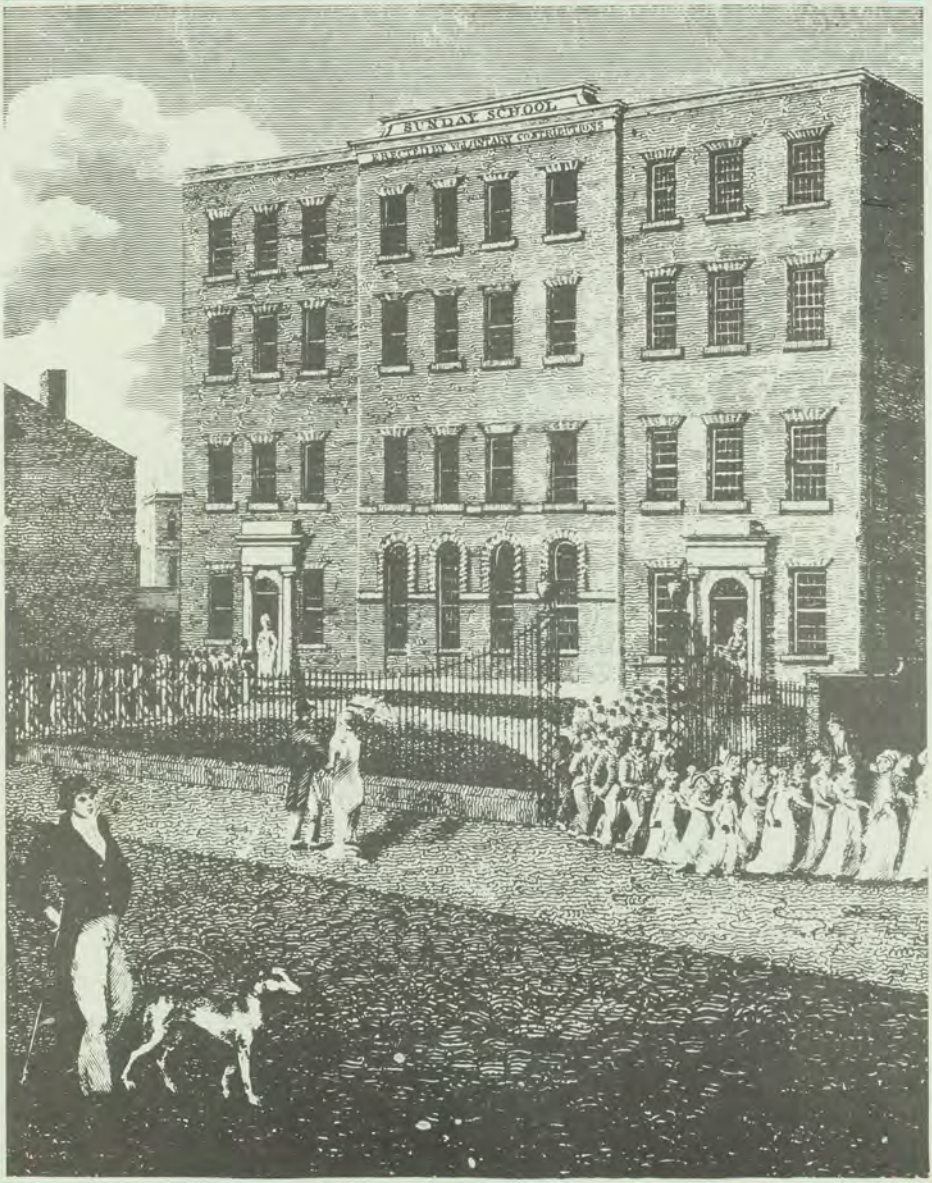
interpretation

number 22 autumn 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.

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Subscriptions

The subscription for membership is £7 per annum for individuals and £20 for corporate bodies.

The Newsletter

'Interpretation', the newsletter of the Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage, is published three times a year, on April 1st, August 1st and December 1st. It is distributed free to members. Non-members may buy copies at 70p each.

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Cover picture: Macclesfield Sunday School

Readers please note:-

The copy date for the next issue of Interpretation is February 11th 1983

Viewpoint: Could try harder ...

Membership of SIBH is growing but the untapped potential for new members remains great. Even in disciplines where there is an overlapping sphere of interest, their understanding of interpretation is limited and ignorance of SIBH generally complete.

The need is mutual. SIBH needs to establish a broader base and related disciplines (including land management, landscape architecture and agriculture) need to know the What? Why? How? and Where? of interpretation. Most will find it has a role to play in their own affairs.

The extent of the opportunity and the need for action have been reinforced by my own limited involvement with Leeds Polytechnic. After only two seminars to the final year architecture students, the course directors are now planning to incorporate aspects of interpretation into their course syallabus. They have suggested that other local colleges would also welcome an outside speaker to introduce the concept of interpretation and its relevance to their particular course of study.

It may be that this is indeed happening in other parts of the country but I suspect it is patchy and ad hoc. Surely this is an area where SIBH (or SIBH in conjunction with CEI) could take the initiative and practise a bit of co-ordination by:

1. Compiling a national register of interpreters willing to speak on an occasional basis

2. Making the register and the service offered known to the tertiary education establishments and professional bodies most likely to use it.

Cathy Macfie

Review

The Design of Educational exhibits
compiled by R.S. Miles
in collaboration with: M.B. Alt, D.C. Gosling, B.N. Lewis and A.F. Trout

There is an urgent need, at present, for a relevant and educationally authoritative handbook for people involved in designing educational exhibitions. The Design of Educational Exhibits aims to meet this need by laying out guidelines, and a sound pedagogic basis for them, for exhibition design that (for a given cost) will tend to optimise the educational value of such exhibitions to their target audience. It offers practical guidance on all aspects of the work, from the planning administration and evaluation of a large programme of exhibition work down to the selection of media and the design and construction of the single exhibit. It discusses the things that should be thought about and the things that should be done in setting up educational exhibits, paying particular attention to the pitfalls that must be identified and avoided if the work is to be done well. It makes accessible much of the craft-skill that is required to set up successful exhibits and which has not before been recorded in an organised form.

The authors have all worked in the planning, production and evaluation of a series of major new exhibitions in the British Museum (Natural History) and the chief author is Dr. Roger Miles, head of the Museum's Public Services Department. Mick Alt is a freelance market researcher/evaluator, David Gosling is head of the Exhibition Development section in the Museum's Public Services department, Brian Lewis is Professor of Educational Science in the Institute of Educational Technology at the Open University, and Alan Tout is a partner of A. and D. Tout Consultants. The writing is closely integrated and throughout is founded on detailed practical experience and sound theoretical understanding.

The book is aimed at all people who are concerned with mounting educational exhibitions, whether they be administrators, designers, educationalists, planners or subject-matter experts. Student readers are likely to be following a postgraduate course in museology (museum studies) or similar courses at institutions throughout the world. The backgrounds of the readership will be as varied as the skills required to put together and evaluate an exhibition. Therefore, no special knowledge is assumed and the book should be accessible to all readers.

11 November 1982 225 pages 60 line & 41 half tone illustrations
0 04 069002 4 Papercase £19.95

Reproduced with thanks from the Group for Designers and Interpreters in Museums Newsletter

A courtly Cavalier robot, who by speech, flashing eyes, and body movements is being used to guide visitors in a restored country house, could be the first of a new breed of super salesmen, writes Alan Dunn.

Standing 6ft tall in the great hall of the 13th-century Thurnham Hall, near Lancaster, his lips move and his head, eyes, and arms turn to direct attention to the items he is describing.

Mr Stanley Crabtree, who with his son, David, built the robot, said: "Dressed in a business suit, he could be an arresting selling aid at an exhibition."

Mr Crabtree, a former engineer whose family has spent nine years restoring the hall, plans a second robot, and later hopes to build speaking, moving, programmed robots as aids to industry and commerce.

The micro-processor and integrated technology behind the cavalier were designed by the micro-processor unit of Lancaster University.

Picture: Don McPhee.

THE GUARDIAN Wednesday May 12 1982

Macclesfield Sunday School Heritage Centre

PART 1/CONCEPT, MEANS AND REALISATION

Peter de Figueiredo

Macclesfield is famous for silk. For over 400 years silk manufacture was the principal industry, and during the 18th and 19th centuries it shaped both the appearance of the town and the lives of its people.

In recent years the rate of closure of traditional firms in the silk industry increased concern for the protection of Macclesfield's heritage. Since the 1960s there were proposals to establish a silk museum in the town, but the small group of enthusiasts working through the Macclesfield Civic Society were unable to generate sufficient momentum to achieve this aim.

The development of the Quarry Bank Mill project at Styal helped stimulate thinking in Macclesfield, and led in April 1979 to the establishment of a research scheme funded by the Manpower Services Commission and sponsored by the Borough and County Councils and local groups. The purpose of the scheme was to explore the town's industrial heritage.

It was the success of this scheme - the enthusiasm of the five researchers and the support and encouragement they received from the people of the town, which gave such a boost to the whole museum project. At the completion of the exercise it became quite clear that there was quite sufficient remaining in the town to justify some sort of heritage centre.

The momentum was maintained by the establishment of The Friends of Macclesfield Silk Heritage, whose aims were (and still are) to promote understanding of the local silk industry and the development of the town, to act as custodian to the archive and ultimately to set up a silk heritage museum.

A fundamental problem had always been finding a suitable building. But another problem existed in the town at this time - finding a use for the obsolete Macclesfield Sunday School. In 1979 this building was offered to the Borough Council. Owned by a charitable trust, and following its closure as a Sunday School, run on a partial basis for community uses, the building had sadly deteriorated. It was seen as a liability. The Chief Executive of the Borough Council, who had been approached by the Trustees, had the foresight however to see that if sufficient funds could be raised to finance the cost of repairs, this building would provide an ideal home for a Heritage Centre.

The cost of repairs was estimated at approximately £100,000, and it was clear that the project would only be feasible if substantial grants could be secured. An approach to the Department of the Environment for a historic buildings grant was ultimately successful, and an offer of up to £50,000 was made towards the cost of repairs (the Sunday School is a Grade II* Listed Building). This was followed by a further DOE grant of £30,000 under the Urban Programme Circular 1981. Other substantial grants promised include £20,000 from English Tourist Board, £3,000 from Cheshire County Council, £10,000 from Macclesfield Borough Council and £10,000 from the Carnegie UK Trust. The Sunday School Trustees agreed to seek the approval of the Charity Commission to setting up a new trust to operate the building as a Heritage Centre and to transfer the assets which included receipts for the sale of land to Sainsbury's who have built a supermarket next door. The new Trust was established in December 1981 and has Trustees representing the Borough Council, Friends of Macclesfield Silk Heritage and the old Trust. Overall responsibility for the building and the project lies with the Trustees.

Since their formation, the Friends have been most active in furthering the project - in physically cleaning out and clearing debris from the Sunday School, in publicising the project, and in mounting promotional exhibitions. A public appeal has recently been launched by the Friends

with a target of £60,000. National Westminster Bank Ltd., whose local branch manager is Treasurer to the Trust, has been most generous in providing a full time fund raising director. A number of Friends sub-committees deal with specific aspects of the project. One of these forms the Project Advisory Committee which plays a central role in liaising with the Architect and the Project Design Director on the building work and the organisation of the Centre. This committee acts as sponsor to an MSC scheme which is providing a specialist research/design team to work with the Project Design Director. The Project Design Director, Moira Stevenson, is on secondment from Cheshire Council for 2½ years to set up the heritage displays.

One of the greatest assets and a chief subject for interpretation is the Sunday School itself. Erected in 1813 and financed by public subscription, the building accommodated 2,500 children. It was designed in a most unusual way, with two floors of classrooms surmounted by a spectacular two storey assembly room. Its elegant Georgian proportions and fine functional details give the building an appropriately severe character.

The first phase of the project is already under way. This involves the complete restoration of the building and its conversion to provide a suitable setting for the Heritage Centre. The immediate and key attraction will be a permanent exhibition describing the history of the silk industry in Macclesfield and the development of the town. This will be presented in a lively and informative way, making use of the ground floor and basement rooms. There will be an introductory tape slide programme situated in a vaulted basement chamber. A supporting gallery will be provided for related exhibitions on detailed aspects of the area and its people to be mounted by outside organisations and societies. The Centre will act as a basis for trails including other buildings and sites of interest in the town. There is, for example, a unique hand loom weaving room in a former silk mill in Park Lane which will be opened to the public.

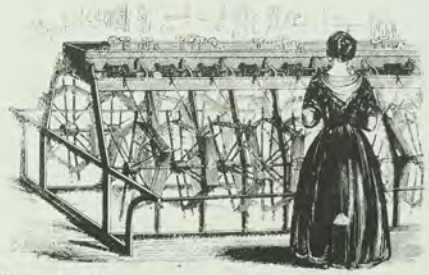
A tea room, open independently of the exhibitions, will be located on the ground floor serving refreshments and light lunches. A tourist information centre and shop selling silk products will also be provided.

The first floor will be converted to provide the historical archive with areas for special study and seminars. Other rooms will be available for letting to societies and community groups with related interests.

The prinicpal aim of the second phase of the project is the restoration of the fine assembly room which occupies the top floors of the building. This will provide a suitable venue for meetings of all kinds: for lectures, receptions, conferences, and especially for music. The work required will include the restoration of the fabric, repairs to plasterwork and the modification of the pulpit to provide a platform adaptable to the many uses of the auditorium. Exits and some sections of staircase will have to be modified to satisfy fire regulations.

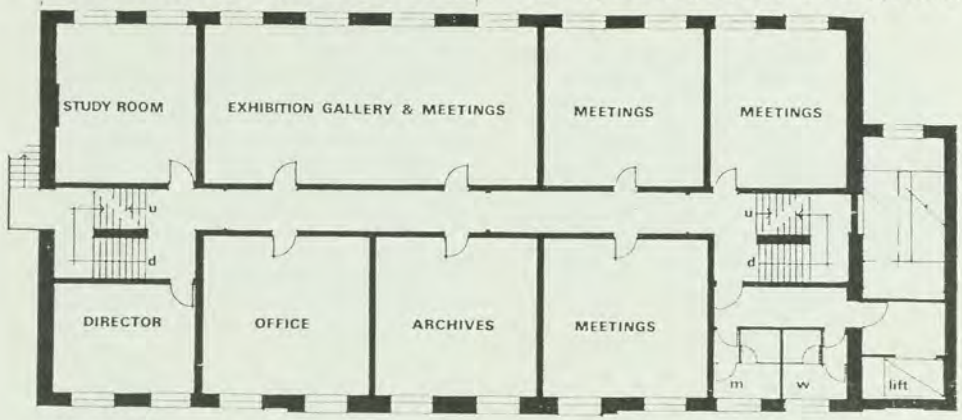
The assembly Hall contains an early 19th century pipe organ by Samuel Renn, one of the outstanding organ builders of his time. Unfortunately it has been badly vandalised. Agreement has however been reached to acquire the great Renn organ from the church of St George's, Hulme, Manchester. This will be used in the restoration of the Sunday School organ and offers the opportunity to create an instrument of national importance.

Outside the building it is intended to restore the original design of railings and to create external terraces and areas for outdoor exhibition. This will improve the setting of the building and express the importance of its location in the town centre.

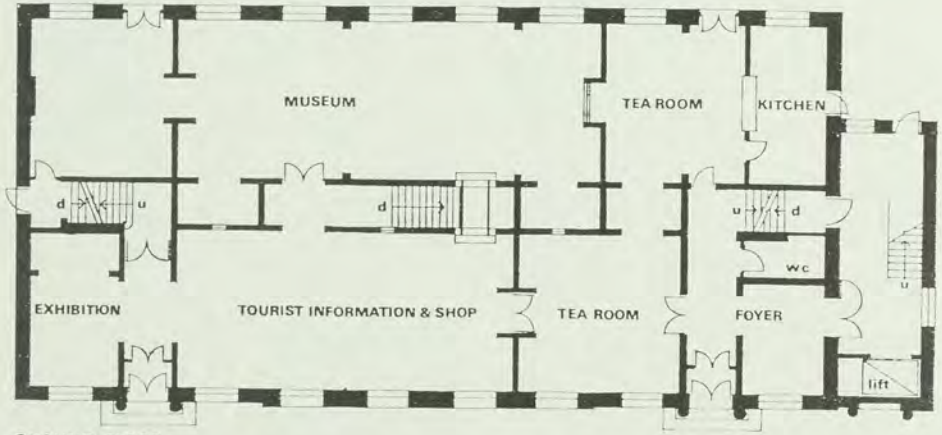


Winding—in the 19th century

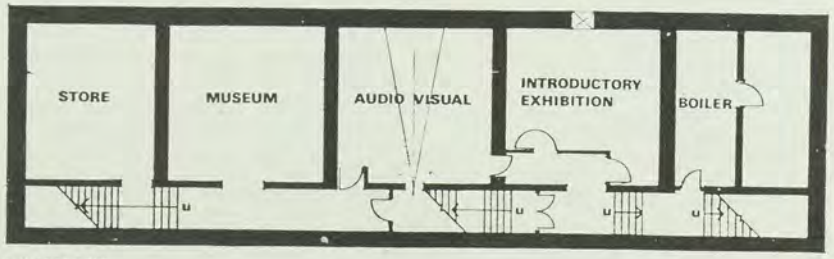
Plans as proposed Basement, Ground & First floors



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



BASEMENT

PART 2/EXPERIENCE IN THE LITTLE THINGS

Harry Ward

Since the establishment of the Friends of the Silk Heritage, representing a wide range of organisations and interests in the town, the formation of the new Trust and the management of the project by a multi-disciplinary and motivated team, progress has been remarkably swift. Targets have been set and within the next year or so certain achievements seem assured.

The unique Sunday School building is well on the way to repair and is being sympathetically and carefully restored. The architectural value of the building will be realised anew, and the improved external surroundings will considerably enhance a strategic part of the town centre. The interior - initially the first two floors and basement - will be revealed, made useable, the spaces inter-related and prepared for their new purposes. We can expect a workmanlike and harmonious result.

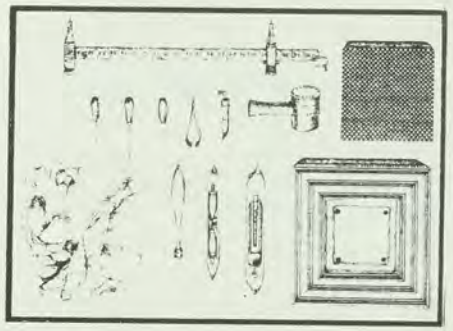
A silk museum will be created and we can confidently look forward to a well researched and imaginative mounted display. The Tourist Information Centre, if run with aplomb, will gain the interest of resident and visitor alike and add to the enlivenment of the building. The tea room will provide a service to users of the building and to shoppers and could well become an important rendezvous.

As well as these facilities meeting rooms on the first floor will provide convenient bases for local societies - especially for those of an educational, cultural and town-promotional kind - and for social events. A gallery will be available to house travelling exhibitions and locally devised displays. The administration rooms will provide opportunities for study and for the collation and keeping of archives.

Most of this development is concerned with the physical adaptation and creation of space, and will require intelligent administration for the Centre to become a unit successfully serving the local community and visitors to the district.

In many ways the Assembly Room on the top two floors is the most important part of the building. Here, in Phase 2, apart from the repair, restoration of the fabric and alterations to satisfy modern safety regulations, a creative and imaginative approach will be needed to make the room adaptable for many different kinds of functions. It seems certain that the restoration of the organ will result in an instrument of great interest to music lovers and organ enthusiasts and that this will help to make the room much sought after for concerts. Questions of platform accommodation, seating, lighting, services installations and the like will require careful consideration and design.

However, notwithstanding the importance of the project as the restoration of a monument, the creation of a place of reference, this on its own is an



A few items from the archive

inadequate aim. The great opportunity is for the creation of a social, cultural, education centre for the town, where artificial divisions in society represented by occupation, age, ownership do not exist and where everyone's talents and experience can be valued and used.

As W R Lethaby said in his essay Towns to live in (1918) - 'The town itself is hardly ever thought of as a cradle of life, a school of manners, and the foundation of civilisation... Our better-educated people, indeed, had come too much to look on our towns as places for labour - labour of others - while they could go 'abroad' for recreation. We have to reorganize all our towns as places in which to live and to train strong and willing children. A man is the child of his city, and if he cannot reverence her he is much of an orphan.' ... 'Town improvement is likely to be put aside as some great thing, and doubtless great things are needed; but it is also a common and immediate necessity. Greater things, indeed, can only be satisfactorily dealt with as the result of constant desire and effort. Without experience in the little things grandiose doings are likely to be unrelated and artificial, or even destructive. Many of the smaller things do not raise the question of cost; they are rather matters of custom and training, and much of the humblest kind needs everywhere to be done for the preservation of a minimum standard of order.'

During the silk research project the five MSC workers established an office in a ground floor room at the Sunday School. They had few resources - a telephone and some borrowed furniture and equipment - but managed to create a lively centre where townspeople were welcomed to give information, to bring documents, pictures and other items relating to the town and its industry, and to reminisce. Somehow the feeling of enthusiasm created in this project and of its ready accessibility to the local population must be regained in the Heritage Centre. It is known that schools in the district are (and have been) involved in local studies and environmental projects - and the Centre should provide a focus for this work and publicise the results. In effect the building and its activities have the makings of an Urban Studies Centre, and in a way this would be a more appropriate overall title.

We are grateful to Bill Breakell (in the spring issue of Interpretation p 36) for drawing our attention to comments on interpretation by Peter Simple of the alien Telegraph, in which he envisages 'an oppressed minority among the hills alive with bureaucratic countryside rangers, touristic and educational interpretation force-feeders, heritagemongers and all the other swarming officials of this appalling new industry'.

We too wince at the words 'Heritage' and begging your pardon, 'Interpretation' and hate 'trails' especially when they come in 'packages' - a new specialism, a new jargon to accompany a new genre of pollution - slick as slick like an American cult. We must beware of our self-satisfied smugness.

Amongst the activators of the Macclesfield Centre we feel sure there is a genuine measure of agreement on humane aims, even if these are not always well-defined or sometimes appear to get mislaid amongst the clutter of organisational activities. The main danger, as T S Eliot said (The Ultimate Treason) is doing the right thing for the wrong reason.

The long slog to get the Macclesfield Sunday School Heritage Centre towards reality has been and is the easy part - we are on the way to the presentation. It will be tasteful, will it be vital? It will be available, will it be accessible? It will be informative, will it be educational? Will it belong to the town? Watch this space.

Friends of Macclesfield Silk Heritage

Regional Meetings

SIBH REGIONAL MEETING: Saturday, 3 July, 1982
The Interpretive Potential of a National Trust Estate:

Nunnington Hall, Helmsley, N. Yorkshire

Cathy Macfie

Nunnington Hall is a 17th century manor house, situated on the bank of the River Rye in a quiet, unspoiled valley. The National Trust opened Nunnington Hall and its gardens in 1978, although publicity remained low key and facilities minimal. In 1981, Peter and Carol Brown were appointed as full-time Administrators for Nunnington with a brief to help develop the property's potential as a visitor attraction. The installation of the famous Carlisle Collection (of 22 miniature rooms, each furnished and decorated in the style of different periods) was probably the most important single factor in drawing 34,000 visitors to Nunnington during 1981.

From April 1982, the National Trust increased its visitor facilities to include an improved tea room, a small information centre and re-sited National Trust shop. Scarcely any consideration has yet been given to the provision of interpretive services or facilities.

By inviting SIBH to assess the interpretive potential of Nunnington Hall, the National Trust has shown itself willing to consider a new dimension in its planning approach - and provided an opportunity which SIBH could not refuse.

The working party was met by Leslie McCracken, Regional Information Officer for Yorkshire, who outlined National Trust policy in general and interpretive constraints for Nunnington in particular. (Prior to the meeting, a detailed brief had been sent to each participant.) Peter Brown then guided the group around the Hall and gardens, stimulating a welter of initial thoughts and ideas.

Black clouds threatened to douse the promised riverside picnic but the National Trust provided a splendid buffet lunch in the tea room. This, the afternoon tea which followed and the initial publicity material were offered free of charge as a gesture of appreciation for the services of the working party - a factor which helped keep costs down to £4 per person.

After lunch, the group sat down together to work out a basic framework and theme for interpretive provision. Alan Machin (Tourist Information Officer for Halifax and SIBH Treasurer) offered some ideas on the importance of marketing before everyone divided into smaller working groups to consider more detailed proposals. Groups 1 and 2 worked together to develop storylines and select appropriate interpretive media. Group 3 looked at user groups and marketing considerations.

The range and quality of the proposals which emerged during the combined discussion at the end of the afternoon did credit to the group, given so little time for preparation. As a result of that day's work, a subtantial report, outlining the preliminary findings, was prepared and first circulated to group members for comment before final submission to the National Trust.

Its proposals are both imaginative and practical; simple and far-reaching. Should the National Trust decide to look further into any/all of the recommendations, it is hoped that it will refer back to individual members of the group.

From the group's point of view, the day was deeply satisfying. Drawing members from a wide variety of backgrounds, we were able to offer the National Trust a professional and competent service. At the same time, it was stimulating to work together as a group; ideas sparking ideas and with the urgency of a time limit to lend direction and incisiveness to our thought.

Many members of the group have suggested that this is an exercise which SIBH might usefully repeat in Regional Meetings elsewhere. There is no doubt of its value to the "client" and one suggested amendment to any repeat programme would be to charge a reasonable fee for the preparation of the final report.

Interpretation of the Salt Industry in Northwich

Ian Parkin, Warrington

28 attended the first joint meeting with the Group for Designers and Interpreters in Museums and were treated to an extremely varied and stimulating day looking at various aspects of interpretation in the salt town of Northwich, Cheshire.

Starting at the newly opened Salt Museum where we saw an excellent AV programme and exhibition, the party took a leisurely journey by narrow boat along the Weaver Navigation to the Anderton Lift, enjoying lunch, liquid refreshment and good company en route. After being 'lifted' the 50 feet to the Trent and Mersey Canal we were given a superb tour of the workings including the amazing network of cogs, wheels and wire ropes which sit on the very top of the structure.

The boat then took us along the canal to the Lion Salt works, the last operating traditional salt works. There we saw the various stages involved in converting brine into rock salt and most of us invested 40p purchasing a useful sample for the kitchen.

A Coach then returned us to the Salt Museum where a lively discussion ensued on the various aspects of the day. Everyone took home a package of leaflets, postcards, posters and souvenirs and for £10 it seemed good value for money.

Photo: Michael Quinion

Photo: Michael Quinion

Responding to Evaluation

Teige O'Brien Painshill Park Trust Ltd.

SIBH South-East Region
Natural History Museum
Saturday, 7th August, 1982

Following the snow blighted Winter meeting of the SIBH on Evaluation of Interpretation where the importance of involvement of evaluation at the earliest possible stages in exhibition design was stressed, a workshop was organised in the South East region, to look at the varied evaluation techniques used at the Natural History Museum, London to monitor their newer exhibitions.

Dr Roger Miles and Dr Steven Griggs showed their use of evaluation methods at every stage of the Exhibition design process, with particular emphasis on the least expensive methods. Dr Miles opened with a talk on the impact of Evaluation on exhibition schemes at the Natural History Museum.

There are three key factors in exhibition design:

1. Transformation of the information so that it is easily understood by the audience.

2. Evaluation of the information to confirm it is communicating.

3. Renewal of exhibits which are not performing adequately.

In the design of an exhibition it is essential that evaluation is incorporated in the early stages of planning prior to production and opening to the public. The different types of evaluation and their timing was best demonstrated in chart form.

Type of Evaluation	Exhibition production stage		
	Planning	Production	After opening
Large-scale sample survey	✓	×	✓
Behavioural	×	×	✓
Comprehension & Knowledge	✓	✓	✓
Critical appraisal	✓	✓	✓

Large-scale sample, behavioural and comprehension and knowledge surveys give quantitative data whereas critical appraisal is qualitative. The use of many types of evaluation at the planning stage should minimise poor performance of the exhibits once the exhibition is open. The large-scale sample survey provides demographic information on the visitors. Behavioural surveys study the attracting and holding power of the exhibits. Comprehension and knowledge studies test the visitors' understanding of concepts and exhibition panels. Finally critical appraisal should be applied at all stages continually asking questions such as:

1. Is there a beginning, middle and end and are they clear?

2. Are there clear steps in the argument?

3. Is the information organised correctly and in the right proportions?

4. Is any information irrelevant?

5. Is the information in an inappropriate medium?

6. Are any questions rhetorical and not capable of being answered?

There are also a number of problems associated with post evaluation: it can take a long time; it identifies faults but not corrective measures; it can be too late especially when large sums of money have been spent; and if too many negative points arise, it can be psychologically detrimental to the designer. Therefore, it was found that evaluating earlier in the production sequence helped quality control but the designers needed to allow more time for it, needed new skills (and attitudes) to use it efficiently.

The second half of the morning session was taken up by Stephen Griggs talking on monitoring exhibit effectiveness during design. He concentrated on the best evaluation methods and the most economical methods of achieving them, using examples from the Human Biology exhibition and the forthcoming Origin of the Species exhibition.

Having been briefed on the requirements for an exhibition, formative evaluation can commence. Ideas should be put on paper, especially where there is disagreement on what will work. Previous errors should be analysed to make sure they are not repeated. Formative evaluation must always be quick and cheap, but there are problems with floating ideas to a small number of people. Firstly the data is not statistically relevant, and more importantly good ideas can be neglected in error. Also one has to consider how is the idea best transformed into a three-dimensional exhibit.

For the Human Biology exhibition individuals were shown story boards and roughs of exhibits and their comments were tape recorded. The sample size was 30. This enabled them to establish where communication was poor and why; therefore, corrective measures could be implemented at considerably less cost than if a completed exhibit had been researched and produced. Levels of recall were looked at, paying attention to the minimum permissible levels and the best methods of increasing recall, perhaps by shifts of emphasis.

Problems encountered were:

- orienting visitors where you want them
- establishing the best sequence
- eliminating preconceived ideas of both the designer and visitor

Overall it was found essential that the designer be involved in evaluation. Often the use of an educational psychologist was a benefit.

The afternoon began with Stephen Griggs talking on knowing your target audience. In order to be able to pitch the level of information for an exhibition accurately one must find and define the target audience. Front-end evaluation should provide information on the existing knowledge of the visitor, the ways of communicating with the visitor, the best methods of correcting common misconceptions, and discovering the visitors' expectations and relative interests in different topics. The data from the front-end evaluation can then be used to extend the original brief and look further at particular aspects. An analysis of the requirements should then be used to establish the behavioural patterns available, the level of commitment by the visitor and their reasons for their commitment; for instance - is it because of their work or hobby or some other reason. This analysis is best achieved by an in-depth interview which will look at the potential customer and their requirements, check assumptions, maximise the scope of the exhibition, establish the best methods of presentation and what benefits are derived from the visit.

In summation: to ensure the maximum effectiveness of the communication for an exhibition it is necessary to establish the demographic characteristics of visitors and their response to exhibitions of the type intended, and conduct pre and post research on the exhibits themselves.

There then followed a visit to the Human Biology exhibition where the benefits of assessing the completed exhibition were demonstrated. We had already seen story boards of some sections and photographs of the original panels installed. It was interesting to note where sections had been changed following summative evaluation to improve their communication effectiveness. We were also shown the complex video tracking system used in the Hall of Human Biology and how it has been used to monitor the flow pattern of the visitors and the holding power of exhibits.

An interesting, wide-ranging discussion rounded off the day which covered the many means of monitoring exhibition design from planning to implementation.

Leeds by Gaslight

Dear Sir GAS LAMPS

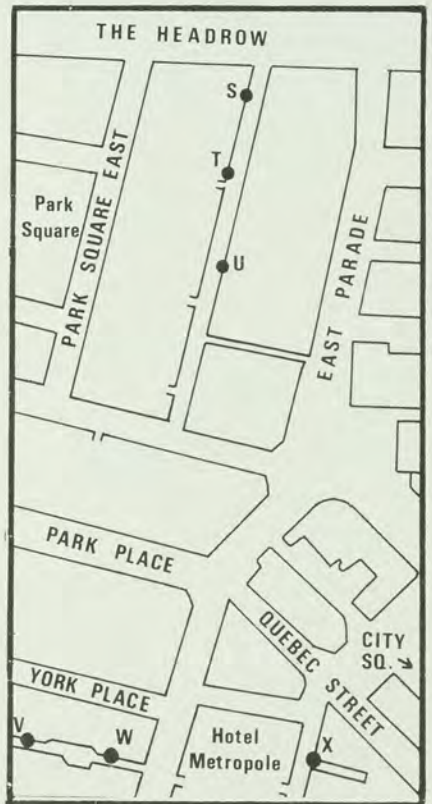
A colleague and I have recently produced a booklet on the "Surviving Gas-Lamps of Central Leeds". We researched the material for the booklet whilst undergraduates at Bradford University studying Environmental Science. The booklet has sold about 700 copies to museums, libraries, shops and individual members of the public. We have attracted a lot of interest from local radio and newspapers during our research and sales campaign.

At present we are seeking funds to continue our research on the surviving gas-lamps of Britain. It may surprise you to know that there are over 3000 surviving gas street lamps in the Country mostly in London but examples survive in Sheffield, Newcastle, Malvern, Nottingham and Workington. British Gas have offered to publish our work and the National Photographic Record wish to mount a National exhibition of Gas-Lamp photographs. We are hindered in our research by a lack of funds. We need assistance toward travel and recording costs for two people over a 6 month period which we have calculated at £500. Any help or advice you can give would be most warmly received. We are available at any time for further diccussion of our work.

Yours faithfully

Peter Hopkinson

*We suggest anyone with information about gas-lamps (or sources of money) write to Mr Hopkinson.
39, Oldcroft Rd., Walton, Staffs



Streets of the Park Square Area
S,T,U - Park Cross Street
V,W - Back York Place
X - Little King Street

THE YARDS OFF BRIGGATE

A,B - Bramley's Yard
C,D - Rockley Hall Yd.
E,F - Bay Horse Yard
G,H - Ship Yard
I - Angel Court
J,K,L Change Alley
M - Pack Horse Yard
N - Minor & Scurr's Yard
O,P - Hirst's Yard
Q - Queen's Yard
R - Blayd's Yard

There are at least 24 of the original Victorian gas lights still left in central Leeds but they are threatened by a combination of redevelopment and vandalism. They are largely unknown to the public and ignored by amenity planners. This booklet describes the history of the gas lights and gives suggestions for their preservation.

S.J.B Hickmott
P.G Hopkinson

For copies of booklet; 30p

David Wright,
4 Broomsdale Rd,
Soothill, Batley.

WHERE THE GASLIGHTS ARE

Heritage Commission

SIBH Executive Committee

Organisation of Ancient Monuments & Historic Buildings in England

The Way Forward

Memorandum of Observations submitted to the Secretary of State for the Environment

August 1982

Introduction

1. As the aim of the Society is "to promote a high standard of interpretation in order to heighten public awareness and appreciation of Britain's heritage," it welcomes the opportunity to comment on the way in which work and responsibilities for ancient monuments and historic buildings will be organised in future.

2. The Society feels that its comments in relation to the presentation of ancient monuments and historic buildings may be particularly helpful, because its members are drawn from a wide range of public and private organisations engaged in presenting and interpreting sites and buildings to the public.

The Way Ahead

The Society fully supports the principle of establishing a new "single, committed and central focus for our heritage of monuments and historic buildings" which will have the twin functions of preservation and presentation.

Whilst preservation must come first, that is but a means towards the end of a better informed public, aware of the quality and character of its inheritance and caring enough about it to ensure its survival into future generations.

Monuments and buildings must therefore be presented to the public in an attractive and informative way. There are many different ways of doing this and there are many successful examples in the ownership of the National Trust, Local Authorities, private people and the Government itself. Successful presentations are almost always very carefully related to the particular place, especially its history and geographical setting. The new Agency must be careful not to seek to create uniformity over the places in its care.

With regard to the Royal Park and Royal Palaces and similar properties, the Society shares the views of those arguing in favour of responsibility being with the new Commission. Any special problems can be the subject of special arrangements required by the Minister. The more exceptions are made to the general rule, the more there is danger of duplication and confusion.

Organisation

The Society sees great advantage in an organisation which is locally based to respond to the different needs of the public visiting individual sites or groups of sites and to the variety of conservation interests.

The centrally based part of the organisation should be concerned with setting policy guidelines and dealing with national issues. Management and advising services should be regionally based to allow maximum partnership with the voluntary and private sectors. Indeed, we would suggest that many monuments and buildings should be managed on an agency basis by other bodies altogether.

The advisory committee suggested could also be appointed on a regional basis and we would strongly urge that they include people with proven skills and experience in interpretation.

Commission's Executive Functions

Ancient Monuments in Care: The management function of the Commission is to conserve and present Ancient Monuments in care to the public. Conservation consists of consolidation and maintenance works to the sites. Presentation embraces all the aspects of visitor handling, including marketing, interpretation, on-site services and sales. We think all presentation should be done in as commercial a way as possible on all sites and doubt the distinction drawn in the paper between "the commercial operation" (guidebooks and other saleable items) and other aspects, which are presumably thought of as non-commercial. Many more sites should be able to trade profitably if the management is geared to the reasonable needs of the visitor and we suggest that the Commission's commercial approach is based on the potential of individual sites or groups of sites.

Grants: We suggest that an additional condition of grant aid to historic buildings should require appropriate interpretive facilities to be provided to the public (public access an existing condition of grant).

Royal Palaces: As stated above, we believe the Commission should be responsible, at least for all presentation matters (including "the commercial operations").

There is a curious reference in the paper (para 30, p.23) to the use of Ham House and others, as 'museums', which leads to the conclusion that the Commission should have no interest. If that is a correct interpretation, we disagree entirely; much of the work of the Commission is akin to the museum work, i.e. the conservation of historic items and their presentation to the public.

The Commission's Advisory Role

The Society would like to see the Commission undertake a much wider role in promoting higher standards of management of all historic sites. It can set an example on its own properties, particularly in terms of interpretation, design and staff/visitor relations. In addition, it can publicise the best examples and encourage others to match them (an awards scheme, perhaps); require better presentation through the Historic Buildings grants scheme (see above); sponsor staff training schemes; develop more educational programmes of both specialist and general public interest, as well as those for schools.

Staffing Arrangements

The Commission must give greater priority to the number and quality of presentation staff than the Department has been able to do. The Society has great admiration for the interpretive work done in the last few years by the handful of people in the Department, but theirs has been an impossible task.

The Society urges the Commission to establish a strong nucleus of interpretive staff (designers, researchers, communicators) to produce guidelines for the display of all Ancient Monuments. Locally based consultants can be used to produce detailed schemes for individual or groups of monuments. There is a wealth of skill and experience in this field - the Commission can be first to tap it on a national and regional scale.

We urge this on the Commission because we believe it is necessary to present Ancient Monuments and historic buildings in an attractive and informative way, in order to increase income through admission charges and sales. We see good interpretation as both an educational and as an economic benefit.

Conclusion

The Society would be glad to elaborate on the above points and to contribute to the further development of government thinking if desired.

The Society looks forward to the formation of the new Commission.

Note: the Executive Committee is indebted to Bill Lanning of East Sussex County Council for his work on this statement.

Stratford Comments

Derek Baylis

1. The capacity of the town to survive without Shakespeare was very evident on the Sunday afternoon of our departure, with riverside and gardens teeming with folk who were obviously enjoying themselves because it was a pleasant place to come, just to be sociable in the Spring sunshine. There seemed to be a need for even more promenade space and more opportunities to be on the river. Tourists obviously come for other non-cultural reasons: to shop or simply to stop en route from one place to another, because the familiar name has a pull. This has little to do with the heritage, but is the real stuff of tourism.

2. The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust succeeds in carrying out the near-impossible task of preserving these tiny fragile buildings, yet allowing hundreds of thousands of people to see their interiors every year. However, one has to say that the experience of joining the tours to be processed through the highly-polished, perhaps rather antiseptic interiors and numerous sales points is redeemed only by the dedication and excellence of some (not all) of the guides. There are other places where one can experience buildings of the Tudor period and - dare I say it - with a greater sense of history, even a whiff of the life-style of the period. The Trust succeeds in preserving the physical heritage and to a considerable extent meeting the need for serious study of Shakespeare's life and times through the facilities of the Shakespeare Centre. It also carries out what would seem to be the local authority's responsibility of providing essential car-parking provision near the Centre.

3. The proposals contained in the "Outline Management Scheme for Stratford-on-Avon" contain so much good sense that the failure of the local authorities to agree to adopt any of the proposals put forward seems illogical to the point of perversity. The relocation of the T.I.C., and the provision of a comprehensive system of signing - for vehicles and pedestrians - appear to be essential steps towards a satisfactory orientation of the visitor. One has sympathy with the view too many signs diminish visual amenity, but in the Stratford situation, good basic signing is essential to effective circulation, and as a means of sorting out the disparate motivations of the visitors.

4. Tony Fyson made the point, and Geoff Stansfield reminded us in his summing-up, that the true source of the Shakespeare Heritage is the body of his work. Without the excellent Memorial Theatre, Stratford would have little to offer the Shakespeare pilgrim which related directly to the plays and the poetry. However, it would be absurd to think that the "pilgrims" are all devoted students of the Bard's work, but to make this work more accessible at Stratford is surely what interpretation ought to be about. The historic buildings and other attractions of the town are all peripheral to this central fact.

My feeling is that "The World of Shakespeare" is interpretation along the right lines. It brings into relief the high point of the English Renaissance, but the experience is as much entertaining as intellectually stimulating! There seem to be challenging possibilities in public performance also - without theatre, and with minimum capital investment. I am visualising much greater access to the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries at a popular level as a counterpoint to the facilities already available to the serious student.

Why not have an open concourse like the Pompidou Centre's Place Beaubourg, where groups can put on performances at certain times each day? Groups of 'living history' interpreters at the right places and times of day could introduce a dynamic element to interpretation which is absent at Stratford.

Stratford cont. over ...

MORE STRATFORD COMMENTS
from discussion group two's report

"Improvement of interpretation in the Birthplace Trust properties was vital. More could also be done to promote the appreciation of Stratford as a whole, rather than simply picking out a few exceptional buildings. Promotion of low cost accommodation opportunities would help establish the town as somewhere to stay as well as to visit. Interpretive sign boards ought to be considered in an urban interpretation approach, but this in turn would depend upon a properly structured visitor survey and comprehensive interpretive plan. These would help diminish the apparent conflicts of interest between commerce, local government and Shakespeare enthusiasts which had been demonstrated from the very revealing platform contributions at the conference ...."

"The real significance of Shakespeare as one of the great literary figures of one of the world's great languages was not interpreted to the general public at all. Complete performances of the plays at the Memorial Theatre were emphatically not such an interpretation - especially as they were so expensive to attend. The tenuous links between various houses and Shakespeare - or more often his relatives - did not illuminate the nature of the man or the significance of his work ...."

"The promotional concept of 'Shakespeare Country' was entirely spurious. Neither Shakespeare's work nor significant parts of his life could be said to centre upon Stratford or its region. If anywhere could lay claim to him in this regard it would be London. But in fact he was in no real sense a 'regional' writer and therefore should not be promoted as such. Some members believed a great mistake was being made in not using Shakespeare's own words - the true source of his power - to augment interpretation (The honourable exception was the World of Shakespeare). The new entrance to the Birthplace Trust cried out for an interpretation of the man's work. And if there was anywhere in the country where dramatised interpretation using live actors was justified it had to be Stratford. All in all, Stratford without Shakespeare was not an edifying experience ...."

OLD IRONWORKS WINS NEW AWARD

The excavation and interpretation of 17th Century ironworks in the Wye Valley has earned Gwent County Council a Prince of Wales Award.

The Abbey Tintern Ironworks site is in the quiet Angiddy Valley west of the village of Tintern. Excavations have shown that the once busy works comprised a number of buildings and water courses with a charcoal fed blast furnace which could produce more than 30 tons of fine iron every week. Water from the Angiddy brook turned a 25' diameter wheel which drove bellows to blast air to the furnace. Later, one of the first iron cylinder air pumps in Britain seems to have been for the blast, and over the years several changes of ownership and buildings took place until 1828 when the furnace closed.

Nearby woodlands were coppiced for charcoal and ores from the Forest of Dean, Lancashire and even from India appear to have been used in experiments in producing fine iron for making wire. The iron was shipped from Tintern via the Tidal Wye.

The excavations were organised by Gwent County Council and carried out from 1979 until 1981. The Manpower Services Commission funded excavation work through a temporary employment programme and grants of about £7,000 towards the cost of materials came from the Welsh Development Agency.

The site is not open to the general public. Educational parties and special interest groups can visit the remains of the works - mostly the exposed remains of buildings, ponds and water courses and the remnants of the furnace - but only by appointment. Teaching packs are being prepared by the County Planning Department and Gwent College of Higher Education as educational aids.

Following the Viewpoint on interpreting battle sites in the last issue, Terry Robinson drew attention to the poet Philip Johnstone's anticipatory poem High Wood, written in 1918 and reproduced below.

High Wood

Ladies and gentlemen, this is High Wood,
Called by the French, Bois des Fourneaux,
The famous spot which in Nineteen-Sixteen,
July, August and September was the scene
Of long and bitterly contested strife,
By reason of its High commanding site.
Observe the effect of shell-fire in the trees
Standing and fallen; here is wire; this trench
For months inhabited, twelve times changed hands;
(They soon fall in), used later as a grave.
It has been said on good authority
That in the fighting for this patch of wood
Were killed somewhere above eight thousand men,
Of whom the greater part were buried here,
This mound on which you stand being ...
Madame,please,
You are requested kindly not to touch
Or take away the Company's property
As souvenirs; you'll find we have on sale
A large variety, all guaranteed.
As I was saying, all is as it was,
This is an unknown British Officer,
The tunic having lately rotted off.
Please follow me - this way ...
the path, sir, please,
The ground which was secured at great expense
The Company keeps absolutely untouched,
And in that dug-out (genuine) we provide
Refreshments at a reasonable rate.
You are requested not to leave about
Paper, or ginger-beer bottles, or orange-peel,
There are waste-paper baskets at the gate.

Philip Johnstone
1918

Review

Sharing Nature with Children
by J B Cornell Exley Publications
£2.95 from Inter Action Inprint
15 Wilkins St., London NW5 (add 65p p + p).

Just lately British interpreters have noticeably begun to turn up their noses when new ideas from America are placed before them. In the new found adolescence of the British Interpretive movement it has become easy to snub our mentors with a feeling that the apprenticeship has been served and now we can do it as well as you.

Interpretation with the characteristics of inspiration, innovation and imagination is rarely found in this country whilst the States remains a justified source of ideas.

The recent visit by Van Matre (see Interpretation No. 17, 1981) introduced the sceptics to "Acclimatisation," yet how many have adopted the techniques for their interpretive programmes? Guided walks continue to cause problems in sustaining visitor levels which is not surprising for most guided walks programmes show little originality in their content or marketing.

Consequently, this delightful book by Cornell, so well illustrated and composed, offers British interpreters a life-line. The author's ideas are not original nor are they particularly new, those of us who heard John Hanna's Lectures in 1977 will realise that.

However, what Cornell does do very well is to provide a stimulating range of 'nature games' which can be introduced into guided walks or form interpretive events in their own right. These games are based on the Author's five tenets for outdoor teaching, which are;

1. Teach less, and share more
2. Be receptive
3. Focus attention without delay
4. Look and experience, then talk
5. A sense of joy should permeate the experience

I recommend this book to you all and suggest that you don't limit its application to children. "Sharing Nature with Children" should sit comfortably on your shelf next to Tilden, providing of course that it has been well used.

Terry Stevens

Dear Events Organiser

It has come to my attention that SIBH mail is being sent to my old address at Whatton, due to out-of-date labels or lists or something being issued to regional organisers.

It has taken me years to acquire an interesting address (I really wanted Bogend, but there were no houses available) so would you please ensure that Blidworth Bottoms is used to the full by any members wishing to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Mitchell

Margaret Mitchell
4, Rigg Lane
Blidworth Bottoms
Mansfield
Notts
NG21 ONS

News and Notes

HADRIAN'S WALL

An attractive booklet has just been published by Northumberland National Park. Titled Look Around Hadrian's Wall it introduces the visitor to geology, history, industry, farming, forestry and wildlife in the district, all in 42 pages of large text and b/w illustrations. Author AM Tynan of the Hancock Museum, Newcastle on Tyne has had the bright idea of including spaces where notes may be added under "seen at" and "date" heads. As so often with good publications, the target audience is young but the adult reader will appreciate the product too.

LOCAL HISTORY

Nearby History: exploring the past around you is the title of a new volume from the American Association for State and Local History, by David Kyvig and Myron Marty. The family, buildings, the community, documents - published and unpublished, oral and visual, and artifacts are but some of the themes covered. There is also practical advice on researching and writing. In a U.S. context of course, but still of great interest. Order from AASLH 708 Berry Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37204 USA $15.95 or $7.98 to members. (It's worth joining - ask for details).

KIRKLEES JOBS

Two new posts have recently been created by Kirklees Metropolitan Council at Oakwell Hall Country Park. They are for Interpretive Officer and Countryside Ranger. We were told in October they would be advertised shortly - and could we inform colleagues. Details from Mrs Hoyle, Dept. of Leisure Services, Central Library, Princess Alexandra Walk, Huddersfield, W Yorks.

NEWS FROM LOSEHILL

Working with Volunteers is the title of a new report by Rosie Simpson of Losehill Hall. It summaries results of a national survey into the extent to which local authorities, water authorities and national parks work with volunteers. From the same source is a report on the 1982 Conference on European Heritage Landscapes and the programme for the 1983 event. Look out also for the Countryside Interpretation Training Course (Jan 21-30 1983) Working with Volunteers (March 7-11) and Talking in Public (Feb 28- Mar 3). Details from Pete Townsend, Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire S30 2WB

SIBH JOINS CEE

The Society has been approved as a member of the national Council for Environmental Education, the liaison body for organisations in every area of environmental education. CEE recently achieved the distinction of a guaranteed annual inflation - proofed DoE grant, so is obviously a body to make friends with. Terry Robinson is the Society's representative on the Council. Tony Fyson already represents CEI there and on the Council's Executive Committee.

NEW NORFOLK PUBLICATION

It was at Easter 1979 that the Norfolk Heritage scheme (at that time working as a department of Norfolk Museums Service) had to close down when outside funds ran out and Norfolk County Council felt unable to take the scheme over. In 1981 the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust (who had originated the idea some seven years earlier) generously made fresh funds available to help Norfolk Heritage resume its work under a new, voluntary committee. With further help from the English Tourist Board, a new set of guide cards has now been published.

The new series of 12 guide cards features places that illustrate Norfolk's long maritime history - from the Roman coastal fort at Burgh Castle to the servicing of North Sea and oil installations from the port of Yarmouth. King's Lynn with its old Custom House and modern docks is featured, as is the lesser but still active port of Wells-next-the-Sea, once a great exporter of grain but no now chiefly an importer of animal feedstuffs. The 'decayed' but attractive small ports of the north Norfolk coast are linked to maritime stories of their own - mussel fishing at Brancaster Staithe, coastal shipping at Blakeney, Customs and smuggling at Cley, and the three Norfolk Admirals of Salthouse and Cockthorpe. Sheringham crab fishing has a card devoted to it, and so has Cromer's celebrated lifeboat tradition. Lord Nelson is remembered with a card that illustrate his memorial, the 'Norfolk Pillar' at Great Yarmouth, while the perils of shipwreck are vividly recalled by a card on Happisburgh's lighthouse and churchyard.

Norfolk Heritage has, as an experiment, changed the format for this new series of cards. Previous series ''Water Transport in Norfolk' and 'Food from the Land') were A5 size with text and illustrations covering both sides. This new series is of a large postcard format. The front has a black and white photograph and two columns of explanatory text within a coloured border, with a further column of text on the back. The rest of the back provides space for a message and an address. The card can thus be usd used as a novel kind of postcard, as well as a guide card.

At 8 out of 12 sites Norfolk Heritage outdoor panels are to be erected as soon as site and planning permissions can be cleared. These panels will display the same information as is given on the cards, for the benefit of visitors and passers-by. At none of the sites is there any other all-year-round provision of such information.

The cards will be on sale at shops and other outlets near the sites themselves (retailing at 12p) or in sets of 12 in a transparent wallet (£1.60) Cards can be ordered wholesale from Norfolk Heritage's Sales Organiser, Mrs Ann Millett, 44 Heigham Road, Norwich NR2 3AV.

Norfolk Heritage Trust Ltd.
Beech House Gressenhall, Dereham, Norfolk
Secretary: Mrs Joy Lodey, Fieldfare, Etling Green, Dereham, Norfolk NR20 3ET

THE NEW PROFESSIONALISM

Should the curators of Britain's museums change their attitudes towards the public? This is one of the questions asked by Dr Neil Cossons, 1981/82 President of the Museums Association, in his Presidential Address to this year's Annual Conference theme of 'Professional Standards'. It is too easy for curators to concentrate on their collections whilst the public - on whose active support they depend - get a raw deal.

The essential dilemma of the occupational or service professions, of which curatorship is one, relates to the need to set standards of performance and establish codes of conduct on the one hand and the desire to provide an enhanced quality of service to the public on the other.

The problem is not one of resources so much as collective professional attitude. Dr Cossons argues that for a profession such as curatorship to have a future in which to set standards it must be in the vanguard of change - and that change must begin with their attitudes to the concept of serving the public. The controversial Rayner Scrutiny of the Science and Victoria and Albert Museums, published by the Department of Education and Science (Office of Arts and Libraries), May 1982, has fulfilled a major service to museums in Britain, says Dr Cossons. What we need is more such scrutinies asking more penetrating questions and forcing museums out into the open.

'... the best protection which we as a profession can mount for the cherished ideals of service to the public and indeed free admission will be based on a wholeheartedly commercial approach'.

The 'new professionalism' will involve museums in providing a product in whi which the customer can participate - as a visitor or as a volunteer. The distinction between curator and manager will become blurred as professional staff take on a higher committment to providing a service direct to the public.

The public genuinely want good museums. The future of curatorial standards rests to a great extent on satisfying that potential.

NEW PRESIDENT OF M.A.

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, MA, FRSA,

Founder - Trustee and Chairman, National Motor Museum, was appointed President of the Museums Association in September. A press release announcing this also included a summary of the Association's objectives as follows: To enhance the Association's status and strengthen the museum voice in national and local government; to stimulate national museum involvement in the Association's activities; to encourage improvements in museum presentation, assessment of visitor needs and adaptation of marketing techniques to attract the wider audience; to encourage self-financing schemes for acquisitions, conservation and displays and the retention of any income raised by museums for such purposes; to promote the building of new museums and expansion of existing ones, either by government or private enterprise.

DES SHORT COURSE

Short Course N152 on
Educational Use of Museums, Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings

Monday 11 April - Saturday 16 April 1983 at La Sainte Union College, Southampton

Museums, ancient monuments and historic buildings are widely used educational resources. This course is designed to promote an exchange of ideas and experience amongst those interested in employing such resources, whatever their discipline or the age group with which they work.

The central theme of the course will be the investigation of the educational and interpretive aspects of visits to historical monuments, sites and buildings and their inter-relationship with the educational use of collections in museums, galleries and archives.

Practical fieldwork and the use of primary sources will be important elements of the course. Lectures will suggest how to develop the educational potential of such field studies. The primary resources of the Southampton area will be complemented by audio-visual material, exhibitions, and displays of published sources.

The course will be limited to 80 members who will be asked to state in advance their particular interests and who will work in small groups on selected themes.

NO PARKIN ON THE GRASS

Ian Parkin SIBH's hard-working secretary, has announced he is leaving his beloved Warrington, Risley Moss, his park system and 'low key' interpretation 'for pastures new' after 9 years. 'Pastures' may, however, be misleading for he has taken the post of Group Leader (Reclamation and Landscape) in the County Planning Department of West Midlands County Council. He will be in charge of a team of 20 implementing a major programme of land reclamation and landscape development, with the opportunity to promote the principles of 'after care', visitor services and management and environmental education. With his contacts and experience he is sure to spread his commitment and enthusiasm to great effect in his new surroundings. At the same time, he is confident that his present patch will remain in good hands with Graeme McLearie and his merry men.

His new office address from 1st January 1983 will be:

c/o County Hall
1 Lancaster Circus
Queensway
Birmingham
B4 7DJ

probable home from 1/2/83:
4 Holmewood Cl.
Kenilworth
Warwicks.

Telephone : 021 300 5151

CEI REGIONAL SEMINARS

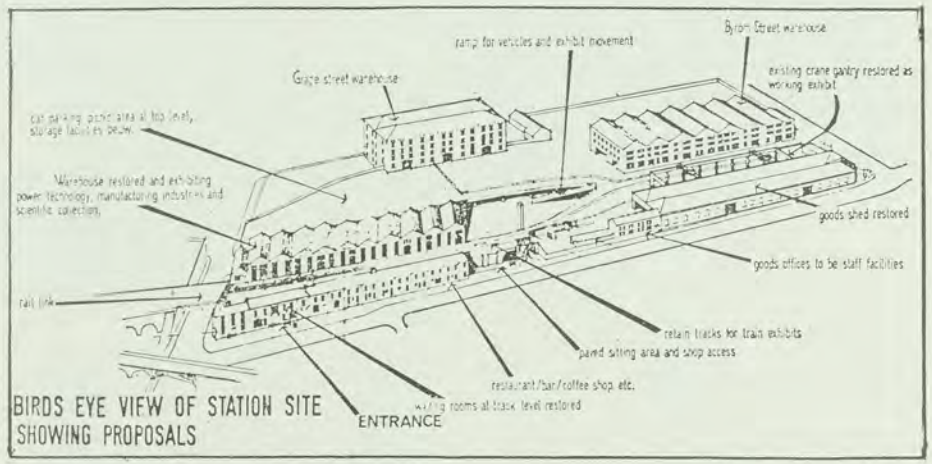
As part of its programme of events, the CEI is developing a series of day long seminars for senior local authority employees. The first of these was held at the Orangery, Margam, South Wales in November. In 1983 the idea will be further developed in the West Midlands and the North East. Enquiries to Tony Fyson.

NEW COURSE

A new course titled Countryside Care and Conservation commenced in September 1982 at Capel Manor, the Institute of Horticulture and Field Studies run by the London Borough of Enfield. The course runs for a year over six one-week blocks - entry requirements, Phase 1 and Phase 2 Year 2 of City and Guilds in Horticulture/Agriculture. Details and prospectus from Capel Manor, Bullsmoor Lane, Waltham Cross, Herts EN7 5HR (Phone Lea Valley 763849)

CASTLEFIELD

Manchester City Council have recently announced the creation of Britain's first Urban Heritage Park in Castlefield, the fascinating but derelict area of the city centre which some members may remember from their visit during the 1981 Annual Conference. Below is a sketch showing proposals for the world famous Liverpool Road station. Work is well in hand on this and the Air and Space Museum further to the east. The new Museum of Science and Industry, the Heritage Centre and the Roman Fort interpretation are also in process of realisation.



BIRDS EYE VIEW OF STATION SITE SHOWING PROPOSALS

DOCTORATE

Terry Stevens has been awarded his PhD for his thesis on Environmental Interpretation in Wales. Congratulations to him. We should press for more higher degree work in our subject.

DEAN HERITAGE

We have received a request to insert a notice in this issue from Richard Tamplin of the Dean Heritage Museum Trust. He would like information and objects to help interpret the heritage of the Forest of Dean. If you can assist, write to DHMT, Camp Mill, Soudley, Cinderford, Glos GL14 7UG (Tel: 0594 22170).

A Long, Long Story

Bill Breakell and Maria Murtagh, Pennine Heritage

The story of the Pennines is long... far too long to fit into the 250 pages of our new series of booklets.

So we asked a dozen writers to select the classic parts of that story and - in just five thousand words - offer their insight into that long, long story.

The result is a series of sixteen stimulating publications, each interrelated through theme and time and helping trace the continuity and change, the causes and consequences of our Pennine heritage.

First comes the introductory publication - one for each of the four themes (the man-made landscape; transport; textiles; social movements). Then for each theme, three further booklets trace the subject's development, broadly following the periods leading to the industrial revolution, its growth and consolidation. (The dates we've chosen are upto 1780, 1780-1840, and 1840 to 1914).

They build up not into a library of weighty books, but into a set of readable, get-up-and-go booklets to be understood and enjoyed by everyone.

There are other reasons why our series of books will entertain. First of all, they're short and to the point (between twenty and thirty pages). And they're jam-packed with maps, drawings and photographs.

To make exploration of our heritage easier, we've devised our special green pages : all the facts you need to know in order to find some of the best sites related to the story in each booklet. (Locations of selected sites; Tourist Information Centres; early closing and market days; bus and rail enquiry offices; details of other trails and guides on each site). So for instant information, just skip to the green pages : the rest of the book will wait!

But even lively little booklets may be too much for younger readers and a book has been specially devised with them in mind. Called 'The Long Long Story of the SouthPennines', though not long in words it's format is certainly long (420 x 150 mm)!

Publications are only a small part of the Network, and with just 2 full-time staff, other assistance has been essential. The priority area of marketing is the latest activity to be tackled by a volunteer as part of an industrial placement from a marketing course.

Offering a realistic working environment for students and volunteers has created much goodwill, valued help and a network of contacts which may provide them with future job opportunities. There are a number of people around here saying 'Partnerships are good for you'.

Three short courses arranged by Pennine Heritage Network will be of interest especially to those who live in the north of England.

A two day workshop on producing cost-effective publications (26-27 February) includes practical demonstrations and the chance to operate computerised typesetting equipment, printing presses and process cameras. It will enable participants to understand the latest techniques which can be used in producing leaflets, books and maps. (Fully inclusive price for tuition, accommodation and meals £30).

A one-day practical session on producing inexpensive exhibitions and displays (12 March) will include demonstrations of off-the-peg equipment, techniques for large displays and a special session on techniques for external signs. (Cost including tuition and meals £12).

Another practical course has been organised in conjunction with the North West Sound Archive and takes place on 15,16,17 April. This weekend will demonstrate the techniques and uses of oral history and costs from £40.

Details of these and other courses from : Pennine Heritage Network, 13 The Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge, HX7 8DG.

Last year the highly successful Heritage Swap Shop brought together those involved in interpretation in the Pennines (and further afield). To meet what can only be termed the popular demand, Pennine Heritage Network are holding a second Swap Shop in Hebden Bridge on Saturday 26 March.

Although aimed at encouraging participation and partnership in the South Pennines, the Heritage Swap Shop is certainly a technique which could be put to work in other parts of the country.

Details from : Pennine Heritage Network, 13 The Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge, HX7 8DG.

A novel way of distributing interpretive publications - by packhorse - drew a crowd to Hebden Bridge on 28 September. Television, radio, press and representatives of South Pennine authorities turned up in force to launch Pennine Heritage Network's matrix of 16 publications on the region's heritage.

Maria Murtagh of Pennine Heritage Network (right) bravely stood in for the horse's owner who had just been kicked by "Peggy"!

(Photo: Yorkshire Post)

Heritage Legislation

Museums Association Views

HERITAGE LEGISLATION AND THE QUEEN'S SPEECH

The Museums Association which represents museums and galleries, their governing bodies and staff, welcomes the references in the Queen's Speech to impending museum legislation. Although this refers specifically to the transfer to trustee status of the museums, Victoria and Albert museum and Science Museum - now part of the Office of Arts and Libraries, and the Armouries at the Tower of London - now administered within the Department of the Environment, the Association hopes that full opportunity will be available to discuss the future development and policy of the museum services in the country.

In this context the Association welcomed the recent publication of the Eighth Report from the House of Commons Education, Science and Arts Committee, Session 1981-82, Public and Private Funding of the Arts (HMSO, 18 October 1982).

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, President of the Museums Association, recently drew particular attention to the vital importance of museums to the tourist industry; over one-fifth of all visits to museums are by foreign tourists, rising to nearly a half in London, and museums attracted over 55 million visitors in all in 1981. The Commons Report recommends that this should be recognised by appropriate public funding (Recommendation 4, Paragraph 5.7). He also supported the Committee's recommendation that where a museum

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generates revenue from admission charges or from successful trading activities, eg. museum shops, this should be retained for the museum's benefit and not returned to the Treasury or general rate fund (Recommendation 40, Paragraph 8.27).
Museums are facing serious difficulties from the cuts in public expenditure and the economic recession.
Further incentives to business and other donors by tax exemptions should be provided, particularly to ensure that heritage material is not lost by export abroad. The Association hopes that Government will look again at the recommendations of the Drew Report, Framework for a System for Museums, Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries (HMSO, 1978), repeated in the Select Committee's Report that certain outstanding museums in the provinces be designated as 'national museums'. The input of central government funding to such regional centres of importance can have a marked impact on income and employment in the surrounding area.
(The support from the Inner Cities programmes towards the development of the maritime museum in Liverpool's do dockland area is a good example)

Subscriptions

Michael Quinion, Membership Secretary

One in three members of S.I.B.H. have joined the Society since the beginning of 1982 and the membership is now larger than at any previous point in its seven-year life.

The Society has cause to be very pleased at the way numbers have recovered from the depths of two years ago, when some members, myself included, thought S.I.B.H. could not survive.

The increase has come about through an intense membership recruitment campaign, in which a large number of copies of our prospectus have been distributed to members of other voluntary organisations and to interested bodies and individuals. Links have been forged with the British Association of Friends of Museums, with the Association of Independent Museums, the Group for Designers and Interpreters in Museums, and others. As a result, S.I.B.H. is now a very broadly based organisation indeed, with members working in a dozen different disciplines, but drawn together by a common interest in communicating with the public.

But if we are strong in numbers and talents, our finances are less healthy. The Society has held its subscription rate for about three years, whilst inflation has leapt ahead. At the moment, virtually all our subscription income goes to service members subscriptions: mailing notices of meetings and producing and posting newsletters. Without an increase, in real terms it would soon be costing S.I.B.H. money every time we got a new member.

One reason for holding membership fees down was the change in the constitution last Spring, which had the effect of making the membership year coincide with the calendar year. As a result, the 1982 membership year is only nine months long.

The increase in subscriptions agreed at the E.G.M. at Brockhole in October - to £20 for Corporate Members, £7 for Individual and Overseas Members a and £5 for Library Members - will bring in an extra income next year of about £450. This will enable the Society to continue its promotional work and expand its activities.

Unless you are a very new member of S.I.B.H. you will find a request to renew your subscription for 1983 enclosed with this issue of "Interpretation". Please return it quickly, because this helps our financial position - if you can encourage someone else to join at the same time, all the better!