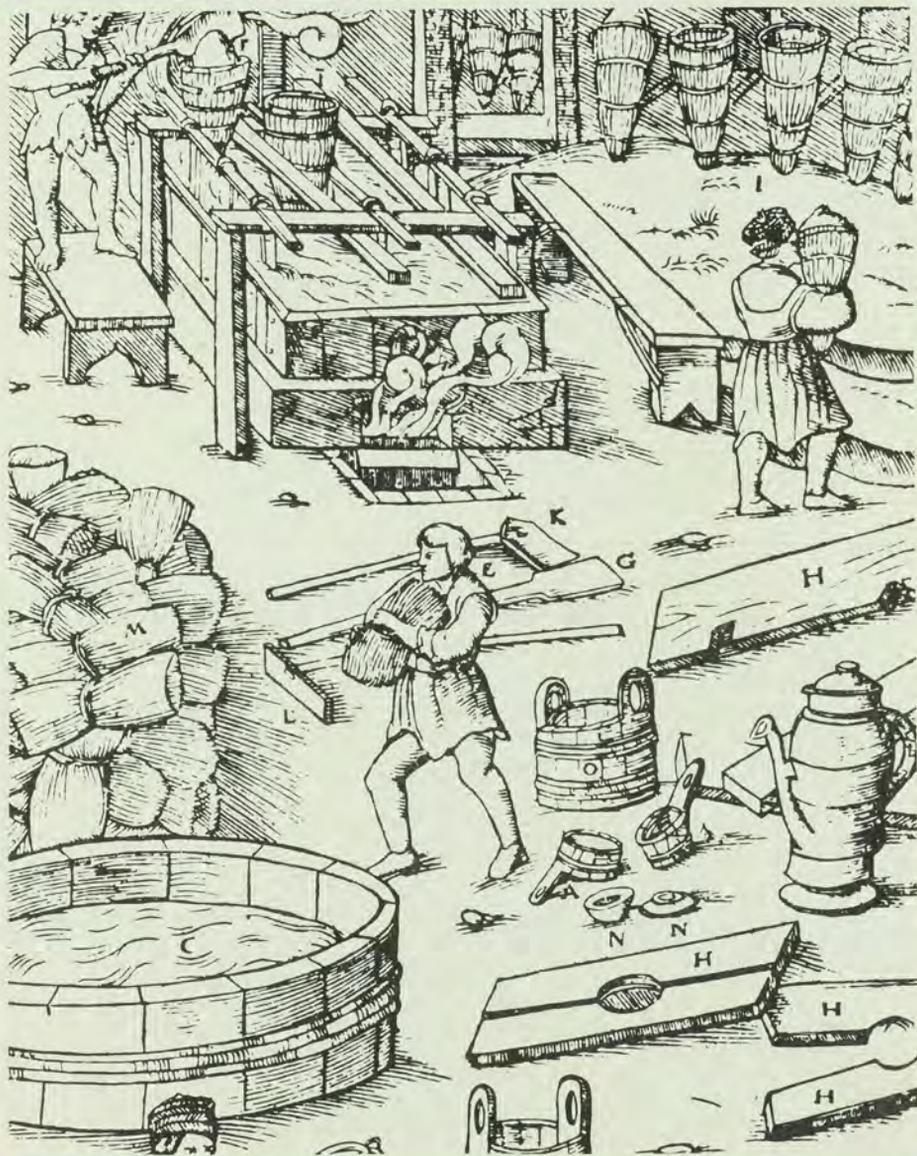


# interpretation

NUMBER 20

SPRING 1982



## 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.

## Subscriptions

The subscription for membership is £5 per annum for individuals and £15 for corporate bodies.

## The Newsletter

'Interpretation', the newsletter of the Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage, is published three times a year. It is distributed free to members. Non-members may buy copies at 70p each.

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To advertise in Interpretation contact the editorial office.

Advertisement rates: Full page £30  
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Please supply camera-ready artwork in the following sizes or the same proportions (height first in all cases):

Full page 260x170mm to reduce to 180x120

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Unprepared text for adverts can be copy typed and prepared for camera by the editorial office free of charge but only in the 'house style'.

Loose inserts are normally charged at the standard rate of £15 plus any incidental costs - for example extra postage.

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Readers please note:-

The copy date for the next issue of Interpretation is June 11th 1982

## Viewpoint: Free Roaming

There is a seductively simple argument which surfaces periodically in support of the notion that the era of free access to recreation in the open countryside is over. It runs roughly like this: the use of the countryside for walking, picnicing, nature watching etc is no longer cost-free, there being considerable incidental expenses - e.g. car parks, footpath maintenance, sign posting and so on; therefore, someone must pay; therefore, that someone should be the user.

The equally simple riposte states that all prices discriminate against the poorer sections of the community: however nominal the charge, the extra cost is bound to act as a disincentive to potential users.

The arguments are of course a good deal more complex in reality (and are rehearsed in a good many books and articles<sup>1</sup>). Pricing is an extremely useful economic tool operating in a 'free market' to ensure the efficient allocation of resources. Prices can raise revenue for general or specific purposes. Revenues raised at different recreation sites can indicate consumer preferences. Differential pricing can divert users from one site to another. Deliberate 'over' pricing can protect a vulnerable resource. Seasonal or day pricing can even out uneven patterns of use. On the other hand, the case is put for access to countryside recreation as a public good like health and education which should be paid for out of general taxation. Fairness dictates that the poor should not be discriminated against. Furthermore willingness among the

public to pay for countryside access is not the same sort of economic indicator as their willingness to pay, for example, for television sets: if it turned out not to raise large revenues would society then decide not to spend on conservation policies which might preserve the options of future generations? And lastly, how in practice can one control access to open countryside and ensure the imposition of charges?

It is a subject on which it seems possible to go on even-handedly balancing the pros and cons for ever. It still seems right, however, to climb off the fence on the side of no charging. For all that it presently seems to be the relatively affluent who, by reason of better education or greater personal mobility, can take advantage of our hardwon freedom to roam, the interpreter's aim is surely to spread environmental awareness through every stratum of society so that potentially at least all may enjoy the countryside. It is a hard enough task without introducing financial barriers against its ultimate fulfillment.

Anthony Fyson

1. See for example McCallum and Adams in Institute of British Geographers Transactions Vol 5 No 3 1980 and their subsequent debate with Blacksell in Vol 6 No 4 1981.

READERS ARE INVITED TO CONTRIBUTE VIEWPOINTS OF 400 TO 500 WORDS ON ANY SUBJECT, IDEA OR ARGUMENT

## Review

The Monster Book of Environmental Education by Don Aldridge. Geo Abstracts Ltd., Regency House, 34 Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 3AP. £4.50

The book is typical of the author, small, dry humoured, provocative, liable to make irreverent digs at the establishment, yet displaying insight, knowledge and sensitivity. Don is the United Kingdom representative on the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Education and Training and was asked by them to gather and condense a number of strip cartoons he has used over the years as visual aids for 15 lectures. The book is designed to answer the question "What does the Council of Europe do in Environmental Education?" I remain little the wiser about the Council's role but I am nevertheless grateful to that august body for producing the book.

I found it difficult to keep momentum in my reading, not because I was bored, but because I repeatedly found myself brought up short as a drawing or word reminded me of my own or other peoples past mistakes and successes, made me wonder whether I had given enough thought to a facet of a project in progress, or whether I couldn't use "that" in my next lecture. There are

many valid points concerning pit-falls for practical interpreters, hints on how to explain interpretation and the role of the interpreter to those of other disciplines and many useful aids for lecturing and training. Don points in an amusing but immediately understandable way the variations in the role of visitor centres, museums and field education centres. He delves into interpretive planning and good and bad interpretation and draws one on to think again about the relationship between education and interpretation. He even tells us, as he told them, what the Scottish Countryside Commission is for.

Despite its charm and all the meat in it, however, most readers will find something to criticise. The very purpose for which it was written makes this inevitable. Some of the necessary editing makes one feel that points have not been fully made, and in the absence of the lecturer one or two of the lessons are not easy to grasp. The political points will not interest or please everyone. But if the art of interpretation is about making people think then this book makes it abundantly clear that Don is a master interpreter. It is a book I shall dip into time and again and I commend it to you, be your natural habitat a visitor centre, museum or field study centre.

Peter Moore

## Acton Scott

ACTON SCOTT WORKING FARM MUSEUM

VISITOR SURVEY, 1981

Sylvia Lough, Assistant Keeper, Acton Scott.

### Aims of the Survey

The survey was carried out amongst adult visitors to the Acton Scott Working Farm Museum during the 1981 season (April to October inclusive). Its purpose was twofold; firstly, to find out more about the type of visitors who are coming to the museum (where they come from, by what means of transport, whether they are on a day trip or on holiday etc) and secondly, to assess how the site is being used (what areas of the site are visited most, and visitor's reactions to the information and services available).

Some of this information was being collated for the first time, whilst

other questions were asked in order to compare with the results of a previous survey carried out in 1978 and to assess the effects of additions and improvements made since that date.

The survey was carried out by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust Research Assistant with the help of a Manpower Services Commission employee.

### Method of Survey

Brief questionnaires were prepared for the visitors to fill in themselves on leaving the site. Visitors were encouraged to complete the forms in the picnic area, in one of the shops, or in their cars, but on an outdoor site such as this, the system proved unsatisfactory, as on wet days only about half the forms were returned.

The forms were handed out on every eighth day (in order to cover the whole range of weekdays and Bank Holidays) to every fifth adult visitor leaving the site. Two hundred and fifty completed forms were received out of a total of 2,969 adult visitors on those particular days and 21,530 adult visitors over the whole season.





## Results of Survey

### Section 1 - Type of Visitor

1. The Majority of visitors in the sample (97%) set out on the day of their visit from a radius of approximately 50 miles, whilst just over half lived within that radius. Only 21% of the sample lived in Shropshire although 65% were on holiday in the county. The majority of our visitors set out from Shropshire, Hereford & Worcestershire, West Midlands and Cheshire and Lancashire and this pattern is also reflected in our visiting school groups.

There were roughly equal proportions of daytrippers and holidaymakers. 96% of the sample came by car; coach parties accounted for a very small proportion of visitors. The proportion of retired visitors in the sample was 16%.

These results indicate that, as we found in 1978, we are still catering largely for car-owners who are willing to travel some distance to get here. This is to be expected, given the location of the museum, but it would appear that we are not attracting many

coach parties of adults - which would provide a means for more retired people and non car-owners to visit the museum. The museum is not served directly by a bus route, it is one mile from the nearest bus stop and visitors have to walk a steep hill from the bus. In addition, a lack of indoor refreshment facilities or reduced entry rates for adult groups may have accounted for the low proportion of coach parties, and it will be interesting to see the effects of both provisions being introduced for the first time next year.

2. Over half of our sample mentioned other sites they had visited this year, which come into the broad description of country parks, museums, historic houses etc. Most of these were outdoor or partly outdoor sites. Nearly two thirds of the sample came to the museum as a direct response to our formal publicity; newspaper advertisements, posters, tourist guides etc. This accounted for a slightly higher proportion of visitors than in 1978, which indicates that our increased publicity has brought in visitors from a

wider area, as well as reaching more people living or staying in the West Midlands. The present survey indicates that our visitors come from all over the country, although they set out from a fairly local area.

### Section 2 - Use of the Site

1. Most of the visitors in the sample spent a considerable time here; about half spent between one and two hours and half more than two hours. We found, however, that certain areas of the site were not being fully used - for example, the proportion of adults visiting the fields was only 56%, the same as in 1978. The farmyard and surrounding buildings were visited by all the sample, but the wheelwright's shop, forge, granary and barn were not used to the full considering the additional displays and demonstrations in these areas this year. The dairy and livestock were most popular whilst the fields, horse work and machinery were mentioned less often.

Although visitors were not asked their reasons for not visiting certain areas of the site, reasons were often indicated elsewhere in the survey, and visitors comments included a lack of signposting and information, and the muddy nature of the site in wet weather. Both these factors present constant problems to the museum, as an extensive use of signs and labels, or of concrete paths, would detract from the "unspoilt" atmosphere of a fully working farm, which is what the museum portrays and which attracts many visitors in the first place.

2. With the exception of the guide book, which sold to well over half the visitors, visitors on the sample appeared to be unwilling to buy many publications. This may be connected with

the increase in admission charges to £1.00 for adult visitors in 1981, or to the fact that some visitors seemed to be unaware of the scale of information available.

A large number of requests for information were made - mostly by individuals interested in specific subjects.

There were a wide variety of comments about the site and several of those most frequently made were similar to the request made in 1978 - for better refreshment facilities, less congestion in certain demonstration areas, and for more animals and working exhibits to be seen.

Two points emerge from the second part of the survey; firstly, that certain important parts of the site (for example the fields which demonstrate arable farming under a 4-course rotation using turn-of-the-century methods) are not being used to their full potential. There is clearly a lack of information or encouragement particularly to visitors who come from towns and may be unused to farms. Secondly, many visitors like to see plenty of livestock, demonstrations and activities. Both these questions will have to be resolved in a way which does not destroy the nature of the site, or upset the balance of farming on 23 acres, only 6 of which are arable. In addition, it is clear that on a site which is almost all out-of-doors, bad weather can spoil the enjoyment of a visit, as well as reducing the amount of farm work which visitors can watch. Forward planning by the museum will attempt to take these factors into account whilst maintaining the balance and unspoilt atmosphere of what is essentially a working farm museum.



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# Maximise your Press Potential

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Andrew Wilson, journalist  
Text of a talk given at Brockhole during the Countryside Commission's "Marketing in Countryside Recreation" course.

The Press want news. The Press - newspapers, magazines, radio and TV - are in the business of collecting and disseminating news. They are in the market for news, whether they have to pay a staff man/woman, freelance or agency for it, or whether they get it free through a Press Release, a tip-off or report volunteered by an interested party.

They will thank you for letting them know of anything you consider might make a story, or that takes their total of knowledge a stage further. They will not thank you for not contacting them, even if you only have a suspicion of an idea about something interesting.

They will appreciate your information, tip-off (about an event coming up) or report (about an event that has just happened), even if they make a choice not to use it. Give them the opportunity to refuse or accept; either way, at that point you have contact and can start to build up a rapport with them. You can even ask them what they would like from you in future, what they might be interested in, etc. You will still have to compete with many other people who want to see their stuff in print - including the staff journalists! - but at least you will have embarked on a process through which you will develop a keener news sense and improve your offerings until you do get them accepted.

A friend once told me: "Write it so well, that they can't refuse!" That is a good standard to work by - and is just as important to the professional news-man as it is to the volunteer. It still does not mean that you will get everything in - any more than a staff man does. But it does mean that you give yourself the maximum

chance of getting it in, and that you recognise that your success depends on you - not on the copy taster or the news editor. This cuts out time-wasting grumbling and sends you back to the drawing-board to see what you can do to improve the story, or to make sure the next one is better.

## Things That Make News in Your Field.

Surveys and statistics of your establishment make news: visitor numbers, where they come from, what they like best, their composition - school parties, overseas visitors, V.I.P.'s, etc. When you have two or more sets of figures, these can be compared from one year to the next; you can also pick out superlatives and talk about the 'best' or 'worst' - or the 'first time', 'the last time', etc. - and give reasons why.

The aim should be not to get a full-page feature, but to get your name in the paper/magazine or on the air as many times as you can, even if its just a sentence. That is where we scored at Brockhole. For example, "Yesterday a party of 100 disabled sportsmen from the International Disabled Games in Gateshead visited the Lake District and had lunch at the National Park Centre, Brockhole" (A sentence to that effect appeared in the 'Times' and 'Telegraph').

Financial details are newsworthy - e.g. whether the money you have been given or have spent has gone up or down - and some idea of why; what grants you have received; any alterations in the way you are financed, or in the way the money is used - and why; any proposals for extension or development.

New ideas or developments to further the purpose of the establishment; new sections or activities; any policy decisions taken that are going to affect them - e.g. more access, more facilities for the disabled, more sign-posting, better catering facilities, better toilets, more car park space, more coach space, extensions or alterations in opening hours, new displays or exhibits; major staff changes (providing opportunities for interviews with departing or incoming senior staff).

Also newsworthy are new publications contemplated or under production -

saying why they are necessary, what their purpose is, how they will help the public (even if they only help the public to find you), what your aspirations are for them - i.e. what you hope to achieve as a result of publishing them.

Also of interest is the use of your centre or recreational area by others - by school parties, youth groups, local organisations or societies, national groups who use your facilities for committee meetings or conferences. Let the newspaper/radio station know the meeting is taking place. If it includes any well-known names as chairmen or participants, tell them - so that they can fix up interviews if they want to. Tell them how delighted you are to have the centre used in this way, and how honoured/important it makes you/the centre feel. Ask them if they want you to help fix up any interviews/phone calls with the leader(s). Ask them if they want you to report back afterwards on the success (or otherwise) of the event.

Book-launchings, too, come in this category - and at Brockhole, these have become part of the way of life. Brockhole publicise it. The Press come, or at least mention it (and Brockhole). Brockhole gets more publicity - not just as a visitor centre, but as a place where things happen and, on many of these occasions, a place to be (and to be seen to be!).

Talks being given at your centre are also newsworthy - e.g. the 'Meet the Author' series at Brockhole, which also includes a 'Meet the Journalist' session (with me!). Journalists do like to see other writers including fellow journalists honoured in this way, and often they go out of their way to mention it.

Promoting/Marketing your Newsworthiness. It is clear from the above that newsworthiness, or newsmess, is not a passive thing. It is not something you just hope for and then blame the newspaper if it is not forthcoming. There are active, positive steps you can take to promote many of the newsworthy activities, etc., mentioned above - and such promotion can be both scientific and systematic (as it has to be to get increasingly better results).

You can get the news yourself about numbers, figures, visitors etc. You can develop newsworthy activities like talks by prominent local people (including talks by journalists!). You can invite local organisations to use your facilities - and let the Press know about this. You can make overtures to national or regional groups that your facilities exist for day-long or week-long meetings, conferences, etc. You can keep your eyes and ears open for likely publications being launched in the region - and invite them to launch it there. At the same time, you will find yourself able to sell or market yourself/centre more easily on the basis of what your idea/proposal/project has to offer in terms of its public relations value - a hidden plus factor the value of which cannot be underestimated.

Press Contacts. Having got a sense of the newsworthiness of some information/idea/activity, you can tip-off the local newspaper(s), evening newspaper(s), radio station(s), TV station(s) and representatives of national newspapers. Find out from your local newspaper who is working locally for the national newspapers; or find out directly from the national newspapers themselves. There is always somebody locally who is keeping them in touch, sometimes a staff man on a local paper, or (in a city) a freelance Press Agency. If there is a Press Agency or an N.U.J. freelance in your area, contact him/her/them. The Yellow Pages usually has a list of them, either under "Journalists" or "News and Photo Agencies" or "Newspaper Correspondents". Invite their help. Tell them you consider that what you are doing is of news value, and the principles/policies you are working on or working out have significance to others in your line of work and therefore could have national significance or application.

As well as phoning these people, send out Press Releases about the items I have mentioned (not more than one side, double spaced). Use these to tell them about events before they happen, so that they have time to arrange coverage. Send them out about 7-10 days before the event, but not earlier, as it needs to be relevant to the period they are dealing

with. After an event, send out another one so that they can use it as a news item if they were not there.

Press Conferences, too, are useful. These can be held when you have something special to say (and somebody special to say it), some new developments or plans to reveal or some new facility to open. Cumbria County Council have even held Press Conferences to enable the County Treasurer to explain the County's financial and budgetary arrangements.

The Press like conferences, because it gives them a set time and place to make for, they can meet other journalists, they can bask in a renewed feeling of being important, special and privileged. Some drinks or eats should be provided, even if (outside meal times) it need only be a token. But it is a token that is appreciated; and if you are expecting city journalists to travel to a countryside centre to write stories about it for your benefit, then the least you can do is to do something for them.

But, please, where you can, hold your Press Conferences in the morning, so that the TV and photo people have time to get their stuff back to the studio or the newspaper. They don't mind it being early (we regularly have powerboat record attempts on Windermere before breakfast), but it spoils it for them and you if they have to do a 'rush' job because you have not given them enough time to get back to the studio.

Also, where possible, hold your Press Conference on a Monday or Tuesday so that the local papers have got a chance to get the news in that week; by Thursday or Friday, when most of them are published, it is too late for that week and so becomes less newsworthy.

Of course there will be occasions when you have to have a Press Conference at other times because of the nature of the events or the people taking part. But do try to keep it as near the ideal as you can.

As for guest speakers, for a special event or for opening something, do please choose the most newsworthy person you can. Some people make news

just by their very name. These are ideal, and do not be shy at asking them. That is what many of them are there for! If you cannot manage a Princess - and I had two in one week in the Lake District recently - at least go for a Duke/Duchess, an Earl/Countess or a Baron/Baroness. People with titles are professional openers, and there are some in every field of endeavour - e.g. Countess of Arran in the powerboat world, the Duke of Buccleuch or Baroness Masham in the field of the disabled, Lord Hunt for conservation, etc. There are also others who, although not having a title, are regarded as royalty in their particular field - e.g. Chris Bonnington, for mountaineering activities. Go for the best. You will find most of them only too pleased to help if they can.

Open Days for the Press and public can also be arranged. Sometimes there is a case for giving the Press an Open Day on its own. But usually there should be no need for that. An Open Day, with a special invitation to the Press, and a special time and place set apart for them to talk to the man/woman at the top to ask any further questions, is usually sufficient. But if it is linked in with some new development at your establishment, some obvious news line, then so much the better. (It is often worthwhile thinking out something new that can be announced on these occasions, so that you give the Press something to work on - and ensure yourself some publicity at least).

Press Officers. If your organisation has a Press Officer who insists you go through him, show him this memo and tell him you expect him to do all he can to help you follow this enlightened route with the Press. But if not, you can always say you will show this memo to the Chief Executive or a County Councillor - or even to the Press itself. That should do the trick! (or you can write a "Letter to the Editor"!)

If you have any problems, or want any further help or advice, I will be always glad to help. Write to me at: 2 Lane Head, Windermere, Cumbria LA23 2DW; or phone: Windermere (096 62 (096 62) 5124.

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## Clarke Hall

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YORKSHIRE REGIONAL MEETING

CLARKE HALL EDUCATION MUSEUM,  
near Wakefield. 6th February 1982

Cathie McFie

Clarke Hall is a 17th century farmer's house which is administered by the Wakefield M.D. Authority and offers a service which is shared by six local education authorities.

The Hall still appears as it did in the 1680's and retains many features which rarely survive in other Yorkshire houses of that period. The entire house and garden have been restored to their original condition and, where original material has not been available, rooms have been furnished with accurate reconstructions (which may be handled by visiting groups).

The result is a thought-provoking educational resource which is used in a variety of ways by school groups of all ages and abilities. Children step back 300 years in time when they spend a day at Clarke Hall. They usually arrive dressed in period costume and may be involved in a wide range of activities, including cooking, dairy work, spinning and weaving. The theme of the visit is typically linked to considerable preparatory and follow-up work.

Clarke Hall is not open to visitors, which means that SIBH had a rare opportunity to experience a unique educational resource and to test the potential and application of the relatively little used interpretive techniques which are practised there.

A motley assortment of Puritans gathered at Clarke Hall on the appointed morning, prepared to immerse themselves in the 17th century for one day.

After a brief introduction by Tony Stevens, the Warden and Barbara Roberts (who, between them, host all school visits), the group was taken on a "guided tour" of the Hall - with a difference. To demonstrate the potential of visitor participation and to introduce the concepts of Theatre

in Education (TIE) and Drama in Education (DIE), a simple theme had been prepared in advance. The interpreters were given the role of a group of friends and relations converging on Clarke Hall to celebrate a family christening. As the tour progressed, additional sub-themes, relationships and tensions were introduced until the original basic framework was superceded by a more spontaneous dramatic involvement which came, unprompted, from members of the group. The initial, more structured approach is known as TIE and the latter (more unpredictable and harder to control but potentially more rewarding) as DIE. Fortunately, the group managed to unravel the threads of plague, mysterious travellers, marauding soldiers and papist plots in time for lunch.

Mulled wine probably helped to unleash the imagination for the afternoon's projects. Each project team had to organise a visit to Clarke Hall for a different group of visitors. Using the principles of participation and role play, each team was asked to plan a visit which would give its group insight into one aspect of 17th century life at Clarke Hall. These groups included:

- 15 blind children of 10-11 years
- a mini-bus load of Japanese tourists with a poor command of English
- 25 urban housewives from a Women's Institute
- a large class of bright but over-exuberant and poorly controlled middle school children

The programme wound up with an A-V presentation by Tony Stevens on the school use of Clarke Hall and a continuing discussion on the potential of drama as an interpretive technique. The following points were raised at different times and deserve mention:

1. Increasingly, we experience life "second hand", often through the medium of television. The use of drama and personal involvement exposes visitors to a first hand emotional experience which is valuable in its own right. Even a simple communal activity like preparing a meal and sitting down to

eat together is a novel and rewarding experience for some children.

2. In a role play situation, participants are forced to concentrate on what is happening around them: on what is being said. As a result, their awareness is heightened and their receptivity to information greatly increased.

3. A dramatic approach need not be confined to historic homes. It might be effectively applied to other interpretive situations such as guided walks and exhibitions.

4. The practical problems of introducing a dramatic approach to a situation where most visitors are casual and length of stay varies greatly need very careful thought.

## Evaluation at Risley Moss

REPORT ON NORTH WEST REGIONAL MEETING  
RISLEY MOSS - EVALUATION OF INTERPRETIVE PROVISION 4 November 1981

by Graeme McLearnie

The spring meeting of the SIBH brought together Ian Parkin of Warrington and Runcorn Development Corporation who wanted to carry out some evaluation of interpretive facilities at Risley Moss, David Uzzell of Surrey University who had been involved for the previous two years in the development of a package of evaluation instruments for the Forestry Commission, Graham Taylor of the Countryside Commission who ultimately proved willing to sponsor to a substantial degree an evaluation study, and Duncan Campbell of the Forestry Commission who gave his permission for the package to be used at a non-Commission site.

The result of this encounter was an evaluation study of visitor response to the interpretive facilities of Risley Moss carried out between July - September 1981. The study had four main objectives:

1. to assess the adaptability of the evaluation package
2. to assist Risley Moss by provid-

Surprisingly, considering the national interest in the work pioneered by Clarke Hall, the meeting was not fully booked. Were members deterred by

- the feeling that the subject was not relevant to their own interpretive work?
- having to make a costume and participate in role play?
- the cost (£8.50)

N.B. Members who are interested in living history and the possible application of TIE and DIE to their own work may like to note that Barbara Roberts will soon be available to advise in a freelance capacity. Her address is available from the C.E.I.

ing some 'base data' in the first year of operation to help in future management and as an argument for further financial input

3. to be used as a test case to examine the usefulness of the package to other sites through an SIBH seminar

4. to produce a technical paper on the findings which could be presented at the SIBH London meeting and subsequently published.

The evaluation package comprised:

- a. a visitor centre questionnaire
- b. a site questionnaire
- c. a behavioural mapping study
- d. four 'mini survey' questionnaires on the A/V programme, listening posts, observation tower and observation hide.

A postal survey (questionnaires left on site and returned by respondent by FREEPOST when complete) was the only technique in the Forestry Commission package which was not applied to Risley Moss. The interviews were conducted by WRDC office staff together with the Risley Moss Rangers. The results were processed at the University of Surrey and the initial results were presented to the seminar on 4th November 1981 with a view to fulfilling objectives 1 to 3 above. Objective 4 has since been fulfilled through a presentation, greatly enhanced by the discussions of 4th



November, by David Uzzell and Ian Parkin at the London meeting.

After introductions the proceedings started with a presentation by Ian Parkin about the background to the site. This was followed by Kenn Watt the Head Ranger, describing the interpretive facilities at Risley Moss. Bob Jones of the Forestry Commission then described the package as it had been applied to the Commission's sites. David Uzzell followed this with a presentation of the main findings of the study at Risley Moss. The findings will be published in detail as a project report. However, certain points arising from the findings are worth a mention here:

1. It is envisaged that the F/C package will be administered entirely by site staff, analysed by the University of Surrey, and then returned to the site staff for interpretation of results. It was hoped that the same would happen at Risley Moss. However, with the current ranger staffing levels it was necessary to use other Corporation staff and the variety of interviewers raised a few questions:

- were there too many, varied inter-

viewers?

- Is it essential for the package to be administered entirely by the site staff?

- If so, is there a need to study the deployment of rangers' time to ensure that evaluation is a routine part of the day's duties?

2. The package did not set out to discover the change in level of understanding achieved by the visitor from experiencing the interpretive facilities: this is something that further surveys should concentrate on.

3. Some of the interviewers felt that the package was too 'long' (ie too many questions). However, this raises the problem that a questionnaire which is too short may not provide enough data.

Graham Duffy of Graphic Partners (Edinburgh), the consultants who designed and produced the visitor centre exhibition, responded to the questionnaire findings. The response to an 'if we knew then what we know now' analysis was that the partners would not have changed the exhibition appreciably. The problem of repeat visitors was raised - many visitors who had been round the exhibition

tended only to visit the site on their return visit. How is it possible to cater for repeat visitors? Temporary exhibition panels are a solution. The issue of charging admission to the exhibition was also raised.

Discussion groups then dispersed to talk around four areas:

a. the audio visual facilities - main conclusions were that the listening post tapes were too long and that use of video rather than film loop in a part of the exhibition would be more satisfactory.

b. the display - discussion revolved around the detail of the exhibition and the pros and cons of employing design consultants rather than using in-house staff

c. community involvement - were local interest groups making use of the facilities? Could volunteer wardens be employed more widely? The special problems and advantages of providing interpretation for a New Town community were also discussed.

d. Recreation issues - are there adequate links between the visitor centre and the site? - Is the visitor centre 'value for money' with respect to the site? Should there be more on-site interpretation? Could there be more interpretation of seasonal changes?

Before the various strands of the day were finally brought together Jon Hall from Merseyside County Museums gave a superb 'tongue in cheek' paper asking whether designers - with their vast experience and professional training - knew all the answers anyway and that perhaps evaluation was a waste of time. How could the layman make suggestions for improvement?

The final discussion was started off

by the Chairman, Terry Robinson posing three questions:

1. What is the public purse getting back?
2. What sort of interpretation should be done?
3. How can you make sure you are asking the right questions?

The main points of interest arising from the discussion were a general appreciation of the need for regular evaluation; the continuing problem of whether there is a need to change the exhibition and 'static' interpretation to cater for repeat visitors; and the inevitable question of a charging policy for the site, and with particular reference to Risley Moss, the need to improve roadside signposting.

It was encouraging to see 64 delegates at the meeting (including a fair number of non members), an obvious indication that there is a growing appreciation of the need for evaluation.

From the Development Corporation's point of view the following questions were asked:

Has the evaluation package fulfilled the expectations held at the beginning of the study? The answer is an unequivocal 'yes'. Indeed it has provided benefits far surpassing those originally anticipated.

Would the Development Corporation use the evaluation package again? Yes, with certain modifications. Continuing evaluation is essential and it is hoped that further visitor surveys will be undertaken in the summer of 1982. These will probably be short specific surveys on certain key issues. However, the core of the F/C package could be used biennially with great benefit

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## Scottish Experience

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REGIONAL MEETING AT EDINBURGH

Graham Duffy, Graphic Partners

MORNING VISIT TO 'THE SCOTTISH EXPERIENCE'

The Scottish Experience is a privately run multi-media facility including a massive relief model of Scotland some 40' long, which is the centrepiece of a 'son et lumiere' programme; and a computer controlled A/V presentation on the Making of Edinburgh.

The Members and guests assembled in the comfortable coffee house, having first browsed around the well stocked shop on the floor below street level. Mrs Gay Grossart, a director of The Scottish Experience then welcomed everyone and gave a short introduction to the morning visit.

### Model of Scotland

The group moved up to the first floor level to view the 'Model of Scotland'. This was introduced to the audience, seated on the surrounding rostra, by an A/V programme viewed on video monitors around the model. The history of Scotland was then told in about 20 mins with special effects, lighting, projectors, and sound effects, all linked to the video programme, using the model as the main centrepiece.

The audience were invited to walk around the perimeter of the model where they could press one of several hundred buttons located alongside a photograph and its caption to light up the appropriate location on the model. In many cases a small scale model of the particular building would be beside the location.

Bill Landale, Chairman of The Scottish Experience gave a brief run down on the development of the Model of Scotland concept and pointed out a number of improvements that he felt could be made. The audience joined in at this stage with informal comments and reaction and some of these were as follows:

The massive scale of the map model combined with the low level view point made it difficult for the visitor to

orientate himself geographically when walking around and changing the axis of his viewpoint, and indeed difficult to appreciate Scotland as a whole particularly in respect of the main touring routes. There was discussion about creating a high level gallery on entering the space which would help this problem, perhaps served by a plug-in audio guide arrangement.

Bill Landale also referred to the wider use of 'plug-in' audio guide electronics around the perimeter perhaps tackling region by region. He also recognised that it was difficult at present to see into the centre of such a large model and that small location models were often too distant for their detail to be appreciated, and had thoughts to move them closer to the perimeter, although one would then have to cross refer them with the location.

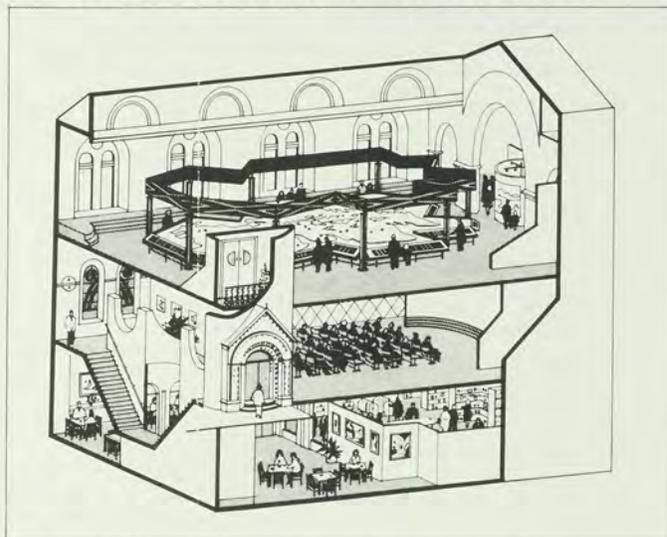
During busy spells the problem of several people pressing buttons simultaneously and not knowing which location light would be applicable, was also seen as a difficulty. The video screens were felt by many to be too small for viewing from the rostra, and the lighting effects on the model were felt to be repetitive over the length of the programme. The programme context was, however, excellent and the dynamic effect and scale of the Scotland model was undoubtedly an imaginative concept which would have an even greater impact once the initial teething troubles were dealt with.

### The Making of Edinburgh

The group proceeded to the A/V theatre on the ground floor and were treated to a beautifully put together 5 screen A/V programme. Soft masking techniques to blend together the 5 screens; composite images, built up gradually over all screens in random shapes; specially commissioned theme music; radio-phonetic sound effects and 'wall to wall' sound all added up to a subtle yet impressive show. The Making of Edinburgh from its volcanic origins up to its annual cultural Festival was neatly told with many fascinating vignettes along the way.

Graham Metcalfe of Calton Audio Visual, who directed the programme gave a short talk about the making of the

## The Scottish Experience



**First Floor**  
The Spectacular Scotland panoramic model and exhibition area  
**Ground Floor**  
Auditorium—The Making of Edinburgh multi-vision production: Films, Conferences etc  
**Lower Floor**  
Information Unit, Exhibitions, Alison's Kitchen, the Scottish Experience Shop



show with little comment from the audience, but praise for what had been seen.

### Managing The Scottish Experience

To wind up the morning visit, Gay Grossart and Andrew Wilson, General Manager, gave a brief résumé of the day to day management problems with the audience adding their comments. There was discussion about the location not being on the City's Royal Mile where the main tourist route was. Gay Grossart replied that she thought that their location at the West End of Princess Street was ideal. She also said however that any private venture such as The Scottish Experience had to promote itself vigorously and to that end they had obtained the services of Michael Vigor, marketing consultant to the former 'London Experience' at Piccadilly.

### AFTERNOON VISIT

After an excellent buffet lunch at Gladstone Court the group received a short talk from James Simpson of Simpson/Brown, Architects who work in association with Bernard Fielden and Partners, the architects responsible for the restoration of Norwich Cathedral.

Simpson/Brown are working on the restoration and development of St Giles, Edinburgh's great pre-Reformation Cathedral. By contrast with the morning visit which was promoting various aspects of Scotland in abstract, it was interesting, if less glamorous, to note that the facilities on the ground, like St Giles, have to be preserved and adapted to present day needs for the visitor. The care with which this must be done in the case of such an ancient building, and the necessary interpretation of historical detail was ably described by James Simpson an obvious and committed expert in this field.

### St Giles Visit

Following this talk the group set off

up the 'Royal Mile' on foot to see St Giles for themselves. Joe Penney, of St Giles, led the party around the Cathedral, providing some historical background, and described the development. Phase one is the creation of a new main staircase which will link the Main Floor to the lower floor where a number of existing unused rooms are being skillfully linked together to provide coffee house, toilet accommodation and administrative facilities. At the time of our visit an archaeological dig was in progress at the site of the staircase, to which public access, via observation windows, had been provided.

In the second phase of the work it is hoped to excavate a larger undercroft area below the main floor which may house an interpretive exhibition on the history of the Cathedral or even the shop facility. This would meet the problem facing all great churches, in providing facilities for the non-religious visitor cheek by jowl with the serious worshipper.

The afternoon session ended with tea back at Gladstone Court and general discussion on these problems including the observation that the need to provide additional space below the main floor seemed slightly absurd given that church congregations were declining. The logic of this would be to reduce the scale of the main floor space by creating space for the visitor facilities on that floor. Whether this could be done without destroying the very essence of these large spaces is the nub of the problem.

The event was held to be a successful regional meeting. About 60 regional members were circulated in Scotland and the North of England with a target of about 15-20 people. On the day, after cancellations, some 25 people attended including the 5 guest speakers and a break-even position was achieved on a meeting fee of £6.50 per head.

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## Performing in the Provinces

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Alan Machin

Over the last year several regional meetings have been added to the Society's programme, with some notable successes. Despite encroaching blizzards the London 'hardy annual' got together around sixty members at the Natural History Museum in December. Earlier, South Wales accumulated thirty or so in Margam Country Park, and Yorkshire around a dozen for Leeds and Bradford Industrial Museums. Edinburgh, Northamptonshire and Warrington have also hosted meetings. There have been others which failed to get sufficient numbers to go ahead, but which have not left their organisers downhearted enough not to plan afresh.

One of the big successes came at Risley Moss, thanks to hard work by the local lads who did their homework and paperwork so well that 52 members and soon-to-be-members spent an early November day at a busy workshop session. Linking well with the London topic to follow in December, the day tried to evaluate the Forestry Commission-sponsored survey package which had been tested out during the summer at Risley. Four groups were formed from the participants to look at specific aspects such as display and audio-visual provision, and the way the questionnaire survey tested their effectiveness.

Besides giving the chance of seeing Risley Moss, its Visitor Centre and facilities, the meeting brought together a wide range of interpreters and providers from as far away as Edinburgh, Guildford, Aberystwyth and Cheltenham. The discussion periods were lively and informed, and full of honest comment by the creators of the Warrington centre and its visitors that day. High-cost units like it are understandably less favoured today than they once were, and the meeting raised the question not only

of how good the survey package was at looking at non-Forestry-Commission sites (which is what the Countryside Commission wanted to know), but inevitably, how good Risley Moss was.

SIBH has been revitalised by good meetings. The last Annual Conference set a cracking pace round Manchester, and the next will do the same in Strafford. One lesson which has been learned as far as regionals go is that even small, informal meetings of as few as eight people are much enjoyed and appreciated. Organising one can be hard work and may need a strong nerve. Members can help to maintain the warmth of organisers' feet by booking a place in good time: please do not leave it until the last moment - the meeting might be cancelled. Within the society we have the resources and opportunities to create more events around the country. There are no fixed regions or local committees to be adhered to. Do you think that somewhere near you there are exciting developments in interpretation that we should all be going to see? Are they in reasonable reach of enough of us to warrant a half or full-day meeting? Could you do the careful, detailed preparation work that is needed?

There are various Society aids to running a successful gathering: guideline notes, an events co-ordinator's advice, gummed labels with members' names and addresses, small poster blanks for advertising, plus examples of simple but effective programme leaflets: and last but not least, grant-aid from the Society, courtesy Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, to publicise the event.

The programme for regional events in 1982 is nearly complete and will soon be published.

For 1983 however, the field is open. In order to take full advantage of available publicity, we aim to have the 1983 programme tied up by Christmas this year. If you are ready to go, start now by planning to attend the one day workshop that the Society will hold in May for meeting and conference organisers. Ring 0242 21381, the Countryside Commission HQ and ask for Terry Robinson if you are interested in attending the workshop or have ideas for future meetings.

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## Delamere Forest

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URBAN PROGRAMME : DELAMERE FOREST

Countryside & Recreation Division  
Cheshire County Council

### Background

During the past few years, in the school summer holiday period, 'bus loads of children mainly from Merseyside and Manchester have arrived at Delamere Forest on day outings. Some children, because they did not know how to occupy their time, got into mischief by raiding orchards and gardens, causing damage to trees and plants and upsetting shopkeepers and local people. The organisers rarely stayed with them.

The Division manages a number of picnic sites on the fringe of the Forest and provides a general management service for visitors in the vicinity. It was therefore decided to apply to the Department of the Environment through the Urban Programme for a grant to assist with a scheme to employ guides to help these children by providing simple activities for them.

### 1979 Scheme

**Outline Plan.** The plan was to contact the organisations which were likely to send children to the Forest, find out the date and time of the proposed visits and, if they agreed to co-operate, meet the transport on arrival at an agreed point. The children were then to be invited to participate in various simple activities eg. walks in the Forest, elementary nature study, hide-and-seek games etc.

**Grant Aid.** The total cost of the scheme was estimated at £1,635, 75% of which was to be paid by the Department of the Environment in grant aid.

**Staff.** The Organiser was a graduate employed through the STEP scheme who also had other duties in the Division unconnected with the Urban Programme. He was in day to day control and also did all the paperwork. After advertising in local newspapers, four university students, two young women and two young men, were recruited as

guides. One of the mer. was appointed supervisor. Overall control was exercised from Chester by the Deputy Director of the Division.

**Duration.** The scheme ran from 16 July to 17 August. The guides started work on 11 July to allow themselves a few days in which to become familiar with the Forest area and plan the activities.

**Contact with Community Groups and Organisations.** Starting in Mid-June, contact was made with various community and street groups and voluntary organisations which were known or thought to send children to the Forest. In all it was estimated that between 150 and 200 groups were told of the scheme by telephone, letter or word of mouth. It was explained to the group leaders that we had a scheme to provide guides who would lead the children in various activities during the period of their visit. It was emphasised that the guides would not assume responsibility for the children; that was to remain with the adults who brought them. They were invited to join the programme and select a day and time for their visit. It was planned to have two groups of about 50 or so children daily, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. This system worked quite well and in the event just under half of the groups which arrived at the Forest had been booked into the programme. The others were accepted without difficulty.

**Equipment.** The guides were each issued with a minimum of equipment: basic first aid kit which would enable them to deal with minor cuts and stings, a map of the Forest area, leaflets identifying common trees, plants and insects found in the Forest and a Countryside Ranger's badge to give them official status. For group games they had a football and some tennis balls.

**Attendance.** The scheme ran for 25 days, during which 22 groups with a total of 779 children were met and guided round the Forest walks etc. The majority were very appreciative; some of the children had never been out of the town before. There may of course have been other groups of children visiting the Forest who had not heard of the scheme or who did not wish



to participate. There were fewer children than expected but the original estimate was not based on very accurate figures. Further, the intention was not to recruit visitors but provide simple, interesting activities for those who already intended to come.

#### Conclusions

- a. The organisation of the scheme worked quite well and the booking system enabled some control to be exercised;
- b. The idea of being assisted by guides was appreciated and even the groups which were not in the programme (over half) were pleased to accept their services;
- c. Although the number of visitors was relatively small, there was no doubt that the children who did take part thoroughly enjoyed the experience;
- d. The experiment was successful and with some changes worth repeating.

#### 1980 Scheme

*General.* This scheme differed only slightly from that of the previous year and therefore the following

comments are confined to the changes which were made.

*Grant Aid.* An estimated cost of £1,600 was approved by the Department of the Environment which again agreed to pay 75%.

*Staff.* As before the scheme was controlled from Chester, but this year there was no STEP graduate to do the detailed work. It was decided that three guides were adequate. The two young women who had worked on the scheme in 1979 came back for a second time and one of them was appointed Organiser; a young man who had just finished his studies was the third. The Organiser started a month before the other two guides so that she could do all the preliminary work. When the children started to arrive she became Supervisor and also worked as a guide.

*Duration.* The scheme started about three weeks later than in the previous year as it was considered that more children would be likely to take advantage of it if it began about half way through the holiday. It ran for 20 days from 4 to 30 August.

*Contact with Community Groups.* The Organiser contacted 70 groups personally and it was estimated that more than the same number again were told of the scheme by these groups. Social Services Departments in Merseyside and Greater Manchester also spread the word so that most of those in the two areas likely to be interested were aware of the scheme.

*Attendance.* The weather was very poor throughout and on two days it was so bad that there were no visitors. A total of 21 groups comprising 932 children participated in the scheme. Again the children enjoyed their visits and the three guides found no difficulty in managing the numbers which were greater than the previous year by about 18%.

#### Conclusions

- a. The timing and duration were about right, though some adjustments might be necessary in any future scheme;

- b. The planning and execution went well. This was largely due to the fact that the Organiser had experience from 1979;

- c. As the number of groups differed only by one over the two years and about the same number knew of the scheme, it seems unlikely that there would be a big increase in the number of children participating in any future schemes. This, however, does not mean that others, who could not be fitted into the programme might not turn up anyway to amuse themselves in their own way;

- d. The cost was about £1.73 per child. The scheme also gave holiday employment to three students;

- e. The response indicates that the children enjoy their visit. The scheme appears to have fulfilled its purpose (to stop the children running wild) as the reports of misbehaviour decreased during its period of operation.

## Salt Museum in Cheshire

Moira Stevenson  
Cheshire County Museums

I was interested to read Claire Baylis's article on the Royal Salt Works which appeared in the last issue of 'Interpretation'. I have heard much about this unusual building of Claude Nicholas Ledoux but was not aware of its current use.

Although the Salt Museum in Northwich, opened by Cheshire County Museum Service in 1981 cannot boast so grand a building, it is nonetheless still of some architectural interest. Built in 1837 as a workhouse, and extended in 1897, it fell into disuse in the 1960's until it was restored for European Architectural Heritage Year by Cheshire County Council in 1975. The building thereafter became the headquarters of the County Museum Service and home for the Salt Museum.

This was not the first salt museum in Northwich. As early as 1889, one had been established there by a director of the Salt Union Limited and a

committee of volunteers. The collections were housed in a small purpose-built timber framed building in the town until the first world war when it was requisitioned by the government. The collections were transferred to the nearby Brunner library where they were displayed for some years before ultimately being put into storage.

In 1972 Lady Mary Rochester and a group of volunteers with the assistance of the North-Western Museum and Art Gallery Service redisplayed the collections to provide a coherent interpretation of the history of the salt industry in Cheshire. Although this exhibition was small and staged on a very limited budget, it was well attended by school parties and the general public.

With the establishment of the County Museum Service in 1975, the future of the salt museum was secured. In that year a decision was taken to house the museum alongside the County Museum Service headquarters in the newly restored building. After a programme of research and development using volunteers, the museum was opened to the public in June 1981.

The museum has four permanent exhibition galleries. The chemistry and geology of salt, its traditional and

chemical uses, and the methods by which it was transported are described in a room set aside from the main circulation route. The main galleries explain the processes of extraction and manufacture of salt in Cheshire from the Roman period to the present day. The social and environmental conditions which prevailed in the salt towns of Cheshire are described in a final gallery where photographs of housing, shops, schools and public houses are displayed. The roles of the salt manufacturers and trade unions are also explained using extracts from minute books and newspapers together with commemorative pottery and personal effects.

The environmental impact of subsidence caused by the extraction of salt is examined in a tape slide programme called 'Salt and Subsidence.' The commentary outlines the causes of subsidence, the remedial action taken by the industry and the campaign for compensation which culminated in the Brine Subsidence Compensation Acts. The programme concludes with a description of current solution - mining techniques which have been developed to avoid subsidence.

Temporary exhibitions on related subjects are arranged from time to time. Library and research facilities are being developed and a series of pub-

lications dealing with various aspects of the salt industry are in the process of preparation.

The Salt Museum would welcome visits from members of the SIBH. It is open from Tuesday - Saturday 14.00 - 17.00 ALL YEAR ROUND Sundays 14.00 - 17.00 EASTER - OCTOBER

ADMISSION Adults 40p  
Children 20p  
Family Tickets £1.00

Tuesday-Saturday 14.00 - 17.00 All year round.  
Sundays 14.00 - 17.00 Easter - October

Admission Adults 40p  
Children 20p  
Family Tickets £1.00

Forthcoming attraction:  
Joint meeting SIBH and Group for Designers and Interpreters in Museums

Moira Stevenson and Ian Parkin are proposing to arrange a joint meeting to look at interpretation of the salt industry in Northwich - probably in September or October. This will possibly include a round trip by canal and visits to the Salt Museum and Salt Works.

Details in the next issue of Interpretation.



## Operation Woodpecker

Alan Teulon, Northamptonshire Leisure Services

As lunch time approaches the groups of a dozen or so children begin to return usually racing ahead of their group leaders in order to return their equipment and then to race to the caravan to retrieve their personal belongings and packed lunches.

The group preparing the nature trail for Senior Citizens retain their clipboards with their notes and sketches because they are going to discuss their findings over lunch. The tractor returns, driven by the Park Warden, its trailer loaded with willing young foresters who have spent the morning cutting down small trees and trimming them to make posts, their tools are checked in and stored safely. An excited girl aged about eight rushes up to one of the organisers and asks if she can once again join the first aid groups in the afternoon. The camping group's tent is taken down and folded up for the sixth and last time for the present session. Several groups return carrying their treasures and finds to be examined, identified and sketched during the afternoon.

The last group to return, as always, are the ever enthusiastic fossil hunters from the old quarry, an energetic group announced by their bright yellow safety helmets.

The weary group leaders are the last back, tired and hungry, but elated by the warming enthusiasm of the parties of children.

This is a typical midday scene at Operation Woodpecker, a summer play-scheme run by the Leisure and Libraries Department of Northamptonshire County Council at Irchester Country Park, near Wellingborough. The scheme, so named because the Green Woodpecker, with its bright green colouring and distinctive call, is perhaps the most flamboyant creature to be regularly seen and heard in the Park.

In 1977 the Countryside staff of the Northamptonshire County Council decided

that an experimental summer playscheme should be operated when the opportunity presented itself. The opportunity arose the following year when the small team of Officers and Countryside Wardens was augmented by a team of five Countryside Interpretation Officers in a S.T.E.P. scheme funded by the Manpower Services Commission.

The aims of the scheme were to:-

1. To introduce children informally to many aspects of the countryside.
2. To encourage children to use their leisure time constructively.
3. To minimise anti-social activities in the Country Park during school holidays.
4. To show the local community the benefits of a well managed Country Park.

The successful pilot scheme was continued with further Manpower Services Commission involvement in 1979 with considerable acclaim from the local community and ample coverage in national press, regional T.V. as well as local media.

Despite staff shortages and local government cutbacks the County Council decided that the scheme now known as 'Operation Woodpecker' should become a regular summer event at Irchester Country Park.

The participating children range in age from 8-14 years though comparatively few teenagers take part. Many walk to the park from the nearby villages and many others are brought by car from up to 6-7 miles distance by their parents, who collect them at the end of the day. One exceptional pair of brothers walked five miles.

Talking to children, one is pleased to discover that they cover a very broad cross-section of the population. Many of the 100-200 who attend daily are those who would be playing in the park anyway and possibly causing problems for the Park Wardens.

The volunteers, upon whom the success of the scheme rests, vary in age from middle teenagers to people in their seventies. They are made up of housewives and mums, scouts and guides, teachers on holiday, unemployed people and those retired. Young

David was a keen Venture Scout experienced in camping and the outdoor life, awaiting to become a 'boy' soldier. Edwin, with his woolly hat in the hottest weather, is nearing eighty. He takes the fossil hunters to the old quarry and tells the younger children stories about elephants in Burma during his lunchbreak.

We originally appealed for volunteers in the local press and by use of posters in the locality. Derek, a telephone engineer, read about the scheme in the Northamptonshire Post whilst sitting in the dentists waiting room in Kettering. Christine, a school teacher, read about the success of 'Operation Woodpecker' on the leisure page in "The Guardian" and got in touch the following year. Last year we had 48 volunteers although they weren't all available at one time; and many only put in an appearance for a short time. During the winter I have received a number of messages concerning volunteers that have changed addresses and are anxious for us to know where to contact them when the time comes.

All these fine people are unpaid, give up their own time and even take leave from work to help. We welcome them all, including those without special skills or those who can only spend an hour each day.

Operation Woodpecker is exceptional because of the nature of the activities. Although the children have a good share of games and entertainments, the bulk of the activities are based on the natural resources of the park and its immediate surroundings - bark rubbing, natural dye making, leaf prints, animal tracks and signs, bird watching, flower pressing, plaster casts, pond dipping, clay modelling, butterfly examination, fossil hunting, fungi collecting, hedgerow dating, tree measurement, weather stations and numerous crafts based on natural resources. Some groups work on special projects throughout the period, such as preparation of a nature trail for the elderly or construction of childrens play equipment from timber prepared from the 130 acres of conifers within the park.

Other activities introduce youngsters to new leisure pursuits that they may

continue in the countryside, such as fishing (sometimes building their own rods), camping, canoeing, bottle collecting, pinhole photography, sketching, map reading and wayfaring. (a simple form of orienteering)

Other activities relate to the management of the countryside including dog training, wardening (small groups accompanying the park wardens on their normal duties for half a day), making bird boxes and bicycle training. One of the most popular activities is first aid training which developed from the routine emergency cover provided by the local branch of the British Red Cross Society.

Popular group visits include a neighbouring farm, the parish church, the local library, a waste disposal tip, a flour mill and a nearby road construction unit.

The intention is to give the children a taste of many new interests and topics in a relaxed, informal manner without presenting them with too many hard facts.

Operation Woodpecker operates on a scale such that we can arrange visits from a number of national and local organisations, such as the R.S.P.B., (for bird projects), R.S.P.C.A. (pet projects), Dog Training Club, a local camping outfitters, the County 'Watch' group and the Police and the Fire Brigade.

Furthermore many of the activities are inter-related, for example: tree recognition, leaf collecting and leaf prints; clay collecting, modelling, firing and painting; exploring, map reading, map making, wayfaring; identifying plant colonies, collection of plant material, use of plants for crafts, scents, printing etc.

One management problem is enabling every child to be involved in the activity of his or her choice. Such were the demands last year that a booking system was introduced in order to identify those who hadn't been on the activity of their choice. It is a bit daunting when on the last day you ask who hasn't been birdwatching yet and wants to and fifty eager hands are raised.

During the lunch period the staff and volunteers would like to take a well

earned rest relaxing in the sun. However, with many healthy children consuming a picnic lunch in 10 minutes flat with numerous queries about forthcoming activities, it is essential to provide diversions. A few of the over-active can be sent "wombling" (litter collecting) with litter pickers.

The tuck shop is opened with a varied selection of cheap sweets, lollies, crisps, etc. The parks ice cream concessionaire does a good business. The main diversions are provided by organised games and a film show, mainly of films related to the wildlife, pets, safety and other topics covered by the activities.

Little advertising is necessary for Operation Woodpecker as an annual appeal in the local press for volunteers usually generates interest and enquiries. Regular young visitors to the park constantly enquire of the Warden if and when Operation Woodpecker is taking place. Just before the end of summer term the Park

## Crafts at Risley Moss

by Susan Curry, Ranger

Risley Moss is a 220 acre site in Warrington New Town's Birchwood area. Since opening in September 1980 about 100,000 people have visited the site either to attend events, go for a peaceful walk or to be shown around by rangers. It is one of my areas of work to plan events programmes which help us to continue attracting high visitor numbers and to offer them a memorable experience.

There are several groups and types of visitors to bear in mind when planning events. Risley Moss is of regional as well as local importance, appealing to a wide variety of people with many interests. Newspaper headlines reflect this; 'Call of the Wild'; 'Wealth of Wildlife on edge of town'; 'Youngsters learn about wonders of Risley Moss'; 'Strictly for the birds'; 'Moss is regional asset'; 'Bogarts on the Moss'. Some reports are aimed at the amateur naturalists, others at those with a vague interest in wildlife and at those more interested in family fun and a pleasant, preferably cheap day out. A success-

Warden visits the local Junior School to remind the children in assembly about the event.

There can be no doubt of the immense enjoyment that Operation Woodpecker brings to participants and volunteers alike. However, there are many other advantages. Youngsters gain a greater knowledge of and a respect for wildlife and the countryside generally and the Country Park and its Wardens in particular. Through their children the local adult community gain a greater understanding of why the park is managed as it is and what facilities are offered to visitors.

My personal satisfactions gained from Operation Woodpecker are meeting youngsters at other times and other places and being greeted by them; receiving changes of address and telephone numbers from faithful volunteers wishing to be kept in touch; also seeing the social mix of children from various backgrounds getting involved together in an activity new to them.

ful events programme by my definition is one which meets some of the needs of most of these people. Because Risley Moss is surrounded by new houses and a community of urbanised people, the marketing of a piece of countryside to them was rather complex or like preaching to the unconverted. For this reason I began to seek alternative activities as a means of capturing the communities' interest. It seemed obvious to plan guided walks on aspects of natural history; in fact it was tempting to continue this to the exclusion of other possibilities because every conceivable type of walk - bird walks; seasonal walks; even midnight and dawn walks were always successful and fully booked.

However, my own interest in arts and crafts, plus close contact with our weekend visitors, made me aware that something more could be developed. (I should point out that weekend visitors tend to appreciate colourful lively activity more than the sedentary weekday naturalists do). Weekends bring families; not only nuclear groups but extended families of aunts, uncles and grandparents.

The way I established a crafts pro-

grammes was simple. I visited a college of Further Education close to Risley Moss to discuss our programme with the Head of Adult and Community Studies. She gave me one contact in the local craft world and that person proved extremely keen on promoting crafts at Risley Moss. She and her husband were actually regular visitors anyway. Consequently I met some of her friends and acquaintances and the first crafts programme formed.

We began gradually, with one demonstration a month on average. Amongst these were 'Paper Sculpture on a Christmas Theme'; 'Embroidery and Natural History'; 'Hedgerow Sculpture'; 'Spinning a Yarn' and 'Corn Dollies'. In short, thirteen such events attracted upwards of seven hundred people. No entrance fee to the classroom was charged as most craftsmen preferred the room arranged informally so that they could work and chat to people who could, in turn, come and go as they pleased.

However there were some lessons to learn at this stage. One of the main elements of a successful programme is thoughtful timing of events. Television pages for evenings of a proposed talk are now scoured thoroughly as the Miss World Contest or World Cup can seriously affect numbers of people attending a talk, say on the 'Insect Life of Cheshire!' Some of the less patronized demonstrations were those in midweek, so for the next programme I made a rule of using only Sunday afternoons for crafts. This seemed to work and numbers attending events immediately increased. One of the most successful was a pottery demonstration in November.

I met a potter in Bolton and had little difficulty persuading him to come and show off his skills at Risley Moss. This he did, to a spellbound crowd of roughly one hundred people. I decided, in consultation with the Head Ranger, to give thought only to 'relevant' crafts. So, arguably, any crafts would be permissible as the materials used are natural; clay, wax, wool, grasses. Either this or the fact that the event closely related to natural history made a craft plausible. So 'Embroidery and Natural History' and 'Landscapes in Silk and Watercolour' also fitted in.

One of the spin-offs of these demonstrations has been local community enjoyment and their repeated attendance. Several retired ladies asked whether we could run evening classes in crafts and I hope that this demand will increase after the coming summer programme so as to make it a viable proposition. Another has been the growth of craft workshops for young people. I planned three sessions to take place in the Visitors Centre Classroom during the Christmas holidays, dividing children into age groups. For the five to seven year olds 'Bogarts and other creatures' was the theme, including an impressive performance by the rangers as bogarts dressed in old sacks dancing around trees. After the children had laughed and pointed enough we took them indoors and commenced making bogarts; stick-like puppets made from twigs, cones and grasses. The seven to nines made pre-Christmas collage calendars for their mums. The final group of ten to twelves produced some very fine hand-painted stones and were amazed at their own efforts. Subsequently a junior craft group formed, to learn a different craft each month. I am helped in running this by teachers and local craftsmen who enjoy Risley Moss and offering their knowledge to the local children. The costing of items needed for the workshops necessitated charging a £1.50 membership fee for six months. This did not deter parents - all the places were taken immediately and several names taken for the second half of 1982. All this convinces me that craft events, workshops and craft items in the shop are all a great success and will continue to take place alongside the natural history walks and talks.

I would make two final points: apart from the interpretive message that can be told about the various crafts, the events offer the visitor another opportunity to visit the exhibition and site, and therefore be influenced by the broader interpretive story being told. Finally, where the craftsmen can sell their wares, there is income to be made which can be ploughed back for the greater good of the project. Both have to be seen as valuable spin-offs and help make the exercise very worthwhile.

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## One Earth

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TRANSLATING AWARENESS INTO ACTION

Geoff Cooper, Losehill Hall

Environmental Education has more influence as an approach to learning than as a separate discipline. The over-riding importance of its message - our survival on a planet whose resources are diminishing and where conditions are deteriorating - transcends subject boundaries. Progress can only be achieved if attitudes - both individual and corporate - are changed. There is the danger of losing sight of this central issue.

The two most influential developments in Environmental Education in Britain over recent years have been the development of "environmental awareness" techniques and issue-based studies. The first emphasises awareness of our place in the natural world using both personal feelings and learning through ecological concepts such as "energy flow" and "community". The leading exponent of this approach is Steve Van Matre<sup>1</sup> who held his first workshop in Britain at the Peak National Park Study Centre in February 1981. Van Matre presents a well-structured programme based on sound educational principles and employing a wide range of imaginative activities. Similar ideas have been attractively presented in Joseph Cornell's recent book "Sharing Nature with Children". The emphasis is on developing a personal relationship with nature. There are, however, no suggestions for translating this awareness into action to improve the environment.

The second approach has concentrated on the socio-political system and its influence on the environment. Students gain an understanding of the environment through an involvement in local issues such as pollution, housing and transport. Action, which may include anything from planting trees to meeting local councillors, is the desired goal. This approach has been enthusiastically proclaimed through articles in the Bulletin of Environmental Education. Valuable links have been forged between many groups of teachers, planners,

architects and other professionals to create a greater consciousness of the political and economic processes at work.

These approaches differ markedly in their origins and focus of attention. "Environmental Awareness" uses the natural or semi-natural environment as its theatre and is based on ecological concepts. "Issue-based" studies concentrate on decision making in the built environment. They have developed as independent strands drawing Environmental Education in opposing directions. The Schools Council Project "Art and the Built Environment" represents one of the few links between these approaches. This has attempted to develop an appreciation for and understanding of the Built Environment through visual awareness and evaluation (Figure One).

These developments have undoubtedly led to greater appreciation of our surroundings and the natural economic and political influences on them. At the same time, they have tended to obscure the most critical issue - the need for global action. The step between personal awareness and global action is a huge one. It is debatable whether commitment to improving one's immediate environment leads to greater concern for national or worldwide action.

"Environmental Awareness" can become an end in itself and at its worst lead to self-satisfaction and self-indulgence. Local involvement may produce only cosmetic changes to the environment and may lead to complacency on broader issues. These are criticisms of the limited goals rather than the methods of these approaches.

There is a need for stronger links within Environmental Education, for awareness to be translated into action and action not to be confined to parish or neighbourhood boundaries. The task is formidable. It involves constant persuasion and pressure at all levels in our society. The initiatives are unlikely to come from governments.

The World Conservation Strategy<sup>2</sup> and the Brandt Report<sup>3</sup> which identify many of the problems and outline courses of action will not be accepted by societies based on exploitation and mater-

# CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

ETHICS

MAN-ENVIRONMENT SYSTEMS

EFFECTS

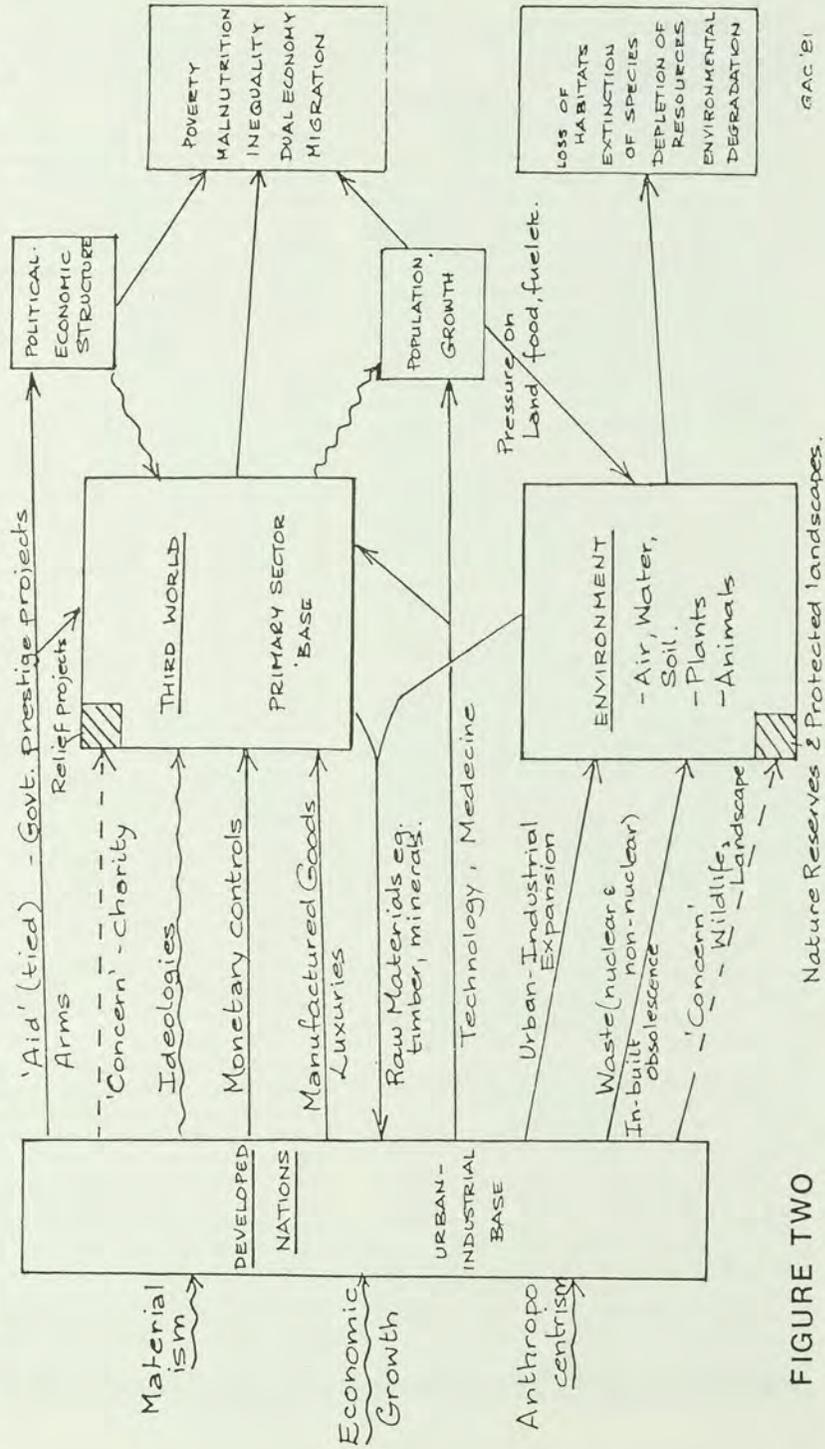
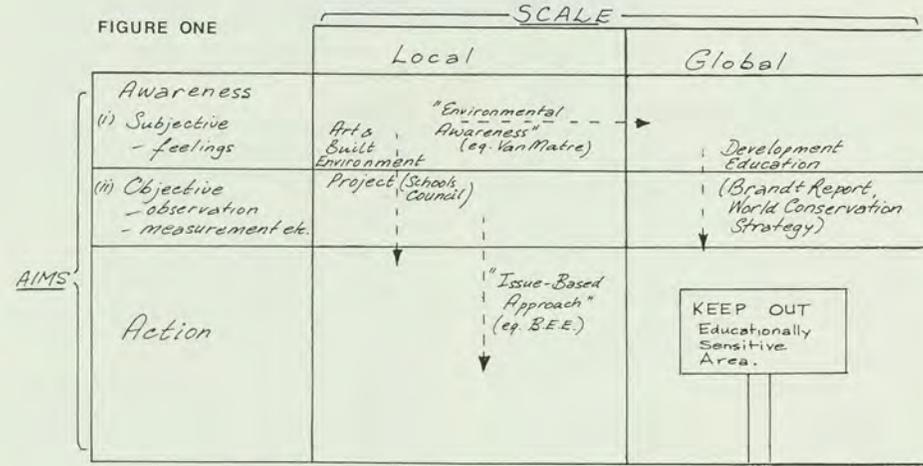


FIGURE TWO



*Environmental Education - where's it going?*

ialism. World poverty and environmental degradation are closely associated results of the domination of the planet by the Developed Nations.

It is important that we understand the links between Conservation and Development. Figure Two provides a framework for discussing some of these relationships. We need a new ethic - a complete re-assessment of our attitudes to the Earth and all its inhabitants.

An excellent introduction for young people to the global issues is a recent newsheet "Down to Earth - Up to Us" published by the Council for Environmental Education<sup>4</sup>. This makes some suggestions for putting ideas into practice and gives a useful list of addresses for contacting environmental groups.

NOTES

1. Further details of Van Matre's "Acclimatization" programme are available from the Peak National Park Study Centre, Castleton, Derbyshire

2. The Report "World Conservation Strategy" is available from World Wildlife Fund, 29-31 Greville Street, London.

"How to Save the World" by Robert Allen, published by Kogan Page, is based on the World Conservation Strategy and written for the general reader.

3. See: "North-South: A Programme for Survival", Pan 1980. The Report of the Brandt Commission on World Development.

4. From: Council for Environmental Education, School of Education, University of Reading, Reading, Berkshire.

# Welcome to Sunnydale Nature Park and Insect Garden

Andy Person, Sunnydale Head deRanger

"He loveth best who looketh best  
At things both great and small"

You have just walked through the main entrance, which is now behind you. Ahead of you is the souvenir stall. A rest room will shortly be built a hundred yards on your right. W.C.s are available in the car park of the Prince of Wales in Stackley Regis, 3½ miles west of here on the B2407. Please do not consume refreshments in these grounds. Beware of the bees. Keep to the tarmac path.

The numbers of the paragraphs in this leaflet correspond to those that used to be attached to the stumps of wood with red rings round them that you will see beside the path at intervals. Whenever you reach one of these posts, just stop, read the next paragraph, and move on.

(1) On your right is an ash tree, on your left a holly. The dead tree in front of the holly was a beech, but it died the year after we planted it. We have left it in position in case it is used by wood wasps.

There are no oaks in our little spinney. Nevertheless you may like to be reminded that there are two forms of British oak, the pedunculate and the sessile, the latter so named because its branches are good for birds to sit on. One has acorns on stalks, the other does not. The leaves of one sort look rather like the other, but back to front.

(2) Stop, and look at the little stream at your feet. Notice that it is flowing downhill. Why do you think this is?

(3) Look at the ruined brick building on your left. Some of the particles of which the bricks consist were formed by volcanic action over 250 million years ago. Keep moving, please. There may be others behind you.

(4) To the countryman, smells are as important as sight and sound. Close

your eyes and take a deep breath. You may detect the odours of willowherb and various other invertebrates.

(5) If you are lucky you may hear, among the waterside vegetation opposite, the noise made by a fisherman's reel. Its elusive, continuous sound is not unlike the song of the grasshopper warbler.

(6) Beyond the small hill in front of you is Smithson's digestive biscuit factory. Where their grit-refining plant now stands, there was a badger's earth in 1845. The church-warden's accounts of 1829 contain the entry "item to Robt Snugge 2s 0½d".

(7) This piece of rough land is similar to the sort of ground that a labourer of this district might have dug for a vegetable plot in the late nineteenth century. To help evoke the period atmosphere, we invite you to dig a row or two with the spade provided. Please do not try to remove the spade from the chain and concrete post.

(8) There are over a million species of insect in the world, many of which are to be found in Britain. Even in the few acres of this reserve there are a lot.

Pause a moment to reflect on the folklore of insect life: consider, for instance, that nursery rhyme about ladybirds, the asp that bit Cleopatra's bosom, and the proverbial fly in the ointment.

(9) We need not apologise for the leaf litter, for in a nature reserve this should be left in place. Among it will be many creatures including leaf insects such as millipedes. It is now generally accepted that most millipedes have not in fact a thousand legs, as was once vulgarly thought. How much further science has progressed since the days of our fathers!

(10) Notice how the telegraph poles run parallel to this track. They were erected in 1949. Mr Bill Dunfold of Stackley-on-Fret was foreman of the gang on that occasion. His hat is displayed in the front window of his son's house (Mr Ted Dunfold), 3 Fobney Village, Stackley Regis.

The tar that can sometimes be found oozing from telegraph poles has long puzzled naturalists, as has their occasional whining song.

(11) The hardy deciduous shrub in front of you, with dull green lanceolate leaves of bushy habit, is *Abelia triflora*. In the Himalayas where it comes from it is the food plant of the giant Rubrick's Calendar Moth.

Our biggest moth in Britain is the Death's Head, whose caterpillars (or pupas as the scientists prefer to call them) can squeak, but are seldom dangerous.

(12) You are now back near where you started. Have a last look round, and notice anything you like, or make sketches in the space below.

The souvenir stall is on your left. Now is a good moment to visit it. You may choose between Sunnydale Nature Park keyrings, Sunnydale Nature Park bookmarks, or Sunnydale Nature Park ball-point pens. Sunnydale Nature Park car stickers are also available, and one or two other things.

When you have spent all you have,

please leave as quickly as possible, for the convenience of our over-worked staff.

"Leave nothing but the echo of your acquiescence, your money in our till, and, for our researchers, a note of your socio-economic group.

Take nothing but gasps of breath, blurred photographs, and an impression that you have seen all this before."

NOTES: We have not included many Latin names for plants or animals in the above paragraphs. That is because in the many nature trail leaflets that we have used to compile our own, we found a confusing inconsistency in spelling.

The management cannot be held responsible for any accidents to visitors, loss of personal property, or obscurities in the text of this leaflet, some of which was written by an expert.

(Editorial note: We would have liked to include the line drawings that illustrate this leaflet, which treat such various subjects as the sexual parts of the male lacewing magnified x 43; bracket fungus (upside down); Bewick's engraving of a Sea Eagle; and a sound spectrum of the sub-song of Bonelli's Warbler. But most of them were xeroxes of stencils of ball-point copies of tracings from illustrations photocopied from other people's books, and they were too difficult to reproduce.)

## COURSE ON PLANNING INTERPRETATION 25 August - 1 September 1982

The Countryside Commission for Scotland is to run a course on Planning Interpretation which will be based at Kindrogan Field Centre, near Blairgowrie and at the Commission's headquarters at Battleby near Perth, and the cost will be around £110 for full board, and the use of facilities. There is a tuition charge of £20 + VAT for participants who work outside Scotland.

The course, which is based on practical workshop sessions rather than lectures, will include a simulated local interpretive planning exercise and will also consider local and re-

gional 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; museum 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.

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## Heritage Swap Shop

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Anne Symonds

Over 250 people attended the Heritage Swap Shop, launched by Pennine Heritage Network earlier this year. Representatives from national and regional organisations included staff and students from colleges of further education and polytechnics, the National Trust, Science Museum, Carnegie U.K. Trust and local authority tourist information, passenger transport and countryside ranger services.

The event was well supported by local societies (over 60 attended) ranging from civic trusts to private museums. The day was planned for those concerned with conservation and interpretation in the South Pennines to meet and exchange ideas.

The morning session, opened by David Fletcher chairman of Pennine Heritage, was given over to statutory bodies who offer advice, assistance and funding. It proved difficult for some of these representatives to confine their address, in the short time allowed, to introducing themselves and outlining the assistance available. For the audience, listening eventually became a strain in this ex-Baptist chapel. It has excellent acoustics - every little movement reverberated throughout the hall! However some extremely interesting ideas were raised, and emphasis was placed on the considerable results achieved by some voluntary societies who combined their own expertise and enthusiasm with assistance from statutory bodies.

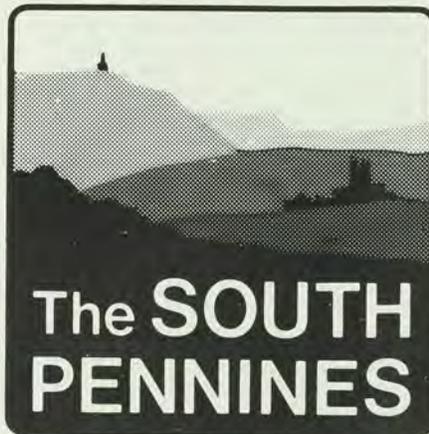
The morning concluded with the presentation of the 'people's symbol' for

the South Pennines - available to all societies in the South Pennines wishing to promote their publications and strengthen the region's identity. Strong support for this logo was given by the Countryside Commission and Yorkshire Tourist Board.

The afternoon comprised short, five minute talks by some of the voluntary groups - there had been a massive response to the invitation! With few exceptions the speakers were totally dedicated to their own particular cause, but tended to lack brevity; their enthusiasm prevailed.

As the day progressed, it became obvious that more time should have been allocated for the societies to mill about, look at each others' exhibitions, and exchange ideas on a more individual basis. (Most of the exhibitions were well mounted.)

There has been a very positive response, following the event, with suggestions that the Swap Shop be a yearly event, and smaller workshops on specific themes be held throughout the year, starting in the Autumn.



The 'People's Symbol' for the South Pennines

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## News and Notes

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### WORKSHOP FOR MEETING ORGANISERS

May 1982

The Society will be holding a one-day workshop for organisers of Society meetings in 1982 and for people interested in doing so in 1983 and thereafter. Attenders will be able to discuss relevant points with committee members and to supply themselves with supporting publicity materials, address lists etc. Organisers of past meetings will reveal the secrets of success, and there will also be chances to exchange ideas.

There will be no charge to attenders. The venue will be selected for its accessibility to attenders.

Members interested in attending should contact Terry Robinson, Countryside Commission, John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3RA

### BACK COPIES OF INTERPRETATION

For those who are interested in making up their collections of "Interpretation" back copies from No. 5 (Autumn 1976) until the present day are available on request from the Secretary. Please send an A5 stamped address envelope: You will be invoiced at the appropriate charge for each copy purchased.

### HERITAGE DIRECTORY

Heritage is a new directory published by the British Tourist Authority (64 St James' Street, London SW1A 1NF) listing the organisations - International, National, Regional and Local - which make up the 'Heritage' Lobby. Addresses, phone numbers, a paragraph or two on the aims and objects of each make this a good £1 worth.

### COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

As readers will know, the Commission becomes a public agency outside the Civil Service on April 1st. The three page press release accompanying its 14th Annual Report opened by quoting the report "Conservation con-

tributes to the central purposes of society and ... should not be viewed as a peripheral interest". But at the end of the release the reader is apparently invited to see this laudable emphasis as an alternative to, rather than the corollary of, recreation. If, as the report says "... the circumstances of the eighties demand rather more attention and resources should be given to conservation relative to recreation and access" is the Commission's admirable record of support and commitment to interpretation to be maintained? With severe staff reductions forced upon it and "a new work programme to suit the needs of the countryside", is the Commission aiming to set less store by the needs of the people? Members of SIBH will be paying particularly close attention as the new organisation sets its pattern. All will hope that ways can be found to avoid loss of impetus in the field of interpretation.

### FARM VISITS GUIDE

As if to emphasise the importance of the above, another notice to hand announces the publication by the Commission of a free guide School Visits to Farms. Up to three million children on school topics visit farms every year. The guide, part of the well-known Advisory Series, helps farmers, teachers and pupils make the most of their time in the "outdoor classroom" a farm affords. It follows the 1980 Farmer and Teacher conference held at Staffordshire College of Agriculture.

### GUIDED WALKS REPORT

Northamptonshire Leisure Services have produced an admirable, concise description and analysis of their public Guided Walks programme of 1981. Ours looks like an eighth generation photocopy, and we don't know whether Northants can send to all and sundry, but those interested could try cadging from the Leisure and Libraries Dept., at Northampton.

### BOOK NOT TO MISS

We hope to have space to give a proper review to Our Past Before Us: why do we save it? (Maurice Temple Smith £6.00) in our next issue. Meanwhile buy it anyway. Editors David

### ACCLIMATIZE AT LOSEHILL

June 11th - 13th, 1982:

Acclimatization - a sensory and conceptual approach to Environmental Awareness - a weekend workshop for all interpreters concerned with the

natural world, especially in the field of Environmental Education.

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

Lowenthal and Marcus Binney have done an admirable job presenting the conclusions of a symposium held under the auspices of the International Council of Monuments and Sites in 1979, and provide, with the other contributors, many important insights into just why conservation in both town and country matters so much to so many.

#### GIVING UP?

Photographing Historic Buildings is a forthcoming HMSO publication by Terry Buchanan. Encouraging to find the Government promoting such a worthwhile activity you might think. A little worrying however to notice that the subtitle is to be "For the Record" and that the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments is the sponsoring department. As the promotional blurb says "Because so many of our historic buildings are disappearing such records will be of immense value to historians and to future students of architecture". Not quite the same as saving them though is it?

#### SANDFORD AWARDS

The Sandford Award for Heritage Education is becoming an established part of the environmental education scene. In its fourth year, there were two winners: Hagley Hall in the West Midlands and Margam Park in West Glamorgan. The award ceremony was held early in March in the magnificent Orangerie at Margam. Owners of houses submit details of their educational programmes which are judged principally on effective liaison with LEA, teachers etc; on the way the educational potential of the property is being realised; and on help given with preparation and follow-up work. Details may be obtained from the Council for Environmental Education (School of Education, London Road, Reading) which administers the scheme.

#### LETHABY LIVES

British Thornton, the drawing equipment firm, has done a real public service in reprinting seven essays by W R Lethaby from his 1922 collection Form in Civilization. The volume (£1.95 inc p+p from British Thornton, PO Box 3, Wythenshawe Manchester M22 4SS) is in memory of the industrial designer Norman Stevenson. It

relates art, design, craft and education in a way that both looks back to William Morris and forward to the kind of environmental understanding the humblest interpreter might aspire to.

#### THEATRE AND INTERPRETATION: 27 APRIL AT HEBDEN BRIDGE

A chance to see the history of transport brought to life through music, song and drama by the Mikron Theatre Company. The company have made ten national tours, using their canal barge as a base, and play to audiences at a variety of venues including schools, pubs and festivals.

Their latest production, 'Over the Top', looks at the history and development of transport in the South Pennines and is linked with the Pennine Heritage Network's interpretation programme which is launched the same day.

The show takes place at the Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge at 7.30pm and there will be a chance to discuss interpretation through theatre after the event. Tickets cost £1 (unless you bring a coach party, when you get in for 35p!)

Further details from Maria Murtagh, Hebden Bridge (0422) 844450.

#### STICKER SQUAD

Sixteen South Pennine attractions have joined Pennine Heritage in a venture to promote themselves through a colour map on which collectors fix special stickers which can be bought from each site.

The attractions featured on the map include everything from castles, clog-makers and car collections to water-wheels, weavers and wormeries.

To launch the scheme, Pennine Heritage Network are giving away prizes for the best, the silliest, the fastest and the cheapest ways the sites have been visited.

You can get the map by post from Pennine Heritage Network, The Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge, HX7 8DG, though if you want the stickers you've got to get there by bus, train, bike or hike. (SIBH members are eligible for prizes!)

#### SIBH REGIONAL MEETINGS 1982

For further details or to reserve places, contact the Regional Organizer for each event. If you have any general queries or would like to offer to organize a meeting yourself, please contact the Events Secretary Terry Robinson, Countryside Commission, John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham.

#### HEBDEN BRIDGE - A CASE STUDY OF ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETATION AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION.

Saturday 8 May. Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire.

A meeting to assess the effectiveness of an attempt to bring about economic regeneration in an area through a programme of activities, including environmental interpretation.

CONTACT: Gillian Binks Centre for Environmental Interpretation, Institute of Advanced Studies, Manchester M15 6BH. Tel: 061 228 6171 Ext. 2195

#### THE WORK OF THE YOUNG NATIONAL TRUST THEATRE

Wednesday 26 May. (p.m. only)

Erdigg, Mr. Wrexham, Clwyd.

A chance to study the company at work with a school in an historic stately home and then to meet actors and discuss their work.

CONTACT: Dolly Pile, Countryside & Recreation Division, Cheshire County Council, County Hall, Chester CH1 1SF. Tel: 0244 603393

#### BOUGHTON ESTATE OPEN DAY.

Wednesday 9 June. Boughton Estate near Kettering, Northamptonshire.

In each of the last 4 years Open Days have been held on this traditional rural estate for schools and the general public. This year members are invited to see the event in action on a day when over 2000 schoolchildren will be visiting the estate, seeing and learning about activities such as farming, forestry, gamekeeping, wildlife and landscape conservation.

CONTACT: Alan Teulon or Lesley Addison, Leisure and Libraries Dept, Northamptonshire County Council, Guildhall Road, Northampton. Tel: 0604 34833

#### INTERPRETATION AT A NATIONAL TRUST ESTATE

Saturday 3 July. Nunnington Hall, near Hemsley, North Yorkshire.

An unusual opportunity to assess the interpretive potential of a National Trust estate in the heart of the North Yorkshire countryside, which is in the early stages of development. As a result of the exercise, the National Trust will consider SIBH's proposal for interpretive provision for possible inclusion in their management plan.

CONTACT: Cathy Macfie, Jasmine Cottage, Kirk Deighton, Wetherby, West Yorkshire. Tel: 0937 62851

#### DRAMA FOR SCHOOLS AT A MUSEUM

Tuesday 13 July. Somerset Rural Life Museum Glastonbury.

The Somerset Rural Life Museum has had considerable success in the school drama project which enlivens the already engaging displays at the Abbey Farm and Abbey Barn. Members are invited to see the project at work with a school.

CONTACT: Jane Comp, 10 Walnut Close, Axbridge, Somerset. Tel: 0934 732836

#### OPERATION WOODPECKER

Wednesday 4 August. Irchester Country Park, near Wellingborough, Northamptonshire

Another course for members to visit and join in this extremely successful countryside activity project for local children. Over a 3 week period of the summer holidays a whole range of activities such as birdwatching or pond dipping, practical conservation work, discovery walks in the park and surrounding countryside and a large number of volunteers with the aim of helping children to appreciate and use their Country Park and the countryside in general.

CONTACT: Alan Teulon or Lesley Addison (see address above).

#### RESPONDING TO EVALUATION

Saturday 7 August. Natural History Museum, London.

Following the Society's meeting on evaluation in December 1981, this meeting will examine in more detail the practical ways in which planning or design of exhibitions at the

# interpretation newsletter

cont. from previous page

Natural History Museum takes into account the findings of evaluative research on earlier displays.

CONTACT: David Uzzell, Dept. of Linguistics and International Studies, University of Surrey, Guildford, GU2 5XH. Tel:0483 71281

A P.S. FROM BILL BREAKELL

Avid readers of the Daily Telegraph (and especially its Peter Simple Column) will have noted the relish with which Mr Simple comments on interpretation. A few days before the Heritage Swap Shop which Pennine Heritage arranged recently, several column inches were devoted to this "heritage breakthrough which will astonish the world".

Mr Simple wrote "Are the indigenous people of the South Pennines, on the borders of the West Riding and Lancashire, traditionally notorious for their pride ("I'll call no man master"), obstinacy, mistrust of strangers and downright rudeness, going to stand by and see their part of what was once England turned into a monstrous bureaucratic swap shop? This is not regeneration. It is degeneration.

"They had better recover their traditional pride and rudeness, together with their wits, in good time. Or they will soon find they have become an oppressed minority among

hills alive with bureaucratic countryside rangers, touristic and educational interpretation force-feeders, heritage-mongers and all the other swarming officials of this appalling new industry.

"They face a greater threat to their identity than their handloom-weaving ancestors ever did. It is time to raise once more the banners of General Ludd".

Incidentally, the same 'mole' let Peter Simple know all about the Interpretation Project on the North York Moors Railway a couple of years ago and brought about his suggestion of "transforming the whole of England into an educational museum employing all able-bodied men, women and children as an interpretive visitor management tool".

Peter's keen interest in interpretation needs to be fostered (indeed, he had to borrow the press information from someone else as we forgot to send him any). We certainly appreciate his thoughts and feel we have a strong ally He's on our mailing list now.

## ADVANCE NOTICE OF AN SIBH WEEKEND IN THE LAKE DISTRICT - INTERPRETATION AND MARKETING -

A weekend seminar is being organised jointly by the Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage and the Association of Independent Museums (in the Lake District), on 29, 30 and 31 October, 1982.

The growth in recent years of increasingly sophisticated visitor attractions has blurred the boundaries between what were formerly easily identifiable categories - museums, galleries, country parks, visitor centres and historic houses are all concerned to present themselves to the public in an imaginative and lively way.

During the weekend, visits will be made to some of the newest developments in the field of museums and interpretive centres in the Lake District. Speakers will include the directors and curators of a number of these new enterprises as well as contributions from an experienced market researcher and a journalist giving advice on "Working with the Media". The lectures and discussions are designed to be of practical use in improving methods of presentation, marketing and communication in interpretive and museum facilities.

Further details are available from Ronald Sands, Assistant Director, National Park Centre, Brockhole, Windermere, Cumbria LA23 1LJ. Please mark the envelopes AIM/SIBH weekend.