Retford.

Ruth Tillyard



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## Living or surviving?

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### LIVING OR SURVIVING - AN INDIAN CHIEF'S STATEMENT

The comment below was the response of Chief Seattle when, in 1854, the American Government offered to buy a large area of Indian land, and to set aside some of it for a "Reservation" for the Indian people. It is a large block of text, but I feel sure you will find the effort of reading it all worthwhile. It is reprinted from Peak Park News. Summer 1976.

"How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us.

If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?

Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. The sap which courses through the trees carries the memories of the red man.

The white man's dead forget the country of their birth when they go to walk among the stars. Our dead never forget this beautiful earth, for it is the mother of the red man. We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters; the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and man - all belong to the same family.

So, when the Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land, he asks much of us. The Great Chief sends word he will reserve us a place so that we can live comfortably to ourselves. He will be our father and we will be his children. So we will consider your offer to buy our land. But it will not be easy. For this land is sacred to us.

## Living or surviving?

This shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water but the blood of our ancestors. If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred and you must teach your children that it is sacred and that each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people. The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father.

The rivers are our brothers, they quench our thirst. The rivers carry our canoes, and feed our children. If we sell you our land, you must remember, and teach your children, that the rivers are our brothers, and yours, and you must henceforth give the rivers the kindness you would give any brother.

We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his father's graves behind, and he does not care. He kidnaps the earth from his children, and he does not care. His father's grave, and his children's birthright are forgotten. He treats his mother, the earth, and his brother, the sky, as things to be bought, plundered, sold like sheep or bright beads. His appetite will devour the earth and leave behind only a desert.

I do not know. Our ways are different from your ways. The sight of your cities pains the eyes of the red man. But perhaps it is because the red man is a savage and does not understand.

There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to hear the unfurling of leaves in spring, or the rustle of an insect's wings. But perhaps it is because I am a savage and do not understand. The clatter only seems to insult the ears. And what is there to life if a man cannot hear the lonely cry of the whippoorwill or the arguments of the frogs around a pond at night? I am a red man and do not understand. The Indian prefers the

soft sound of the wind darting over the face of a pond, and the smell of the wind itself, cleansed by a mid-day rain, or scented with the pinon pine.

The air is precious to the red man, for all things share the same breath - the beast, the tree, the man, they all share the same breath. The white man does not seem to notice the air he breathes. Like a man dying for many days, he is numb to the stench. But if we sell you our land, you must remember that the air is precious to us, that the air shares its spirit with all the life it supports. The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also receives his last sigh. And if we sell you our land, you must keep it apart and sacred, as a place where even the white man can go to taste the wind that is sweetened by the meadow's flowers.

So we will consider your offer to buy our land. If we decide to accept, I will make one condition: The white man must treat the beasts of this land as his brothers.

I am a savage and I do not understand any other way. I have seen a thousand rotting buffalos on the prairie, left by the white man who shot them from a passing train. I am a savage and I do not understand how the smoking iron can be more important than the buffalo that we kill only to stay alive.

What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected.

You must teach your children that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandfathers. So that they will respect the land, tell your children that the earth is rich with the lives of our kin. Teach your children what we have taught our children, that the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. If men spit upon the ground, they spit upon themselves.

This we know: The earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood which unites

one family. All things are connected.

Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life: he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

Even the white man, whose God walks and talks with him as friend to friend, cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We shall see. One thing we know, which the white man may one day discover - our God is the same God. You may think now that you own Him as you wish to own our land; but you cannot. He is the God of man, and His compassion is equal for the red man and the white. This earth is precious to Him, and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its Creator. The whites too shall pass; perhaps sooner than all other tribes. Contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste.

But in your perishing you will shine brightly, fired by the strength of the God who brought you to this land and for some special purpose gave you the dominion over this land and over the red man. That destiny is a mystery to us, for we do not understand when the buffalo are all slaughtered, the wild horses are tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wires. Where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone. The end of living and the beginning of survival."

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## Goals for Interpreters

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GOALS FOR INTERPRETERS IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

I readily accepted your kind invitation to talk here today largely because I was anxious to listen to Michael Dower and Terence Lee. I am not convinced that I have a great deal that is useful to say myself, except to underline conclusions which many people here must have already reached. But if anyone here is despondent about the activity of

'interpretation' in which in different ways we are all engaged, it is worth while, before turning to the next five years to consider the first five years of this society's existence.

Before 1975 there were a number of interpretive activities well established and ranging from the naive to the highly-sophisticated. We have not advanced beyond the standard set by, for example, Brockhole or the Landmark Centres in Scotland. But if anyone has counted the growth of interpretive activities since then, I am quite sure that they would be able to chronicle an exponential growth over the last five years, reflecting painstaking planning and lobbying for funds, long before this society was set up.

It so happened that 1975 was designated as European Architectural Heritage Year, and thanks to the activities of Mr Malcolm McEwen, the Arts Council took the unprecedented step of recognising that the interpretation of architecture was one of the tasks that were encompassed by its range of responsibilities. I was present at the deliberations of the ad hoc committee which advised the Arts Council on the spending of the sum of money allocated. This sum of money was £50,000, not enormous in terms of purchasing power, so the committee decided on a three-way split between a historic city, an industrial conurbation and a small town or village. It also decided upon certain criteria, which were in my view, absolutely justified, that would govern its recommendations. We all knew which industrial conurbation ought to qualify for the recommendation for cash, but in spite of a great deal of prompting, no proposal, either from official or from voluntary bodies, met the agreed criteria, and it was finally decided that the greater part of the sum should go to the City of York, to be added to the sums from the city and from voluntary organisations which were being devoted to the St Mary's Heritage Centre. The rest of that money was voted to the Fleur de Lys Centre at Faversham, to back up the activities of a local civic group, the Faversham Society.

Partly as a result of this bonus to already initiated proposals, we have

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examples of what kind in interpretation can be encouraged with a large total input of funds, as at York, and what kind can be arranged by giving a little extra windfall to an equally active, but less well-endowed local initiative, as at Faversham.

At St Mary's Castlegate, in York it is useful to be able to see what can be done with what is, by the standards of anyone here, a very large initial capital expenditure. At Faversham we learned what a marvellous boost a relatively small sum of money could be to a lot of people over a long time. It certainly seems likely that new interpretive activities in the next few years are going to follow a Faversham rather than a York pattern.

Again, if you look back to 1975 you will recall that there was only one book available on the principles of interpretation. Fortunately it was a very valuable book indeed and nothing written since it appeared, many years ago now, has superceded anything that was said in it. I refer of course to Freeman Tilden's Interpreting Our Heritage. I don't think the subsequent American literature has added very much for us. Much of it consists of rather unctious statements of the obvious.

On the other had the last five years has given us a British literature of interpretation which has been very useful indeed. We had for a start the two volumes of the Guide to Countryside Interpretation from Don Aldridge and Keith Pennyfather, with their bold attempt to evaluate the relative merits of different interpretive devices. Then more recently we had the DART report on Self-Guided Trails, another valuable guide to the critical evaluation of trails and walks. And finally in the last year, there has appeared the Civic Trust's manual of urban interpretation, Understanding Our Surroundings, which I find immensely valuable and authoritative. Its practical helpfulness is not unexpected since its author, Arthur Percival was one of the leading spirits in the Faversham venture.

The last five years has also seen an immensely useful addition to the literature in the form of this Society's Newsletter. I regard it as a masterpiece of concision and compactness: the ideal vehicle for keeping the diverse and widespread interpretation industry in touch with itself. It is a marvellous illustration of the old saying that the best things usually come in little packages. And at a time when many kinds of voluntary activity are crippled by soaring printing and postage costs, how sensible and farsighted it was to select a modest and humble format.

In thinking of goals for interpreters for the next five years I do not put a heavy priority into more literature, welcome though it might be, nor do I think that this society would be particularly well-served by a grander, more imposing journal. Nor am I among those who want more training, more courses, more qualifications for the "profession" of interpretation. I don't myself believe in such a profession and I do not like the idea of a kind of orthodoxy of interpretation, which inevitably leads to diminishing returns among the customers. Not another multi-screen AV show, not more of that puritanical Swiss sans-serif type in white on black, not another range of spotlights in matt black and anodised aluminium. It is about 45 years since John Betjeman wrote his diatribe about ghastly good taste.

I am myself engaged at the moment on a peice of research on the plotlands of South East England. The plotlands are those areas where, following the agricultural depression, speculators bought land from bankrupt farmers and divided it into plots which were sold to people from east and south London, to build their holiday chalet, shack or shanty or erect their first world war army hut or old railway coach. The New Town of Basildon in Essex was sited there in order to provide a service infrastructure for the acres of substandard dwellings on unmade and unsewered roads. Not many of the old plotland houses remain, and of course, with the passage of time - since we are so given to nostalgia: the English vice - they have acquired a kind of period charm. A fortnight ago, one of the town planners

from Basildon was telling me of his ambition to persuade his authority to conserve one of the plotland shanties as a plotland museum, since after all, they were the reason for the New Town's existence.

Would our glossy and sophisticated techniques be appropriate for interpreting the history of the plotlands? Next time I have the delight of going to Blists Hill, I shall be interested to see how Neil Cossens has dealt with the newly re-erected squatter's house there. And what qualifications do we demand from the interpreter of the preserved plotlands shanty? Should it be someone like the people who completed Terry Stevens' questionnaire to interpreters, 50% of whom had post graduate university education, mostly to Master's Level, while "the remaining had all achieved a degree or degree equivalent"? To me it is obvious that the place should be run by a rota of old age pensioners, yarning away to the school children about life there in the twenties and thirties.

If we are thinking about future goals for the activity of interpretation, we need to take seriously the views expressed by Andrew Faulds in the third issue of the Society's Newsletter early in 1976. You may have seen the original version in The Times or heard Mr Faulds expressing these views on the radio. He was scornful of the facile views expressed by the politicians of his own party in government at that time, that Britain could somehow stave off its industrial decline if we all put our shoulders to the wheel and worked a bit harder. I am sure he is equally scornful of the view expressed by the present government on the same theme.

His vision you will remember was of a post-industrial Britain whose big cities had inevitably declined and where small town and rural life are revived, together with intensive agriculture for much greater self-sufficiency. Don't hanker, said Faulds, for those lost overseas markets. Let's make the most of the priceless assets we have got. It's a view of our future that many would disagree with of course, though I am one of those who do see it as realistic. Faulds went on to

say that our neglected heritage might well become one of our means of livelihood in the future. "If we have to live on in a post-industrial Britain, does it not make sense - for our own delight as well as the tourist economy - to invest in those assets?...We must be far-seeing enough to accept that our future may be some such fantasy - a sort of Switzerland with monuments in place of mountains. It may be our only alternative - to provide the haven, heavy with history, for those millions of tourists from all four corners of the world who will come seeking peace in a place away from the pulsating pressures and the grit and grievances of their own industrial societies."

Well, knowing what tourism does to a place, we may shudder at the second part of his fantasy even though we may agree with the first part.

However, in the next five years, when it is quite obvious that money for interpretive projects from governmental, quasi-governmental and charitable sources is going to be very difficult to come by, the arguments from tourism, that is, the suggestion that investment in interpretation is important for its currency earning potential, is going to be one of our justifications. Another of course, is that environmental interpretation is an aspect of resource management: one way of ensuring that the presence of all those visitors doesn't destroy that particular chunk of the heritage they have come to see. A third instrumental use we ought to be making of Andrew Faulds' argument is the one he makes himself. If our past is one of our few assets that does not diminish in value, it makes sense to refrain from destroying it at the rate we have been doing all through this century. His is a powerful case for conservation.

Now if we were unprepared, psychologically, for predictions like those of Mr Faulds about our future economy, still less are we prepared for the impact of the microprocessor revolution that you must already be tired of hearing about. I don't want to hear about how silicon chips can aid the art and science of interpretation. I would like instead to hear about how interpretation can use some of that labour that is going

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to be cast aside by the microprocessor revolution, and in fact is being displaced on a terrifying scale before it has even begun.

Before this Society was formed, Reg Hookway of the Countryside Commission could be heard expressing misgivings that in our enthusiasm for buildings, hardware and gadgetry, we were in danger of forgetting that the best interpretive device is a fellow human, and that it makes more sense to invest in people than in things.

Freeman Tilden too, in considering interpretive devices declared as a first principle that "No device of the kind we consider here, is, other things being equal, as desirable as interpretation by direct contact with the person."

Anyone here who was present at that first meeting of this society will remember the unanimity on this same point. Michael Dower talked of the importance of a two-way flow between visitors and staff, and said how he had noticed at Morwellham quay that people stop most at people. John Nettleton remarked that he would be sorry if the cafe at Brockhole were operated by a concessionaire because the cafe staff, since they are in contact with the public, are interpreters too. And Lord Montagu talked of the importance attached to staff training at Beaulieu. "Good interpretation" he said, "has a great deal in common with good story-telling, and must be done in a way which is immediately comprehensible to the casual visitor."

If you take the gloomy view of our economic future that I do, you will see the point of applying to the activity of interpretation, the series of maxims evolved in the 1960s by Fritz Schumacher and George McRobie for the economics of the poor world:

- "If you want to go places, start from where you are."
- "If you are poor, start with something cheap."
- "If you are uneducated, start with something simple."

"If you live in a poor environment, and poverty makes markets small, start with something small."

"If you are unemployed, start using your own labour power; because any productive use of it is better than letting it lie idle."

Several of our best interpretive enterprises recognise the importance of putting a great deal of emphasis on human contacts, enlisting both voluntary guides, and part-time paid ones. Since it is a fact that shyness and the class distinctions that plague English life, make many people unwilling to approach an 'official' person, (they would rather ask the car park attendant) it is worth while exploring the idea of self-employed interpretive guides selling literature and picture post-cards on commission, peddling their wares from a satchel, as they slip into the role of colourful local character, remembered by the visitor as the chap who made the whole trip worth while.

I was pleased by the report in The Times on November 20th about Merseyside County Council's tourist development department, looking for people to recruit as guides who had the characteristics of a stand-up comic with a Lime Street accent. What the report actually said was that the council was inviting applications for places on training courses which will occupy two afternoons a week for the first three months of next year.

"There will be no age, sex or colour discrimination, but the applicants will have to be capable of addressing groups of visitors in an articulate manner, of being able to absorb and recall a great deal of knowledge. A further asset will be possession of that rather special sense of humour for which the area is noted. A touch of Scouse in the pronunciation will be entirely acceptable. The most important qualification of all will be a pride in the place."

Ronald Jones, Merseyside's tourism development officer, told The Times that tourism in that county brings in about £40 million a year and supports some 10,000 jobs. I think that the approach hinted at in that report is one of the goals of interpretation for the next five years. One of the things

people do enjoy in visits to unfamiliar parts of the country is precisely that sense of regional difference and local idiosyncracies, implied in that report.

We are talking about that difficult and touchy topic: the democratisation of interpretation. By now we do know quite a lot about the social class composition of visitors. The Dartington Amenity Research Trust has told us who goes to Farm Open Days and who goes on Dartmoor Walks; John Cornforth in his report Country Houses in Britain has told us who visits country houses, and the recent English Tourist Board survey of English Cathedrals and Tourism has told us who visits the cathedrals.

Now we all know that when we go somewhere it is because we are scholars or members of the aesthetically aware elite, while if anyone else goes, they are merely trippers, or grockels, as they are called in Devon. Tourism which began as self-education through environmental exploration, has turned into a mass activity. I think that in spite of the enormous growth of interpretive activities, the visitor is often sold short. I do not mean that he is exploited. I mean that the act of visiting implies a question which the visitor has often not formulated, and which the visit often fails to answer. As Michael Dower says, the visitor may come for the recreational experience but may be ambushed by other activities. An important goal for interpreters in the next five years is to find ways of being popular and populist while remaining faithful to their ultimate educative function. We do know that a personal human contact is likely to be the most effective way of reaching the humbler and less articulate visitor. In the splendid sentence of Freeman Tilden, "He may be there for the explicit hope that you will reveal to him why he is there."

Colin Ward

Given at the Society's conference in London, November 1979.

### STOP PRESS

The new Committee is listed on the inside cover.

## Interpretation in Canada

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERPRETIVE PLANNING IN CANADIAN NATIONAL PARKS

The methodology behind the subject of interpretation developed by Parks Canada has much to offer interpretive programmes everywhere. The contemporary situation has been developed as a result of lessons learnt in Canada and elsewhere, particularly from America. In order to put this system into context, a brief history of interpretation in Canadian National Parks is offered. A need to redefine National Park objectives in the light of new demands spawned during the 1960's re-kindled interest in park designation with 10 being created between 1968 and 1972 adding to the 18 already in existence. This sudden increase had been preceded by a redefinition of the aims of the system emphasising their preservationist aspect, which, of course, greatly affects interpretive programmes:

"The basic purpose is to preserve for all time areas which contain significant geographical, geological, historical or historic features as a national heritage for the benefit, education and enjoyment of the people of Canada."

Interpretation in the parks arose from two demands:

1. The demand for better public use and understanding of parks
2. The demand by some users to know more about park environments.

Fifty years ago this communication focused upon the "pleasure ground" aspects of the National Parks; concentrating upon feature orientated promotion rather than the ecological or geographical aspects. This approach was reinforced by continued advertising of the parks' beauties even to post war visitors.

It was not until fifteen years ago that natural history programmes were devel-

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oped in the eighteen parks then in existence. The interpreters were generally specialist biologists the content of whose talks extended only to taxonomic identification. It was the second (paperback) edition of Freeman Tilden's "Interpreting our Heritage" which helped to reinforce the popularisation of "the elusive substance of interpretation."

In the wake of Tilden, Park rangers began calling their communication with the public "Interpretive programmes" in which they began emphasising environmental relationships within a broadly thematic approach. Relevant research was organised into story lines presented to the public using a wide range of media. Emphasis shifted gradually away from the specific features of the park in isolation to developing their newly perceived role as part of the story or as "windows" through which to view the total environment. Appointed Interpretive Staff changed from being specialists to those having a broad knowledge and perspective of the environment with particular skills of oral and written communication. Personal research to foster specialisation within this overview was facilitated by the availability of resources enabling study. In addition park interpreters began procedures in relation to audience and visitor use within the framework of an interpretive plan.

Contemporary to these trends was the move in park management generally towards "management by objective" together with and in keeping with J F Kennedy's "participatory democracy" basing planning on clearly expressed goals and objectives.

The late 1960's saw the increased recreational demand for National Parks being matched by reinforced members of "front-line" seasonal interpreters which in turn meant a tremendous demand for investment upon training and supervision for short term outputs.

A new pessimistic mood influenced the philosophy towards interpretation in the 1970's. A concern for the total environment became the essence of the

challenge facing interpretation with the simple messages being communicated by increasingly sophisticated means. In addition consideration of facility development for minority and handicapped groups was beginning on a small scale.

The recently adopted phrase - "total communications" - is the present vogue guiding interpretive philosophy, it was first used by Reynolds Advertising Co. to describe the process of a completely integrated design and operation of corporate communications. Parks Canada have realised that every aspect of their work which is received in some form by the public is in effect an environmental statement, as a result it amounts to interpretation. All park messages must be properly planned, designed, managed and operated as one voice. Obviously there are tremendous implications of this, more particularly in the need for training in marketing, communications and information management.

The three biggest influences upon interpretation today contain two which we are also familiar with:

- a) the willingness of government to converse and develop a dialogue with the public through the encouragement of public participation.
- b) the economic constraints.

The third is more alien to British interpreters:

- c) the concept of total communication ie. an integrated, planned co-ordinated message for both an in-park situation and extension (out of park) services.

Bearing in mind these three factors, Parks Canada are concentrating upon the following plan for developing interpretation in the National Parks.

1. Developing increased communication with all Canadians, not just those who visit the parks (an extension service)
2. Operating a 'communications skill' training centre
3. Establishing integrated communication objectives for all levels of Parks Service

4. Establishing and realising standards for interpretation programmes to ensure quality and quantity levels
5. Determining efficiency and effectiveness through evaluation methods and relating all the time to the established objectives
6. Staffing with more communication specialists
7. Utilising techniques of message analysis and perception analysis to improve effectiveness.
8. Developing an integrated communication plan for National Parks
9. Developing programmes to create a multiplier effect for park messages.

Critical to the attainment of these aims is the understanding and working of a basic 'communications model' which identifies the components source - message - receiver. This model sits comfortably within the marketing strategy approach now considered essential to Parks Canada's attempts at management by objectives.

Terry Stevens

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## Hopton and Middleton

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### MIDDLETON TOP ENGINE HOUSE

Following the closure of the Cromford and High Peak Railway in 1976, Derbyshire County Council entered into negotiations with British Rail to purchase the line which they were able to do in late 1970. Fortunately, due to the early decision concerning the preservation of the Engine House, the County Council was able to take over the site in 1968, thus avoiding the vandalism that befell the adjoining boiler house and cottage.

Site works began in 1970 and involved volunteers, the County Works Department and, later, specialist contractors to work on the chimney. The Head Ranger took up residence in the

renovated cottage to ensure the security of the building.

The Engine itself was painstakingly restored to full working order by volunteers under the supervision of the Head Ranger. The volunteers were mainly members of the industrial section of the Derbyshire Archaeological Society who formed themselves into the Middleton Top Restoration Group. Grant aid towards the cost of the project was given by the D.O.E., Ancient Monuments Division, the Engine House being a scheduled ancient monument. It was unfortunate that the state of the boilers was such that the possibility of restoring them to full working order had to be ruled out; consequently a compressed air blower was installed. It is hoped in the future to complete the restoration of the exterior wheel pits, to allow demonstration of the method of coupling waggons.

The remainder of the site, which consisted of two derelict reservoirs, which supplied water to the boilers, and the ash tip from the engine, were reclaimed for use as a picnic site and car park. This work was done with grant aid from the Countryside Commission.

The County Council look upon the Engine House as a unique feature, the restoration and preservation of which forms a major part of the overall concept of the scheme. It is a very distinct landmark in the Wirksworth area. The Engine House attracted 6,600 visitors in 1978/79, and it is hoped that in the future further interpretive facilities will be developed at the site. It is the only survivor of eight such engines that worked on the Cromford and High Peak Railway in its heyday.

In 1979 the Travel Britain Company and Ian Allen Ltd organised a competition for the Best Preserved Station (or railway building). The County Council submitted the Engine House which was judged as one of five runners-up.

### HOPTON COTTAGE

Another of the former railway buildings on the High Peak Trail is being

## Hopton

restored as a self-catering hostel by the County Council.

An attractive stone built cottage, equipped to cater for groups of up to 16 people and sited on the fringe of the Peak District, it will be available for as little as £1 a night per person. The cottage, which provides simple but comfortable accommodation, is ideal for use by groups of ramblers, rock climbers and nature lovers or parties of students on field study exercises. It consists of two dormitories, washing and cooking facilities and a sitting room. All kitchen utensils are provided for residents along with fuel for two coal fires. Bed linen and bedding are not supplied.

The cottage is ideally sited for followers of numerous pursuits. It adjoins the High Peak Trail which provides the basis for walks northwards into the Peak District National Park and southwards along the Derwent Valley and there are nearby facilities for excellent climbing and canoeing. The area is also rich in historical interest especially in the fields of industry, railway transport, and lead mining and in archaeological geological and biological subjects.

The cottage will also be made available at considerably reduced rates for groups wishing to work for the community, for which there are many opportunities. Arrangements may be made, through the County Council's Planning Department, to work on projects of historical or natural wild-life preservation. There is a minimum age restriction of 14 years for group members and at least two people in each party must be over 18.

Further information can be obtained from the County Planning Officer, Derbyshire County Council, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3AG

## Interpretation & Management

### INTERPRETATION AS A MANAGEMENT PLOY ?

From its heuristic origins, interpretation has developed into a broad-based inter-disciplinary field, applied either purely for its own sake, or as a subtle safety valve in the face of ever-increasing visitor pressure at our many places of interest, especially in the countryside.

As a management tool, interpretation can either be used directly, as in the setting out of specific zones and routes for public use, or more indirectly in the form of information, eg. by indicating the long-term effects of footpath erosion or habitat disruption. With informed and sensitive planning, a number of strategies are open to the countryside manager, a few are outlined below:-

### PERSONAL SERVICES:

a) Guided Walks can be a valuable exercise in resolving the ever-present conservation/recreation dilemma, especially in small rural communities, on good agricultural land, or in areas of rare habitat. The walk can be so designed as to maximise experience while minimising adverse impact on the environment. By employing a guide with local knowledge and empathy, some rapport can be set up between the intrusive visitor and the local community. This aspect may have been neglected in the past, contributing little to mutual understanding and trust. Particularly sensitive areas can be avoided, whereas others can be exploited positively. It might be the case that a local farmer or landowner would encourage guided walks through certain parts of his land at different times of the year, thus minimising the disruption of such activities as lambing or young crop development. The guide should be flexible and aware enough to build on this. Countryside Commission recommendations are that guides should be "experienced and knowledgeable walkers and particularly conversant with the area over which they are to lead walks."<sup>1</sup>

b) Lectures and Talks should not be limited just to visitors, but promoted locally to enhance local interest: this again will hopefully break down the ignorance and antagonism of resident/visitor needs and priorities. In the Peak District, National Park officers have realised that local residents often feel a reticence to attend a purpose-built information/interpretation centre, and now often give talks in village halls and schools. Lecture content can be very diverse, spanning agriculture to zoogeography, but the main theme should perhaps enhance awareness of the complex inter-relatedness of natural systems. However, it is vital to avoid dictating or blatantly prohibiting certain areas or activities (unless of course absolutely necessary). People should know how to behave in the countryside, but more importantly, WHY.

### NON PERSONAL SERVICES:

a) Footpaths can be used to suggest suitable routes, eg. by providing an easier surface to walk on. Stiles and gates can minimise damage to walls, hedges and fences.

b) Signs should be used minimally, again to suggest suitable sites and routes. Siting and content are important, giving the visitor enough information to decide for him/herself as to the suitability of the visit. Often a symbolic sign system is less obtrusive, linked to a readily obtainable, fairly cheap, guide book.



c) Displays can, in the same way as lectures and talks, be a vehicle for communicating rural responsibility, again avoiding the prohibitive stance.

Thus by enhancing a visitor's experience, the interpreter may in some way be instrumental in simultaneously amplifying a closeness to the environment, and stimulating sensible countryside behaviour, based on personal appreciation, not rules and regulations.

The unskilful countryside manager could be accused of middle class manipulation of the poor weather-proofed orange visitor, whose only real fault is his/her multiplicity and gregarious nature. He should therefore avoid the assumption that visitors are as insensitive as the occasional vandal - the mere fact that a visitor is there indicates a healthy curiosity and regard for the countryside. Each visitor is also unique in perception and attitude, responding differently to his/her environment. As J E Lovelock put it in his hypothesis on a self-regulating biosphere "there can be no prescription, no set of rules.... For each of our different actions there are only consequences." <sup>2</sup>

The countryside manager can help to interpret actions and their possible consequences, communicate them to the general public, and so lessen the need for rigid management rules and regulations in country areas. After all, rules are made to be broken, gates and fences are not.

### References

1. Binks, G 1978, Guided Walks, Countryside Commission, Advisory Series No.4
2. Lovelock, J.E., 1979, Gaia, a new look at life on earth, O.U.P.

Arwel Jones, University of Salford

## News from Warrington

RISLEY MOSS

Perhaps the most rewarding moment was the confirmation that we could commence the Visitor Centre at Risley Moss. The building, which is 416 m<sup>2</sup>, was designed by the Manchester Office of Building

# Warrington

Design Partnership and includes the usual Ranger accommodation, information counter, sales area and toilets plus an exhibition area incorporating a small audio-visual theatre and a multipurpose room suitable for school purposes, evening lectures and other activities.

Despite major problems of inflated costs we eventually accepted a tender of £162,000 and the building started on site on 1 October 1979. Because of the bad ground conditions - peat on clay - the foundations comprised a system of 43 piles and these and the ground beams were completed by Christmas. Above ground the building is a prefabricated timber structure and it is hoped that it will be largely completed by Whitsun.

The Interpretive Exhibition and on-site interpretation is being designed by Graham Duffy of Graphic Partners who is also assisting with the production of a 7 minute introductory audio-visual programme. The research and basic interpretive planning for the exhibition, audio-visual programme, on-site interpretation and teacher resource material was undertaken by Sue Adams and a small research team employed under the STEP programme. Since Sue took up a Planning Course at Manchester University in October 1979, this work has been continued by David Potts, and Graham Duffy has been responsible for the detailed design work.

The aim of the audio-visual programme and exhibition is to introduce the visitor to the site, its history, the people who have influenced its character and what can be seen and enjoyed today. It is, we believe, the only exhibition in the UK concentrating on mossland areas, and in particular we are illustrating the reclamation process for agriculture and commercial peat cutting. Whilst the physical and biological changes are important we are emphasising the human involvement with much use of three-dimensional material and opportunities for the visitor to participate.

We are obtaining considerable help and advice from the North West Museum Service in the form of conservation of

tools and objects, taxidermy, the construction of two major sets and, hopefully, grant aid. Fisons (who 'bought-out' the firm who commercially cut peat on Risley Moss) are also becoming involved and hope to give or loan various artifacts, and will be particularly helpful in the display on the modern uses of peat.

The Centre will be opened later this month by David Bellamy.

As the New Town will eventually be wound up it is important that arrangements are made to ensure the long term management of the project by an appropriate authority. Peter Moore (our Vice President) has given considerable help, advice and support during the planning and development stage and has obtained the agreement of Cheshire County Council to take over the project five years after opening. To pave the way to 'hand-over' we are setting up a small Advisory Committee to monitor the progress of the project against the site and visitor management objectives. The Committee will be able to offer expert advice on planning, countryside recreation, financial, commercial, promotion and conservation matters.

At long last, therefore, we can see the light at the end of the tunnel and we have learnt much from our visits around the country studying other projects, and we would like to thank all those many people who have helped us.

## URBAN RANGERS

This time last year we wrote about the establishment of our Interpretive Park Ranger Service in our new Urban Parks. The scheme, established under the STEP programme, involved the appointment of six Rangers allocated to two major new parks - Sankey Valley Park and Woolston Park. Each park is very different in character: Sankey Valley is essentially a linear park following the course of the St. Helens Canal and Sankey Brook. It is part of a proposed long distance park from Widnes to St. Helens. It is narrow and generally rural in character although the section we are currently developing flows through the centre of our new development. It has great interpretive potential in terms of the canal's heritage

(the first completed modern canal), the 17th Century Jacobean Bewsey Hall and a large area of attractive woodland. It may even be possible to use the Hall for a museum and/or interpretive purposes.

Woolston Park, in contrast, is located to the east of the Town Centre and is completely surrounded by post-war development. It too, however, has a linear element following Spittle Brook southwards into the Mersey Valley, and includes a large area of typical Urban Park with the opportunity for formal and informal recreation.

The Rangers function is to promote the proper use and enjoyment of these parks and to broaden the scope of their use beyond the normal range of events and activities. They operate from a cabin in the parks and in addition to the basic patrolling function we have placed great emphasis on working with schools and with local community organisations to encourage them to use the park for all manner of educational, recreational and leisure pursuits.

The pilot scheme proved to be very successful with the Ranger Service in each park developing its own individual style. Regular newsletters and leaflets were prepared encouraging the community to become involved. We found it very easy to establish a close working relationship with children using the park, and in Woolston Park a "Ranger Helper Club" was established which currently numbers over 450 children. Various events were held including a circus, concerts, community fair, Children's play schemes, sponsored walk, community plant-in schemes including trees, shrubs and bulbs, a 'dry' boat race and a guided walks programme. The lack of basic services, eg. Toilets, electricity and water certainly restricted the range of events that could be promoted.

However, there is no doubt that the parks have been well used and enjoyed, that there has been minimal vandalism and damage and that an exciting working relationship is being established between the park rangers and the park users.

Towards the end of 1979 with the demise of STEP the future of the pilot scheme was in some doubt. However, with support from Parish Councils, Community groups and schools it has been possible to persuade the Development Corporation to establish a permanent Ranger Service for these parks and also the parks in our new Birchwood district. In addition, we will have new 50' cabins including offices, kitchen and multi-purpose room plus water, electricity and foul drainage.

The job description is essentially that of a Ranger/Interpreter: there is little park maintenance as such except for essential remedial work where danger or annoyance to the public enjoyment may result. We have had very close contact with the Cheshire Ranger Service. Peter Moore has been kind enough to allow our staff to attend his in service training courses and similar uniforms are soon to be provided.

Our general interpretation work also proceeded apace during 1979. With Risley Moss being out major interpretive project, we have largely concentrated the rest of our resources on preparing teacher resource materials.

A series of small packs were completed on Sankey Valley Park, "Building a House", an interesting industrial part of town called Bank Quay and on Pond Survey work. A full list of our publications can be supplied on request.

In addition to the parks our Environmental Education team maintained constant and close contact with most of the schools in the town and on average at least one activity a week has been carried out with a school. This could either be a class visiting the park or a Ranger giving a talk in a school, participation in the form of a planting scheme, establishing a tree nursery or entering an essay or painting competition, or even a visit to the New Town Nursery. Every single activity, however, is geared to achieving a greater understanding of the environment.

With the demise of STEP, this team of seven had to be disbanded and unfortunately two or three are still unemployed. However, Carol Elderfield was given a twelve month contract to

## Warrington

continue her direct liaison with schools and she is also assisting David Potts in our broader whole town interpretation work. The principles of our work closely follow the philosophies spelt out in the recent DOE booklet "Environmental Education in Urban Areas" and the Civic Trust report "Understanding our Environment" and we are hopeful that we can continue and expand in the future.

In addition to actually establishing a permanent Ranger Service we have been lucky enough to obtain a proper operating budget which includes a reasonable allowance for travel and for courses so essential to the proper training of our staff.

We are planning a full summer programme of guided walks this year in and around the town and hope that a series of leaflets will be prepared on various aspects of our parks and the town's heritage. We would be delighted to see anybody who is interested in what we are doing and in particular we want to learn from anybody with experience in working in a similar urban situation. You can contact us on Warrington (0925) 51144, Ext 328.

Ian Parkin

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## Books

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### EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK INTERPRETIVE PLAN STUDY

Terry Robinson, Countryside Commission (CCP 123) 1979 £3.15

The book is organised in a logical way: it begins by defining Interpretation, and showing why Interpretive Planning is desirable in a National Park. It describes the Park, the audience for interpretation, and current interpretation. Then begins the Interpretive Plan proper: an essential handbook for anyone who might want to be involved in interpretation in the Park. It discusses aims, and ways of achieving objectives. These are not all neces-

sarily the provision of interpreted facilities, but tourist information; warden services, local debate and co-ordination are all seen as important. There follow proposals for these.

The proposals for interpretation fall into two categories: general interpretation and interpretation of specific topics. The general section includes suggestions for leisure drives, organised programmes of lectures, co-ordination. Under the topics section a main theme is proposed: "the hard bargain that Exmoor drives with the people who have tried to make a living on it," and it is suggested that all agencies' work should be tied into this. Under each of a number of topics, such as "agriculture," "The Royal Forest and its reclamation by the Knights," "The Coast," "The Doones," there is a series of proposals for interpretation.

The final chapter deals with priorities, finance and staff, and there are useful appendices covering visitor characteristics, organisations with an interest in interpretation, topics requiring research and so on. The book is competently designed and illustrated with a number of good photographs by the author.

The plan is supposed to be a model for other National Parks, and it is one that I hope they can follow. It could serve as a model for regional plans, as its range is so complete. The only difference Exmoor may have from many other regions is its simplicity: there are only 36 organisations listed with an interest in interpretation (in Nottinghamshire this is more like 200, so listing them becomes less practical). I personally find the main theme rather puzzling, and the others slightly random. This is one of the dangers of using an overall theme: perhaps there is need for a little more explanation here? In any case, a very useful book and an essential purchase.

Ruth Tillyard

A MANUAL OF URBAN INTERPRETATION  
by ARTHUR PERCIVAL - CIVIC TRUST

Arthur Keostler in his "Age of Longing"

stresses the importance of continuity to a balanced society. "Reactionaries", says the character, M Anatole, "suffer from constipation, and revolutionaries suffer from diarrhoea." And this is because they lack a sense of continuity in changing times.

M Anatole would have enjoyed the Civic Trust's handbook, "Understanding our Surroundings." The first of five points which begin Chapter One runs:

"No-one can plan properly for the future without understanding the past and present."

The book is subtitled "A Manual of Urban Interpretation" and succeeds in being just that - a well considered, practical guide to the scope and achievements of interpretation in the urban environment. Restricting the philosophy and principals to eight concise and readable pages the author, Arthur Percival, then sets out the stages in an interpretive programme, with examples and practical guidelines.

The main body of the text concerns the use of the various media available to the interpreter, from heritage centres to guided walks. This is quite thorough, and rich in example and illustration. Addresses and references to other publications also appear in this section, and useful appendices are concerned with interpretive potential of various features, comparative capital and running costs of the different media, funds, photography, plaques and trails.

The publication of "Understanding our Surroundings" has filled a gap in the literature available to interpreters of both the urban and rural heritage. It is a pity that the restricted method of distribution (mail order only, from the Trust's London Office) might limit the readership of this well written and very useful book.

"Understanding our Surroundings, a Manual of Urban Interpretation" by Arthur Percival, is available from the Civic Trust, 17 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AW, price £4.60 including postage.

David Potts

### APPEAL TO THE GODS

Bruce Allsop. Oriol Press 1980  
£4.45

The author of the now famous "Ecological Morality" (London 1972) and many other books on architecture, aesthetics and social philosophy has now produced this enjoyable and amusing novel. Allsop's conservation ethic and experience of planning procedures are brought together in this novel to portray the inadequacies and ironies of a system which affects us all and about an issue which concerns a great many people.

The story is set in the Thames Valley at Stingles, a Regency house and park. Coal Board geologists say there is coal under Stingles and the Opencast Executive say nothing must stand in its way of getting it out. The climax is a public enquiry and a Ministers' decision against which there is no appeal - or is there?

I found the novel very entertaining, the characters - Crummie Cootts, Smudge and even the Japanese businessman, Mr Itsibitsi, easy to recognise, and the story very engaging. It is a good example of simple writing using a story line to make some good hard hitting points. The essence of good written interpretation? Those living in the Vale of Belvoir will perhaps get some comfort from the book.

T R Stevens

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN URBAN AREAS  
(H.M.S.O. £2.25)

This book is the result of a committee established by the Environmental Board under the chairmanship of Professor Peter Hall. It was set up to examine the present state of environmental education and to suggest new initiatives for the future.

The report states that environmental education should play a greater role in schools, especially secondary schools, where it should be developed as part of many other subjects, rather than a separate subject. "The emphasis should be on local studies, with locally-produced materials and on bringing educational and environmental interests

## Books

together."

The report also points out the need to encourage environmental awareness during the training of professional architects, surveyors, housing managers and so on, and suggests that the relevant professional bodies should set up a working party with the Department of the Environment.

### ECOLOGY IN COLOUR

Sand dunes, Oak woods, the Ice Age, are just three of the subjects covered by the Nature Conservancy Council's range of Countryside and Wildlife wallcharts and leaflets.

Retailing at around 75p N.C.C. can offer generous wholesale terms, that enable you to show a return on your interpretation.

If you'd like more information or just a copy of our latest catalogue and price list please contact Roger Pittaway, Interpretive Branch, N.C.C., Attingham Park, Shrewsbury (phone 074 377 611)

### THE KITCHEN CATALOGUE (ed.) R C Brears

This describes and illustrates the comprehensive range of kitchen equipment from the early eighteenth century to the present day in the Castle Museum, York Collections. The introduction throws many interesting sidelights on diet and cooking methods.

### THE DAIRY CATALOGUE (ed.) Stephen Harrison

This makes public one of the finest collections of dairy equipment in the county, largely collected in North Yorkshire in the earlier part of the century. It includes a concise historical guide to dairying practice in Yorkshire.

Both these publications are available from the Castle Museum, York

### SURVEY OF ARCHITECTURAL SITES IN HUMBERSIDE. N Loughlin and K Miller

A comprehensive statement of the great wealth of Humberside archaeological heritage, the survey lists over 4000 sites. It is published at £8.25 by Humberside County Council, Albion Street, Hull.

### OTHER INTERESTING TITLES

"The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes" (ed.) D W Meining. O.U.P. New York £3.95.

"The Land Speaks : Organising and Running an Interpretation System" Yorke Edwards. National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada, Suite 308,47 Colborne Street, Toronto, Ontario. M5E 1E3, at \$5

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## Take Note!

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### CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETATION

The Carnegie UK Trust has awarded Manchester Polytechnic £75,000 to set up this centre within the Institute of Advanced Studies. The money will cover staff and related costs until the Centre is able to become self-financing. Anthony Fyson, ex TCPA and BEE, has been appointed to head the Centre and will take up his post on September 1st. Later, a deputy will be appointed who will have the main responsibility for organising the courses, conferences and consulting work.

The Centre will operate on a nationwide basis and its purpose will be twofold, promotional and educational.

It will seek to promote the idea of interpretation through the collation and development of both the philosophy and techniques of interpretation. This information will be disseminated by conferences and publications; visits to events and organisations throughout the country; the provision of advice to local authorities and others; and the acceptance of consultancy work of a pioneering nature where this can also be used for demonstration purposes.

In addition to the stimulation of wider interest it is important to assist in training the necessary staff to plan,

organise and undertake the work.

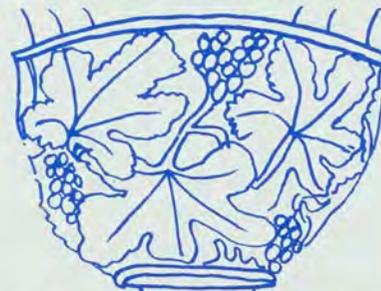
Short training courses will be held in Manchester and elsewhere involving small group study of particular aspects of environmental interpretation. The emphasis will be on the acquisition of practical skills, such as the identification and analysis of sites to be interpreted, the recognition of potential and the determination of priorities. Particular attention will be given to training in the selection and use of media and the techniques of communication with the public in different situations.

It is expected that few authorities will be in a position, at the present time, to employ additional specialist staff in this work - even if they were available. Therefore, the Centre will concentrate on the provision of opportunities for "in-service" training of staff already in post.

### COIN BOX INTERPRETATION

"Mummy, if you put some money in that box over there GOD will tell you all about it!" God in this case happens to be the dignified voice of Mr John Snagge, O.B.E., and the little girl accompanying her Mother just two of the 1,500,000 visitors estimated to visit York Minster every year.

Following a recent survey prepared by Public Attitude Surveys Ltd, for the English Tourist Board, 11% of all visitors to the Minster pay to listen to prerecorded narrations from 12 unobtrusive but well designed oak cabinets sited around the Church floor.



A small and specialised company, aptly named Info-Bar Ltd, owns and operates some 250 coin box units in 30 major centres of tourism and offer a wide

range of "point of interest" subjects as far afield as York in the North East, Caernarfon Castle in the North West, Dover Castle in the South East and The Fleet Air Arm Museum in the South West. Welsh is an added language facility in the principality in addition to the normal English, French and German.

Prominent contributors to the company's scriptwriting skills include The Marchioness of Tavistock, Vice Admiral Sir Patrick Bayly of The Maritime Trust, General Sir Ian Jacobs and Mr Brian Trubshaw, the Chief Test Pilot of the Concord project. During 1980 Info-Bar expects 1,500,000 tourists, both national and foreign will pay to hear their recordings in the various Cathedrals, Castles, Stately Homes and Museums across the country.

Occupying former Senior Officers cabins, the company operates from the unusual address of H.M.S. Belfast, and services its London installations from this central location which includes The Cutty Sark, St. Paul's Cathedral, The R.A.F. Museum, the London Transport Museum and soon, H.M.S. Discovery and The Historic Ships Collection at St. Katherine's Dock.

Apart from the financial considerations the company believes its purpose is to make the tourist's visit all the more memorable by the professional use of the spoken word. It is also significant that from their own endeavours a substantial sum of money is returned to the hardest pressed section of the industry, namely the Private Sector, the Charitable Trust and the Public Appeal Fund. All in all, the co-Directors, Douglas and Linda Vince, find it a satisfying occupation.

### THE VIEW FINDERS

The View Finders is an Exhibition planned for the summer at Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal. It is concerned with the interpretation of scenery in the Lake District. Eight much painted views have been selected and they are seen through the eyes of a wide range of artists in every media from oil paint to photograph. The artists selected cover a period from the early 18th Century to the present day.

## Take Note!

Artists have often found the landscape very difficult to represent. Of course the earliest travellers were clearly afraid of it. Gray was reputed to have drawn the window of his carriage up when driving under the craggy heights of Helvellyn because the scenery was too overwhelming and his courage failed him. In Grange-in-Borrowdale he felt as if he were at the end of the world with the mountains forming their 'awful amphitheatre around.' The views were described in such words as 'hideous desolation,' 'wild and savage,' 'formidable,' 'inhospitable and frightful.'

In 1772 William Gilpin had written his book *Observations relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty*, a lengthy treatise on the scenery of Cumberland and Westmorland and how the artist ought to approach it. He discussed the ingredients of a picture, mountains, trees, waterfalls and lakes and made recommendations on what to do with them and how to rearrange them. So the new wave of visitors dealt with these ingredients in various ways. Some are not only exaggerations of the scenes but sometimes straight travesties. Interpretation was replaced by imagination, invention, exaggeration or anything that would increase the unusualness of the view and the profits from the sales.

There will be postcards in the Exhibition and also a peep show giving a scene interpreted three dimensionally and at children's eye level. There will also be cameras, tripods, projectors and old photographic equipment in the Exhibition to illustrate the work of the many photographers who lived and worked in, or visited, the Lake District from the mid 19th Century.

The Exhibition will be sponsored in part by Sotheby Parke Bernet and Co. and there will be an accompanying catalogue with articles on features portrayed in the Exhibition.

M E Burkitt

## DAN-YR-OGOF'S BONE CAVE OPENS

Not long ago the peaceful wooded hill-sides of the Upper Swansea Valley were invaded by dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures, who settled in a rocky corner of the Dan-yr-Ogof Showcaves to become one of Wales's most popular tourist attractions. Now another band of unexpected visitors has made their home in the Bone Cave of Dan-yr-Ogof. In a dramatically effective setting, an archaeological dig, a burial, a hyena den, scale models of cave dwelling animals and a Bronze Age village, have been authentically recreated and augmented with finds from these caves and others throughout Britain. A detailed commentary helps reconstruct episodes in the early history of man and of other animals, thereby continuing the story of evolution started outside by the geological trail and the dinosaur park. A Roman legionnaire guards the exit to the Bone Cave, reminding visitors that the Roman invasion and colonisation followed quite shortly after the Iron Age in Britain. A fascinating back-up display of archaeological finds is on show at the Dan-yr-Ogof gift and craft shop.

## A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST AT BLAENAVON

Blaenavon Iron works in the Eastern Valleys of Gwent is one of Wales's most impressive and significant industrial sites. It is an important example of a late 18th century ironworks, whose blast furnaces were built in 1789 and which reached the peak of its production in the 1820s. By 1860 it had ceased operating and then fell into decline. Now in the care of the Secretary of State for Wales, the ironworks are undergoing extensive restoration work. A viewing platform has been erected and interpretive facilities are planned, together with a site museum. Overlooking the ironworks is a touching reminder of the plight of the workers of the Industrial Revolution - the humble cottages of Stack Square (built on such a steep slope that their back rooms are single storey) sum up much of what was hard and brutal about these times, when a man and his labourers were rarely separated.

## FISHING FOR HISTORY

The Sunday Telegraph called it "the country's first, biggest, best and only Fishing Museum." The Western Mail said it contains "enough... to entrance even the most complete of anglers." The "it" in question is a unique museum, devoted entirely to fishing and housed in Salmon Leap - an aptly named converted cottage on the banks of the River Teifi in West Wales.

The museum is not only a showcase for a vast collection of fishing antiquities - rods, reels, flies, spinners, nets and salmon spears, it also traces the history of fishing. Superb exhibits of a cormorant, beaver, otter, bittern and heron remind us of the original fishers, who were experts in the art long before man took up angling.

The Fishing Museum, which has been financed and set up by a former Teifi coracle champion, also awards cash prizes for top weight salmon, sewin and brown trout, which are then preserved and displayed at the museum. The museum is situated at Cenarth, approximately 5 miles from Cardigan.

## TREVITHICK'S LOCOMOTIVE RESURRECTED

It is a well-known fact that in 1804 Richard Trevithick's locomotive pipped Stevenson's 'Rocket' at the post in making the first journey by a steam locomotive anywhere in the world. The journey, which took place along the tramroad from Panydarren to Abercynon in South Wales, came about as a result of a wager between two prominent local ironmasters that the locomotive would haul a 10 ton load for 10 miles and return with the empty wagons.

This historic journey has always aroused great interest and romantic speculation in Wales and is now in the throes of commemoration in the most appropriate way possible. The Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum at Cardiff is constructing a full-scale live steam replica of the locomotive, complete with wagons, and it will operate on a specially laid track at the museum's site in Cardiff Docks.

Aided by a substantial grant from the Wales Tourist Board, the construction of the locomotive has been a collabor-

ative effort, undertaken by apprentices at local companies associated with the coalmining and steel industries; three South Wales technical colleges have been involved in the construction of the wagons.

## GET WEAVING

Rodeilio Crafts Centre is the kind of delightful place that is a pleasure to stumble upon by chance. Situated in a sleepy village on the Isle of Anglesey, the Centre is a tastefully converted farmhouse - the ideal setting for the excellent exhibition of old craft and farm implements. Also on exhibition and on sale are a wide range of pottery, silverware, woven goods and other craft products all made on the Isle of Anglesey and by the craftsmen whom visitors can watch at work.

## RETURN OF THE MAGIC LANTERN

Whites Wonders is neither a name nor an experience to forget. This unique, new, Cardiff-based company specialises in the recreation of a virtually-forgotten entertainment form - the Victorian Magic Lantern Show.

Their publicity material proclaims "a truly 'dreadful' and unique entertainment with something to surprise and horrify the whole family." They are now on their first major tour which ends in North Wales at Coleg Harlech on 17th November. In a colourfully vivid presentation, the show features a wide cross-section of original lantern material, plus various anecdotes about the first showmen and their methods. The shows are being held at art centres and theatres all over Wales and at some community centres where the lantern entertainment was once enjoyed.

## EDUCATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

This conference originally planned by the Heritage Education Group for Election Day 1979, took place on 8th May this year in Nottingham. Closely following the pattern of previous meetings, the key guest speaker was Asa Briggs on "The Educational Challenge of the Environment." The meeting provided an opportunity for discussion amongst the invited delegates, many of whom came from local

# interpretation newsletter

## Take Note!

authorities in the region. Local schoolchildren guided the conference around Nottingham's 'Lace Market Trail' and there was a concluding discussion led by a panel of speakers.

### INVESTIGATIVE STUDY : INTERPRETIVE EVENTS

Terry Robinson at the Countryside Commission is undertaking a study of Interpretive Events in the Countryside. You will probably already have heard from him, but if not, he would be very grateful for details of any events that could be described as 'Interpretive' such as guided walks, medieval fairs, animal shows etc.

### STOKE BRUERNE WATERWAYS MUSEUM

In March, the top floor of this museum was completely reorganised. The dominant feature is a display of tools and equipment used in canal construction and maintenance. The collection of tools is grouped round a blacksmith's forge in a realistic workshop setting. The museum also has on display a reproduction of one of two maps it has recently been donated, of canals and navigable waterways in 1830.

## Courses

### MARITIME MUSEUMS IN GREAT BRITAIN

The third symposium on this type will be held from 17th to 19th October 1980 at the Snowdonia National Park Study Centre. Its theme will be Conservation, Preservation and Interpretation. A tour of sites in the area has also been arranged. Further details from Richard Keen, Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum, National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CP1 3NP.

### AUTUMN MEETING

A one day meeting of the Society will take place in Bath on Saturday, 29th November. Members will be circulated.

### COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND INTERPRETIVE PLANNING COURSE

The Countryside Commission for Scotland is to run an Interpretive Planning course in late September. It will be based at Kindrogan Field Centre, near Blairgowrie, and at the Commission's headquarters at Battleby near Perth.

The course, which is based on practical workshop sessions rather than lectures, will include a simulated local interpretive planning exercise and consider topics like local and regional interpretive planning; evaluation of interpretive provisions etc. There will be the opportunity to visit some sites which have interpretive facilities. It is aimed at planners working in local government, with other statutory agencies, or with voluntary bodies, park staff, designers, architects and others who may be involved in planning interpretation.

Further details and application forms can be obtained from Mrs Ruth Grant, Education Officer, Countryside Commission for Scotland, Battleby, Redgorton, Perth PH1 3EW. Tel: 0738 27921

### LOSEHILL HALL: PEAK NATIONAL PARK STUDY CENTRE

### TOURISM AND COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION

A seminar organised jointly with Countryside Recreation Management Association. 31st October - 2nd November 1980.

The development and promotion of tourism in the countryside is not always compatible with countryside conservation. This seminar will discuss the issues involved and will investigate examples where positive solutions are being used to enable tourism to develop harmoniously in the countryside.

Further details from: Peter Townsend, Principal, Peak National Park Study Centre, Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire, S30 2WB