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HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

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Re-living the Christmas customs of long ago - see page 7.

In this issue

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Little Brother is Watching You!

Michael B. Quinion
Membership Secretary

When this Society computerised its records nearly four years ago, it was one of the first to do so. Today many small special interest groups and societies keep records of their membership on computers as an aid to efficiency. All of us are now affected by an Act designed to control the big fish of the computer world.

Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act quietly became law in July this year. Though certain parts of it caused heated controversy during its passage through Parliament, little notice was taken of it in the media when it actually reached the statute book. This is surprising, as its provisions affect most of us, and theoretically give us rights to inspect and, in certain circumstances to modify, information about us held on computer by a wide variety of organisations.

Bodies holding data about people, or who run computer bureau processing information for clients, must now register with the new Data Protection Registrar and ensure the confidentiality and accuracy of the information held by them. There are procedures laid down by the Act which enable people to find out what information is held regarding them and to get redress if they believe they have been harmed by inaccurate information or by information having been passed to somebody who ought not to have it.

In common with everyone else holding data about people on computer, we are affected by the Act. But because we are what the Act describes as an 'unincorporated members club' SIBH is exempt from most of its provisions, provided we follow certain guidelines.

Our obligations

Firstly, we have to tell each of you, the members, that we do hold data about you on computer. If you didn't know already, please consider you have now formally been told. (The data we hold comprises your name, address, membership class and number, details of the subscription payments made by you since 1st January 1982 and routing and mailing information, including a regional code).

Secondly, if you object to us keeping data about you on the computer, we must cease to do so (though the thought of returning to the bad old days of manual processing of membership data, even for only one or two strong-minded opponents of the electronic age, must give any voluntary membership secretary pause). Thirdly, we may only keep data about members who are in good standing, so if you don't pay your dues on time, we could argue we are now under a legal obligation to erase you from our files, not just a financial one. Fourthly, we must not divulge information about you to a third party.

From time to time, we are asked to make our mailing list available to bodies wishing to circulate you. The Committee has taken the view in the past that our membership list should not be made available in this way. In such cases, we have either encouraged the potential advertiser to insert his message into the Society's next mailing, or we have accepted it for mailing by us to members on payment of a fee. The only people outside the Committee who see membership data at the moment are the organisers of meetings, who are provided with the appropriate sub-set of the membership list in the form of mailing labels for circulating notices. (Financial information is seen only by the Treasurer, the Auditor and me).

Society membership list

However, in recent months the Committee has received a number of requests from members to publish our membership list. The reasoning behind this is that it is felt that members would benefit from knowing about other people involved or interested in interpretation who may live near them, be in similar jobs or share common experiences. Knowing very well the isolated position of most interpreters, we see the value of the suggestion.

We held off making a decision until we knew the implications of the Data Protection Act. We now know that it is legal for us to publish a membership list – for a while we thought it might not be – provided that each member whose details are listed has individually consented. We feel the potential value of the list to members is great enough to repay the effort and cost to the Society of producing it and have decided to publish one.

So this explains the form which you will find in the subscription renewal reminder which I am posting to you in early December. Please let me have these back as soon as possible, so that we may proceed to publication early in 1985.

You will notice the form asks for certain information about individual members – qualifications and involvement in interpretation – which new members joining in the last two years have been asked to give, but which we do not hold for members of longer standing. Our purpose in asking for this is that we feel a list of names and addresses alone is not very useful and propose to include this additional information. Because data gets out of date very quickly, we are asking all members, including those who have recently joined, to give us this information.

We also have had it in mind for some time to create a coding structure within our records to permit us to classify members according to their interests, specialist knowledge or involvement in interpretation, and hence be able to direct specialist information to those most directly concerned. We have not yet done so, because we have been too busy with other things, but would like to do so in the foreseeable future.

The form also gives you an opportunity to comment on these proposals. It is worth repeating that you may instruct us not to include your name in the list if you think it inappropriate, even if you are happy to have us keep your name on the computer for internal purposes. You do not have to give a reason.

Is there anybody out there?

Are SIBH members the silent majority? Let your editor know you are alive and kicking, and keep in touch with what other members are thinking, by

* sending in letters for publication
* submitting photographs of the most original, amusing, intriguing, incomprehensible or just plain bad piece of interpretation you have come across
* contributing your opinions on and experience with equipment and materials useful to interpreters
* telling us of your job changes and appointments.

Sculpture in a Country Park - an Interpretive Experience

Dr. T.R. Stevens
Director, Margam Country Park

Artist in residence Gordon Young working on and interpreting 'Y Cais Gyntaf'.

The idea of contemporary art in the majestic parkland setting of Margam Country Park inevitably caused much initial consternation in many quarters. Park staff were understandably sceptical, whilst visitor reactions were mixed. That was eighteen months ago, when the initiative of West Glamorgan County Council and the Welsh Sculpture Trust materialised into real objects. It soon became abundantly clear, however, that we were not welcoming a stranger into the Park but rather we were being re-acquainted with an old friend. As Professor Moelwyn Merchant points out, "Margam has been for many centuries a Sculpture Park of the Welsh Spirit".

Sculptural forms are all around us in the environment, especially in Port Talbot with the cooling towers, chimneys and stacks, whilst the wind-sculptured trees that once stood on the now barren Mynydd Margam attracted visitors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1798 the Rev. Richard Walker described these trees as being so shorn by the salt-laden winds that they "exhibit the appearance of a well clipped hedge".

In Margam more distinct and recognisable sculpture has over the centuries been represented by the sixth-century Bodvoc Stone, with its Ogham script and intricate strapwork; the simplicity of the Roman stones; Celtic crosses and Norman circles. Masons' marks of 1152 on the impressive octagonal chapterhouse of the Cistercian Monastery are today interpreted along with the alabaster tombs of the Mansels and Talbots. The Orangery is a sculptural concept in its own right and was built to house the Mansels' collection of renaissance art as well as citrus trees. Finally the stark 'Gormenghast' gothic mansion contains much of sculptural significance. Margam has therefore a heritage of functional and aesthetic sculpture that was just waiting for a step forward. That step forward took place with the opening of the 'Sculpture in a Country Park' exhibition: 68 sculptures by 34 different artists, a conspectus of post-war British sculpture.

Sculpture in the landscape has a long tradition. The concept of Sculpture Parks is a new one, yet it has long been accepted that sculpture in museums cannot 'breathe'. Timothy Neat, introducing the Landmark Sculpture Trail, states that:

> "Most sculpture looks at its best out of doors amidst the changing light of nature. It is however an unfortunate fact that most European sculpture has been for centuries viewed in the stable and often gloomy light of museums".

It has been only in the past two or three decades that Sculpture Parks have come into existence; they include Bretton Hall (Yorkshire), Louisiania (Denmark) and the Kroller Muller (Holland). These are sculpture collections *per se*. At Margam, however, the sculpture is purposely brought to the eyes and feet of the ¼ million people who come to the Park for a host of other reasons. This has obviously influenced our strategy towards sculpture selection, location and related activities, as well as providing interesting and challenging interpretive opportunities. Gordon Young describing this process of selection in the Park's Sculpture Catalogue explains:

> "Any significance of the work will depend not simply on the Sculpture being seen and enjoyed but also on understanding."

The interpretive role is intensified by the very significance of the exhibition, described by Sir Huw Wheldon as "being of genuine international importance and equivalent to developments such as La Scala and Covent Garden". Sir Huw goes on to say that "as an actual place, or multitude of possible places, in which to exhibit sculpture, Margam must be very close to ideal".

The authorship of the exhibition was that of Gordon Young; however the siting of the pieces was a team effort and an interpretive experience/exercise in its own right.

This task was undertaken with Moelwyn Merchant's comments on Celtic art firmly set in our minds. He states that "Celtic art has always had a tendency to be public and is unusually dependent upon man and his interaction with nature . . . allusive, multi-evocative images are the basis of Celtic art".

Consideration was given to the impact of sculpture on the Park and of the Park upon the sculpture. We watched the light, considered the changes the seasons would bring. We considered security and safety. Remote areas for peace and solitude we've used along with other sites that were closer to the hub of park life.

Henry Moore writes of placing sculpture as though many years ago he had anticipated using the rich diversity of Margam's landscape:

> "Some sculpture finds its best setting on a stretch of lawn or beside a pool. Others might be more effective, more poignant, set against the rhythm and ruggedness of trees. Some of these might look best against oaks and others against elms. Yet others need secret glades or a patch of grass enclosed by high bushes to give a sense of privacy."

Having sited the pieces in the landscape the rather more formal interpretive role of developing understanding has taken place. The interpretive package has proceeded as planned, offering a continuum of interpretive experiences open to all park visitors.

A basic introduction to the idea of sculpture in the open air is given in the Park's Newsletter, which is always handed free of charge to every visitor; each visitor group also receives a guide to the sculptures which is intended solely as a key of their location and a stimulus to visit them. Books on sculpture, artists and other related publications are available in the Park Shop. An expensive catalogue giving detailed

insights into the philosophy and creative thinking of all artists has also been produced. A certain amount of souvenir merchandising strengthens the interpretive efforts.

All that has been described so far is passive in nature - exhibits and books - but Margam's sculpture activities have been far from passive. The summer of 1984 will be remembered in the Park as the 'Summer of Sculpture'. Three residencies were established which involved artists working on pieces in the Park. These artists were contracted and selected on the basis of making contact with the public. Gordon Young's popular imagery of the Rugby Player carved from a Margam oak was full of popular appeal. The easy-to-understand piece discussed with a true artisan opened the door for discussions and debate on sculpture.

Blacksmith-artist David Petersen wielded his hammer to produce leaves and petals and won over many a sceptic. His ability to interpret his craft as well as his ideas attracted over 4,000 visitors in just three days. The fact that half a dozen MSC youngsters also learnt blacksmithing skills became incidental.

Against this background of 'popular' sculpture and comprehensible imagery we were able to introduce the work of David Kemp, our third artist, whose Bosch/Medieval-influenced concepts were translated into *Y Twr Fach.* All sculptures are symbols of man and his search for meaning; the success of the residencies was that this symbolism and meaning were interpreted by the artists themselves.

Having touched visitors' artistic consciences, opportunities were provided to extend their imagination. Guided walks,

Margam visitors 'having a go' at sculpture during the 1984 summer activities.

pony treks and sculpture trails evolved which were led by Park Staff. Open air debates and discussions were prompted in Speakers' Corner - type sessions, and formal lectures and talks were given. Visitors wishing to give vent to their artistic talents or stimulated to try to emulate the sculptors' efforts were encouraged to 'have a go'.

Two art teachers were employed throughout the summer to establish a Children's Sculpture Project. Using a core group of students from the local Comprehensive School the theme of 'Shelters and Shrines' was pursued. It soon became apparent that the original intention of encouraging children's interest in the problems and process of sculpture was too narrow. Parents and other adults wanted to learn the act. As a result the sign announcing 'Children's Project' soon became 'DIY Sculpture'. In just four weeks, over 2,000 people became active sculptors, creating structures that harmonised with the elements, that used and interpreted earth, wind and water.

Henry Moore once talked of his sculptures "possessing their environment", at Margam, in Moelwyn Merchant's words "the sculptures may seem to be possessed by their environment". They have become and have a human, an animal presence. The creation of the Sculpture Park has been the most significant and important development since the original purchase of the Margam Estate as a Country Park ten years ago. Sculpture in a Country Park is a worthy addition to a fine landscape and contributes to the interpretation and appreciation of that landscape in a very positive way. Long may it last.

Green Towns and Cities

Conclusions of the July 1984 Congress, summarised in a paper from the Dartington Institute.

Over 350 delegates from the United Kingdom, the United States, and 12 other countries, gathered in Liverpool at the Green Towns and Cities Congress to discuss the plight of our urban green. Creation and preservation of the urban green, the natural framework which should embrace and permeate the towns and cities of our world, is threatened by the lack of commitment to the environment.

The delegates resolved that the urban green must be raised on the public and political agenda because of the powerful contribution it makes to the social, economic and cultural well-being of our towns and cities. They specifically pointed to the strong links between environmental improvement and economic regeneration, through the direct creation of jobs in urban greening and through the attraction of new business activity, including tourism.

The delegates demanded of themselves and their political representatives that more effective use be made of existing resources committed to the greening of the cities. But the present level of funding is grossly inadequate in many cities. More funds should be allocated not only for creating, renovating and adapting elements of the urban green, but for their sustained high quality management and maintenance. Government restrictions on local authority spending should be withdrawn. A prime responsibility for urban green must continue to rest with government at all levels, both in direct action and funding and in the provision of a fiscal and legislative climate encouraging to action by others. Legislation is needed, in particular, to encourage personal and corporate giving in this field, and to prevent the taking of parkland for other purposes.

The sustained health of the urban green depends upon the affection, support and involvement of all the people. The community should be empowered to participate in the care of the urban green, from window-boxes and street trees to community gardens and park systems. Public funds should increasingly be used to attract resources from the corporate, and the voluntary and non-profit, sectors and from private individuals and community groups. America and Europe have much to learn from each other in developing mechanisms for fruitful partnership between sectors, and for generation of funds through creative and productive uses of the urban green.

Each urban area should have a strategy for greening, based upon systematic appraisal of land and other resources and fresh analysis of people's needs and attitudes. This strategy should be reflected in programmes of funding and action, capable of sustained long-term direction, but also of flexible response to fresh opportunities and changing needs.

Such strategies should embrace protection and enhancement of natural beauty, the conservation and enrichment of wildlife habitats, protection and celebration of wild, natural and historic landscapes, conservation of cultural resources, provision for informal and organised recreation, climatic amelioration, soil and water conservation, and the production of food, timber, nursery stock and energy.

Means must be found to unlock the land now lying derelict or dormant in and around our towns, so that it can make a positive contribution as permanent or temporary green space. In particular, there should be extended provision of Government funds to tackle derelict land, and laws to require publication of data on land ownership, and perhaps tax incentives to encourage temporary use of vacant land.

A vital need is for more innovative approaches among, and more effective teamwork between, the many professions and interests involved in financing, planning, designing, managing, marketing and animating the urban green. Such teamwork depends on the willingness of each profession and individual to accept the role which others play, and to recognise that the ultimate client is the people. Local authorities should ensure effective liaison between their own activities and those of other bodies and community groups.

The high importance of the urban green, and the innovative approaches and skills needed to create and sustain it, should be reflected in more wide-spread programmes of training and education, both for professionals and for the general public, based on the ethics of the World Conservation Strategy. Practical work on urban greening should form part of the education of children.

Stimulated by the exchanges at the Congress, and by the successful collaboration between its many co-convening bodies, the delegates called for:

a. The formation, in America and Britain, of parallel alliances at national and local level among the main public-interest bodies or networks concerned with the urban green; and for continuing contact between the two groups of organisations.

b. International exchanges between elected officials, corporate leaders, professionals, citizens' groups and others, in order to quicken the pace of necessary progress in the creative greening of the cities.

c. The formation of an International Association or similar mechanism to continue the momentum generated by the Congress: a key part of its activity may be to organise an annual conference or seminar.

The workshop in which SIBH was particularly involved, 'Animating the Green', reached the following conclusions:

"Without people, parks are nothing" - and without animators who can mobilise the care and involvement of people in the community, the green spaces will not be cared for. In many places much greater participation by the community is needed in support of developments in, and management of, public open space.

To achieve progress in involving people in caring for the green, new organisations or mechanisms (including new forms of partnership such as Groundwork) are needed. Limited expenditure on new organisations or on extra people caring for the green can be highly cost-effective in cutting vandalism, improving management, increasing use of greenspaces and so on. In particular, there should be increased official funding of *urban* ranger schemes as well as countryside rangers.

Ways must be found to bring together professionals and the community, so that the skills of the former can be applied to help in the development of ideas by the latter. There is need for more voluntary bodies and community-based organisations at local level.

Exchanges between small groups of professionals and others from different cities and countries could do much to spread good practice.

Visiting Coventry Cathedral Visitors Centre

Britain has come a long way since the rebuilt Coventry Cathedral caught the imagination of millions with its vision and statement of hope. In the face of changing social conditions and increasing apathy towards religion, the new Visitors Centre was opened in 1983 as a first step towards the renewal of the Cathedral's message of faith and reconciliation.

Circumstances determined that my first impression of the Centre should be a confused one. Assuming that as an introduction to the Cathedral it should naturally be viewed first, I found myself entering by what is really the 'back door', through the Gift Shop. In fact the intended route is down the Swedish Steps from within the Cathedral itself, so that for most visitors the displays form the final part of their visit. Nevertheless, I preferred doing things my way round for the added insight it gave to the subsequent tour.

Seen first after passing the paydesk (£1.25 or £2 including guidebook) - unless you go straight to the auditorium - is the 'historical experience'. Here episodes from Coventry's history are depicted in miniature scenes using models. The labels are on 'scrolls' to avoid the intrusion of modern graphics. Following straight on from this you enter the darkness of the Bombed House, with its rocking ceiling and sound/light effects. The voices of its inhabitants describe the horror of the bombing, on a continuously playing tape complete with a song from Vera Lynn. Next is a reconstructed ARP post including gas masks, aircraft identification chart etc., and something very nasty brewing on a gas ring; (the guidebook leads us to believe it was once soup). Then a nice touch: old-fashioned telephones on which, when you lift the receiver, an excited caller tells you that the war is over.

Contrasting oddly with these more sophisticated displays, a short corridor containing a Cathedral model with a push-button 'night effect' leads on into St. Michael's Hall. This is an assembly area for clergy where treasury items are displayed in a traditional way. The charred cross made from medieval roof beams, and studies for the works of art in the new Cathedral, are among the exhibits. From here a lobby leads to the most publicised of the elements which make up the exhibition: the award-winning AV presentation *Spirit of Coventry,* which with timed showings may be seen first or last in sequence depending on your time of arrival.

An 18-minute 9-projector show produced by Multiscreen Presentations with narration by Joss Ackland, it is screened in a simple auditorium with few gimmicks. (Unusually, technical production details are given in the guidebook; see also *Audio visual,* September 1983). Beginning very effectively with the menace of a bomber approaching through the clouds, it portrays the devastating destruction of Cathedral and city in 1940. Backtracking in time to recount the earlier history of the city, it then leads on to the story of the rebuilding and all the many artistic contributions to the new Cathedral. The rest of the presentation deals powerfully with the spirit of renewal and reconciliation reaching out to other suffering peoples of the world, ending on a spiritual note with the theme of forgiveness. The quality and technique are excellent. There are some good flame effects and original use of archive photographs set in a 'stained glass' format. To me, a non-Christian, it was undoubtedly moving; the rest of the audience at the time of my visit (an American coach party) remained silent for some time after it was over.

Because of the varying options for approach route and order of viewing, the different elements of the Visitors Centre seem somewhat disjointed and disorientating. This may be due in part to constraints of available space and existing usage. A separate part of the displays, outside the pay area on the way down from the Cathedral, is a unique series of holograms of the stations of the cross by sculptor Malcolm Woodward, prepared by Advanced Holographics Ltd., of Loughborough.

The success of Coventry Cathedral Visitors Centre is encouraging other cathedrals to follow suit. Now Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral has introduced a small visitor centre whose centrepiece is an aerial sculpture symbolising - by coincidence? - the Spirit of Liverpool.

A.J. Maddock

Detail of the Bombed House

The Need for 'Hot' Interpretation

David L. Uzzell
Department of Psychology, University of Surrey

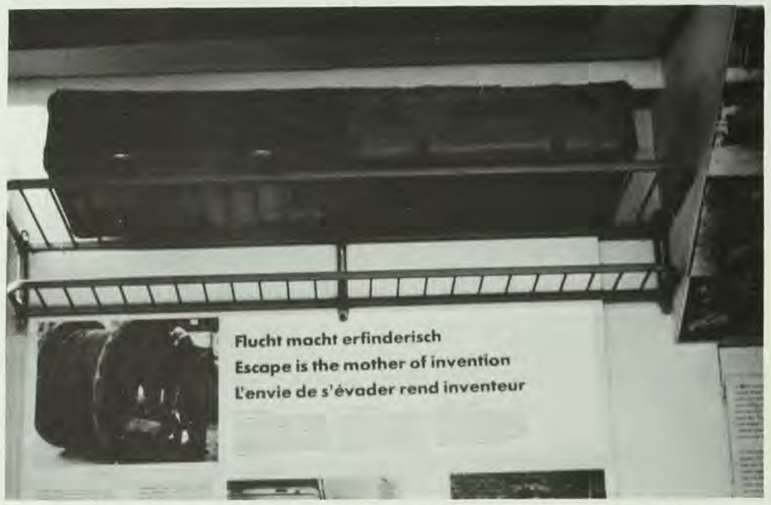
The last building on Friedrichstrasse before you reach the Berlin Wall is called Haus am Checkpoint Charlie. It is unassuming and from the outside looks like a shop. In some places it might be called a visitor or interpretive centre, but it is much more than this. It provides the visitor with both a cognitive and emotional agenda for what is about to be seen in East Berlin, by telling the story of the history of the Wall and the attempts by those in the East to jump, climb, tunnel underneath, fly over or try any other ingenious method to get to the West. It also acts as a Documentation Centre collecting information about the Wall, its defences and the people who have successfully and unsuccessfully tried to cross it.

The ground floor comprises an exhibition made up of panels of photographs and text (in three languages), with many of the escape vehicles and contraptions. On the first floor, an exhibition of paintings and sculpture attempts to communicate the spirit of the same message. From various windows in Haus am Checkpoint Charlie, the visitor overlooks the Wall. The Haus interprets not the past but the present, not the distant but the front-line.

This is obviously an emotive issue, and it would be inaccurate to say that it is a story told without bias. But there again, it is difficult to tell any political story without bias. We tend to be more sensitive to the overtly political story because we are ever alert to the possibility of being 'got at'. But even those stories which interpreters are typically concerned with such as farming, nature conservation or the social history of factory workers have an important political dimension.

It would be impossible to leave the Haus without a *feeling* of admiration for those who risk their lives to help others and the bravery of those who successfully or unsuccessfully try to escape, compassion for the families left behind, despair at the misery man can inflict on man, and anger at the brutality of a system that motivates people to risk their lives for what we in the West consider to be a basic and unquestionable freedom. Regardless of the political issues involved, the emphasis I wish to place here is on the knowledge and feelings that the Haus communicates about the social, economic and political situation which can create such a bizarre folly as a Wall that divides a city in two.

The fact that it creates feelings — a response — a desire to see 'what it's really like', is what is important. Compare this with a number of visitor centres that leave



Double suitcase escape method shown in Haus am Checkpoint Charlie (photo: D. Uzzell).

you with a feeling of 'so what' or ennui, or the Madame Tussaud's tape-slide programme at Windsor and Eton Station with its questionable drum-thumping: jingoistic sentiments which only serve to confirm for foreign tourists that we are an arrogant, insensitive nation which lives in the past.

One problem with interpretation in general and interpretation centres in particular is that the more engaging the interpretation becomes, the more likely it is to become a substitute experience for the very thing it is meant to be interpreting: the trail from the car park to the visitor centre is a well-worn one. Any number of criteria might be established to gauge the success of interpretation, but one key criterion must be that it should not only be overtly linked to the environment, but it should positively push people out to experience what is being interpreted at first hand. Interpretation should prepare visitors for what they are about to see, to set an agenda, to cue them to the essential features that make that place the place it is.

It would be difficult not to project my own feelings, worries, suspicions onto the situation in which I found myself in East Berlin. My reactions to East Berlin were not only a response to something 'out there', but rather something 'in here'. How much of this was due to the Haus which I visited before going through Checkpoint Charlie, and how much of it was due to my preconceptions about East Berlin — as a result of having it interpreted to me over the years by the press, TV and reading John Le Carré and Len Deighton novels — is unknowable. The world is continually being interpreted for us, regardless of the existence of an activity called 'interpretation'. Our minds are constantly and actively interpreting the world around us too, imposing meaning and trying to turn dissociated chaos into organised 'reality'.

The case against making war an entertainment has been made in *Interpretation* No. 21 (Summer 1982) by Tony Fyson, who argued forcefully that the enduring memory of visitors leaving battlefield sites should be war as representing 'individual suffering and social failure' and their 'awful solemnity'. The presentation of battlefield sites and territorial acquisition can quickly deteriorate to the level of political justification and moral rectitude, especially when dealing with a history which has been thoroughly processed by historians, politicians and the entertainment industry. But history is being made now, whether we are talking about the killing of wildlife or the creation of a future cultural heritage. It is being interpreted now — not necessarily by people who call themselves interpreters, but by individuals who have titles like politicians, journalists, industrial public relations personnel and advertising executives.

In many cases the interpretive narrative is a straightforward one. Its aims are to inform and to reveal meanings, significances and relationships. It is often routine but nevertheless important. It has a minimal emotional content, but this does not mean that it should not be imaginative. This might be termed cold interpretation.

The organisation which set up Haus am Checkpoint Charlie was fired to tell the story of the Wall through a sense of outrage and a desire to tell others about the contraventions of basic human rights. I wish more interpretation arose out of that same sense of outrage. The destruction of our towns and cities, the damage which is being done to the countryside, the killing of wildlife, the poisoning of our rivers, land, food and ultimately ourselves ought to instil that same sense of anger. For some it does, but why is it rarely communicated — why do we have to have a watered down version that meets the criteria of non-demanding, non-threatening, all-entertaining 'fun-for-the-family'?

It is environmental and heritage issues such as these which crucially affect our interests and beliefs as individuals, members of a community, a nation or the human race. Such issues do have an emotional content and are such that we cannot stand by as dispassionate and disinterested commentators. Interpretation ought to be inspirational and emotive. The argument being put forward here may be one reading of Tilden's fourth principle: "The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation". This might be termed hot interpretation.

We need more hot interpretation.

Avebury Christmas

Jo Lawrie
Education Officer, Wiltshire Folk Life Society

Towards the end of 1983 an event took place at Avebury which was the culmination of WFLS educational work over the last four years, when 450 schoolchildren came to the Great Barn to revive a village Christmas of 100 years ago. This 'happening' was inspired by the schools' drama days organised throughout Wiltshire by Roger Day, the County Drama Adviser, and capitalised on much previous WFLS work.

First an outline plan was drawn up for the day incorporating several traditional folk customs and including a Christmas Fair. As a result of advertising in the schools' bulletin nine schools elected to take part. Because of the numbers involved we had to stage the event on two occasions.

Becoming involved in the project was quite a commitment for the schools, and meant planning the curriculum for most of the term around a Victorian theme. The teachers came to two meetings at Avebury and ideas they put forward were incorporated in the final programme. Each teacher was given a book of specially-prepared background material to help with the planning of the work, and on the basis of this information each school chose which stalls to run at the Christmas Fair.

The more the children became steeped in the period the greater would be their involvement on the drama day itself. Detailed work began early in the term with either a preliminary visit to Avebury at harvest-time or an illustrated talk using old photographs of the village and artefacts from the folk life collection. Soon pupils were engrossed in finding out how Victorian people lived and worked, and particularly in researching their own characters and producing their own costumes, often with the ready help of parents.

As the day approached there was such baking of pies and mixing of herbal remedies, such sewing of lavender bags and making of garlands. Role-playing sessions became increasingly earnest and anticipation heightened. Preoccupation with the weather gave way to relief as dull, rainy conditions finally changed to mild, clear days which were just what was needed.

On the day itself the children arrived on the outskirts of the village already dressed in character and bearing appropriate items such as chimney-sweep brushes or a shepherd's crook. As they walked through to the High Street they took on their new role before meeting up with all the other villagers. Soon there were wealthy farmers, parsons, beggars, laundrymaids, recruiting officers, poachers, robbers, fortune tellers,

pedlars and even a 19th century dog mingling in the village centre. Meanwhile the stalls for the Christmas Fair had been set up in the Great Barn, which had been decorated with garlands, a kissing ring and a tree.

Then the farmer from the manor, Mr. Kemm (Roger Day), arrived in his horse and trap amid great cheering. He welcomed the villagers to the fair, thanked them for their hard work during the year and finally declared the fair officially open. There followed a half hour of vigorous trading and entertaining: there were quack medicines, hokey pokey ice cream, muffins, gingerbread men, pies, a Victorian photographer, fighting with sacks of straw, fortune telling and a wrestling match among a whirl of attractions. Mummers performed a traditional play involving a killing and resurrection, which symbolises the survival of the spirit of the harvest throughout the winter. Then the players led everyone off into the village, singing, with a musical accompaniment, 'Here we come a-wassailing'. They were going to wassail the apple trees at the house of the local headmaster who had reported a bad crop that autumn. His trees were sprinkled with cider to make them bear good fruit the next year, scattered with cake to reward the birds which guard them, and a traditional rhyme was declaimed. Finally, to scare off evil spirits, everyone banged plates, rang bells and rattles and a gamekeeper fired a shot into the air.

After this a huge Yule log was decorated with holly and ribbons and dragged back to the Great Barn fireplace. Hot wassail, made to a traditional recipe, was drunk as a toast. There was much cheering and doffing of caps as Mr. Kemm invoked the old words calling for goodwill among men and blessing the log as the bringer of good fortune. At this point the church bells began to ring, and the villagers made their way to Avebury church, where the gentry sat in the best seats at the front and the commonalty at the rear. The local rector, in 19th century guise, led the Victorian service in which there was reading, singing and recorder-playing by the villagers.

After the service a feast awaited everyone in the Great Barn. A boar's head procession was followed by the sharing out of several huge turkeys and an enormous Christmas pudding, all provided by Mr. Kemm to supplement the villagers' own meagre lunch of bread and cheese. The occasion became quite riotous as more and more 'ale' was consumed and as Mr. Kemm led the gathering in song and dance accompanied by 'squeezebox', violins and recorders. This was followed more soberly by a toast to Her Majesty, for a portrait of Queen Victoria was resplendent at the top of the Barn, draped with Union Jacks.

Soon everyone had to return, rather sadly, to the 20th century world, but it had certainly been a memorable occasion. However, such an ambitious project could never have taken place so successfully without the help of parents, teachers, local people, colleagues from County Hall and members of WFLS, all of whom should be thanked for entering into the spirit of things so willingly and for assisting 450 children to re-live their Victorian heritage.

Reprinted from 'Wiltshire Folklife' No. 11.

The Timeball Tower, Deal

In 1985 a familiar sight will be seen again along the seafront of Deal, Kent, when each afternoon the Deal timeball will be raised and dropped to mark the exact hour of one o'clock.

The Tower was originally a semaphore station, built in 1817 as one of a chain for the 'Coastal Blockade', an important anti-smuggling force. By 1833 this force had been disbanded and the tower lay largely unused until 1853 when it was chosen by Sir George Airy, Astronomer Royal, to be the site of his new timeball. The dissemination of accurate time, relayed to Deal from Greenwich by telegraph line, was a vital service for ships anchored in the Downs. Without an accurately set chronometer they were unable to calculate longitude and at one time there were erected many time signalling devices, timeballs, flags or guns around the coasts of the world for this purpose.

The Timeball Tower was superseded in 1927 by the coming of wireless and later it became a Tourist Information Office. In recent years it has been empty and derelict.

Dover District Council are now restoring the building and the new plans are as follows. Firstly, the timeball mechanism will be re-erected and a new ball installed and made to drop at 1 p.m. A small but varied series of displays will be set up on four floors, sponsored by British Telecom International. On the ground floor will be an introduction and explanation to the timeball and displays. The first and second floors deal with the early history of signalling up to and including semaphore and ship signalling, and the later history of wireless signalling up to and including satellite communication with ships. On the third floor visitors will see the old and new timeball mechanisms and an explanation of the function of time signals, timeballs and their importance.

An early postcard of Deal featuring the Timeball Tower.

The displays will be Kent-orientated, taking local examples where possible. But it is not the intention to interpret Deal's local history, particularly as a local history and maritime museum already exists in the town. The display space is small but with care we believe that a clear exposition of the history of signalling, particularly in the south east of England, and information on the history of ship signalling, will be given. Proposed exhibits include models, video, a working satellite model, a time signal link to British Telecom and the original 1853 Shepherd Clock which triggered the timeball drop.

We hope to provide a shop, guide book and educational literature. School parties will be particularly welcome. It is intended to allow free admission.

Christine Waterman
Curator, Dover Museum

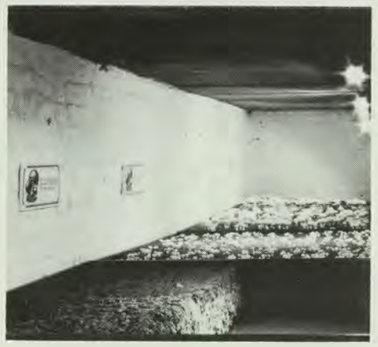
Mushrooming Interests

Another facet of life on a typical English country estate was revealed to visitors at Croxteth Hall this summer. The Edwardian mushroom house, situated among the glasshouses in the Walled Garden, has been renovated and opened with an interpretive display.

The single-storey windowless building has slate cropping shelves supported by decorative ironwork, and was designed to provide the estate with a year-round supply of mushrooms.

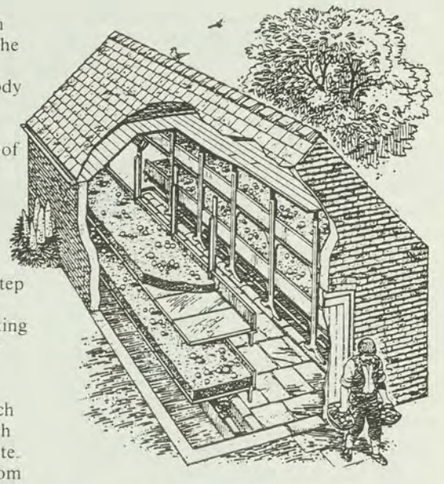
Necessary lighting has been installed, and the paved floor raised to eliminate an entrance step. Missing or broken slate fronts to the beds have been replicated in plywood coated with polyester resin by the Technical Services department of Merseyside County Museums (parent body of Croxteth Hall). Technical Services Officer and highly-skilled modelmaker, Alan Dodson MBE, has made hundreds of replica mushrooms at various stages of growth from filled latex cast in plaster moulds.

Part of the mushroom house display at Croxteth (photo: E.E. Jackson).



The lower tier of beds on one side has been arranged to show the traditional method of mushroom growing, step by step from spawn production in bottles filled with composted horse manure to harvesting at 'cup' or 'flat' stage. Croxteth's Visitor Services staff in conjunction with the Horticulture & Forestry Manager have prepared short explanatory labels for each stage, produced in matt finish acrylic with the colour scheme dark slate grey on white. Each bears a mushroom-cluster motif from a turn-of-the-century growers' manual and takes the form of written instructions to the gardener. The 'imperative mood' was chosen for these after much grammatical entanglement during scriptwriting, when trying to reconcile use of the past tense to imply an obsolete method with the present tense necessary for describing what the visitor actually sees. It seems to work well.

On the other side of the house, beds of fresh compost grow a crop of real mushrooms, which are sold in the Garden Shop. Outside is an introductory panel on a low-level canted box, in green on cream to match other existing Walled Garden panels.



Cutaway drawing of the house as used on the introductory panel.

Next year it is hoped to introduce an AV presentation on modern commercial mushroom growing.

This may well be the only mushroom house of its kind open to the public, but the Croxteth staff would welcome news of any others.

A.J. Maddock
Croxteth Visitor Services Officer

Streets Ahead

Cottage-type dwellings grouped around flower beds, a leisure complex with sports facilities, a theatre, and land for allotments are all proposals made by St. Roch's Secondary School to make the Royston Road in Glasgow's East End a better place in which to live. St. Roch's won 1st prize in their class for their exhibition entry to the Streets Ahead competition, organised by the National Trust for Scotland in association with the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland with sponsorship by the Royal Bank of Scotland.

The 5th Year Art Class draw attention to the influence of the environment on the lives of the local people. They deplore the high rise flats, the gap sites and the unplanned space, the bleak outlook and the evidence of lack of care. Better environments make for better people, and the class call for consultation at the planning stage between the community, the planners and the architects. A 2nd year entry, also from the Art Department, offers appreciation of older buildings in the midst: the decorative work which they carry is valued as the work of someone's hands some time ago. Communities need the signs of the past as evidence of roots.

Hillhead High School gave a historical account of the Byres Road and analysed buildings of distinction. Some modern developments, housing and library, meet with their approval; and the critique which they offer is again in terms of the social, as opposed to the aesthetic significance of the architectural environment. Tobermory High School based much of their entry on local community life and interests, and its presentation in the form of laminated card displaying mixed photography, drawings and diagrams, was good.

The significance of consultation with local authority is not lost on Earlston High School in Lauder, and their new tape/slide entry has a conversation with the former Lord Provost. The School take exception to the visual intrusion of some modern buildings and the mindless jumble of street furniture, but are kind about the National Trust for Scotland and the value of the restoration of old buildings for renewed use.

Among other 1st prize winners in their classes: Cowdenknowes High School in Greenock studied new uses for Dutch Gable House and proposed a striking mural on a large blank wall; Banff Academy made the Bank their choice of building for intensive study — they remembered that buildings are for people and interviewed the staff. Mackie Academy, Stonehaven, in the course of their "Journey Through Time" study of Johnshaven, photographed an old man of 84, placing it in the exhibition beside his picture of 84 years earlier, wrapped in a shawl.

Magnus Magnusson, who had headed the team of judges for the Competition, handed over the Awards at a ceremony at the Edinburgh College of Art in October.

Marista Leishman
Head of Education, NTS

Streets Ahead *continued*

Pupils of Tobermory High School, Mull, at work on their entry (photo: Andrea Cringean).

Castlefield Renaissance

Anthony Pass FSA

The author was Conservation Officer for Greater Manchester 1973-84. He was involved in the revival of Castlefield from its earliest stages until the opening of the two Regional Museums in the last two years, and was architect of the first stages of the Liverpool Road Station conversion.

If you were asked to say which area of the north west possessed the most varied historical interest, would you think of a run-down part of Manchester's city centre? Probably not. Manchester has a popular reputation for rain, for its football teams and, arguably, for its splendid heritage of Victorian architecture. But can it hope to rival Lancaster, Chester or even Liverpool for the length and breadth of its history? The city, heavily committed to the development of historic Castlefield, claims that it can.

Ten years ago, the idea that this remote, seedy industrial backwater might one day become a tourist centre of international status would have seemed far-fetched indeed. Castlefield had few attractions for the sightseer. Where, after all, was the Castle, and where, among the car breakers, the abattoirs and the Dickensian relics, was the Field?

The Castle, for those undeterred by the general atmosphere of neglect, could be found in the shape of a small pile of sandstone masonry lurking under one of the hundreds of brick arches over which the early railway companies entered the portals of King Cotton. The Victorians showed little respect for archaeological remains, until, in the latter part of the 19th century, historians began to search out the vestiges of a Roman fort, largely submerged by the expanding industrial city.

By then the Field, like Acresfield and Spinningfield, was nothing more than a Manchester place-name. Castlefield had ceased to be rural nearly a century before, when the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater had seen the investment potential of a link between his coal mines at Worsley and the growing industrial metropolis. The Bridgewater Canal, one of the world's earliest man-made arteries of mass transport, carved its way into Castlefield and set down its cargoes on the wharves of a miniature dock system. Sites like Potato Wharf, and handsome buildings like the Duke's and Merchants' Warehouses bear witness to the genius of Brindley and Gilbert, the Duke's engineers.

With the coming of commercial transport, Castlefield built up quickly, to become Manchester's 'new town'. Only the stately St. John Street, home of the city's doctors and lawyers, and a handful of Georgian shops and pubs, survive to mark out the boundaries of what was once a densely populated residential and trading suburb.

The next tidal wave of development came barely fifty years after the first. In 1830, the Duke of Wellington entered Castlefield aboard the inaugural train of the Liverpool and Manchester company, the first passenger-carrying railway. The Manchester terminus, sited only a quarter of a mile from the Bridgewater Canal basin, had been hastily constructed under the direction of George and Robert Stephenson. They had invented a new generation of steam engines, and then, almost without thinking about it, they created a new building type, the terminal railway station, a type which is to be seen in every city of the world. Liverpool Road Station, the only remaining example of Liverpool and Manchester Railway architecture, is not a stage coach house, a hostelry or a hotel; it is a fully-fledged public building with a grandiose facade and tracks set high on a brick viaduct.

1830 Passenger Station building and Station Agent's house

Neglect is a great preserver. If Castlefield had continued to develop, it is doubtful whether Liverpool Road Station would have survived into the 20th century. But after only fourteen years as the city's rail terminus, it was consigned to a geographical and historical cul-de-sac. Leeds and Liverpool joined hands in Manchester's new Victoria Station, leaving Liverpool Road as a comparative backwater, demoted to an obscure but ever-growing freight terminus. There was a glimmer of fame in 1930, during the centenary celebrations of Britain's railway system, but thereafter the station slumbered into old age.

By the mid-1970s, Castlefield had been out of sight and out of mind for generations. The Roman fort lay under the foundations of crumbling brick terraces. The Duke's 'cut' mouldered away largely unseen from the viaducts which had by then ceased to carry passengers into Central Station. And the last goods train had lumbered out of Liverpool Road. Even the nearby City Hall, a Victorian palace of iron and glass had said a grateful farewell to its last, rather sad 'Ideal Homes Exhibition'. The area lay in profound decline, kept alive only by a scattering of low-grade factory units.

Then almost by accident local interest was aroused, and a handful of people began to see the potential of the area. The clearance of some industrial terraces provided an opportunity for the University of Manchester to undertake an archaeological investigation of the North Gate and the Romano-British street of traders which had once led out towards distant York. The Greater Manchester Council's conservation team surveyed Liverpool Road Station in the hope that it might be converted to a museum for the county's industrial heritage - an improbable idea in 1974! The potential of the 'Cheshire Ring' of canals, running through Manchester, was rediscovered. But there was no co-ordination, and little hope that Castlefield would enjoy more than a ripple of public attention.

Then history took a hand. The year 1980, just like 1930, would be an important anniversary in the railway history of England. But British Rail had no further use for the station, and the initiative for action would lie with local enthusiasts, councillors and officers. After much negotiation and hasty planning, the Greater Manchester Council purchased the site containing the Grade I listed Station and the 1830 Warehouse with the promise of a generous 'dowry' from British Rail. The plan was to transfer the Museum of Science and Industry, promoted largely by the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, from the campus to a larger and more historic site. This massive undertaking would be preceded by the 150th Anniversary celebrations, during which the decaying station, propped and painted up for the occasion, would be thrown open to the public for the first time in 135 years.

It is doubtful whether the conversion of the station would have been so widely supported without the stimulus of the Anniversary Celebrations, when the old site was visited by 'Flying Scotsman', 'Rocket', 'Lion' and multitudes of sightseers. After a brief spell of glory in August and September 1980, the station closed again for the next stage of the restoration, which included much of the original listed frontage and a large brick warehouse in which the nucleus of the Museum would be housed. Two years later, the Station and Power Hall, filled with examples of the industrial history of the region, was opened by the Queen and Prince Philip.

During her visit, Her Majesty was shown around an adjoining site which is perhaps more famous than the Museum. For more

1830 goods warehouse

than twenty years, Granada Television had used a corner of Castlefield for the *Coronation Street* set. In 1982, the familiar characters were 're-housed' on a site closer to the Museum's Power Hall. Soon afterwards, Granada undertook the restoration of a six-storey railway warehouse for use as extra production space. Since then, a splendid new studio building, clad in traditional multi-coloured brickwork, has been completed, and visitors to the Museum have witnessed a complete, though temporary, reconstruction of Baker Street for the current Sherlock Holmes series. Castlefield has not seen such a jam of horse-drawn traffic for fifty years, as Granada films each episode behind the plywood screen of a mock-Georgian street facade!

Beam engines and steam trains, horse omnibuses and Hilda Ogden are only part of the Castlefield scene, for during this short period, the City Council has not been inactive in the restoration programme. After excavation, it was realised that the Roman fort could not be left to the archaeologists alone. Spare land in the area has been imaginatively landscaped as the setting for a full re-creation of the Roman gateway. A phantom Roman legion has appeared in the form of a large mural overlooking the historic site.

But the City's most important contributions are sited in the old markets area close to Deansgate. A robust Victorian corner building has been magnificently restored to become the exhibition and conference centre of the Urban Heritage Park. An ambitious Air and Space Museum, the best in the north, has been housed inside the old City Hall, a transformation which earned a coveted Civic Trust Award in 1983. A spectacular collection of aeroplanes, helicopters and space satellites shelters beneath the skeletal vaulting of an earlier age of technological development.

It is less than four years since Liverpool Road saw the first coachloads of tourists, and no more than two since the two museums opened to visitors. Much more remains to be done. Work has commenced on the conversion of the elegant 1830 Warehouse and the re-paving of Lower Byrom Street with its gas lamps and handsome street furniture. There are plans to re-create a courtyard of industrial housing complete with stables and workshops on a site between the two museums. The basement of the old station may soon house a permanent exhibition of subterranean Manchester - a museum of drains and sewers. There will be new sections, too, devoted to electricity and postal history.

Outside the museums, it is hoped that the Cheshire Ring of canals can be developed to encourage greater use of the link with the River Irwell and thus with the improved waterfront which extends a mile upstream to Manchester Cathedral. The decline of Manchester Docks presents at least one opportunity: to open up the eastern end of the Manchester Ship Canal from Castlefield for water sport and recreation.

Liverpool Road shops

History seems to move in cycles. Castlefield was the site of Mamucium, the first civilised settlement in the area. More than fifteen hundred years later, the first major canal and the first modern railway in the world entered Castlefield. Now, in a post-industrial age, Europe's first Urban Heritage Park is taking shape. After a century of decay, the future is bright.

The Council for Environmental Education

The Society is a member of the Council for Environmental Education and at the October 1983 AGM Ian Parkin was elected onto their Executive Committee which meets six times a year and guides and monitors the specific progress and programmes of CEE. This note describes a little about the organisation and summarises the benefits members of SIBH can gain from CEE.

The Council is recognised and utilised by many organisations, individuals, government departments and agencies, both here and abroad, as a focus and first point of reference in the UK for all matters related to environmental education. It was founded in 1968 as an educational charity following a recommendation by the Duke of Edinburgh's Standing Committee for the 'Countryside in 1970' which suggested the formation of a council to 'provide a focal point for co-ordinating and disseminating advice on environmental education and to promote appropriate policies'.

CEE has four main functions:

To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information between members and other national and international organisations working in environmental education.

To act as a national centre for information about environmental education, providing an information and advisory service for teachers and others interested or working in environmental education.

To promote and encourage environmental education in schools and at all levels of the formal and non-formal education sectors through selected programmes and initiatives.

To provide a focus and representative voice for the environmental education movement.

Some 60 national organisations including local authorities, teacher and other professional organisations and statutory and voluntary bodies concerned with environmental protection and management make up membership of the Council. Representatives from the DES, DoE, the Welsh Office, the British Council and Schools Council also attend meetings. Each member organisation can elect a voting representative who is invited to attend two CEE General Assemblies each year.

CEE has a small professional staff located in the School of Education in the University of Reading. Its annual running costs, which this year amount to around £55,000, are met by a major grant from DoE, Local Education Authorities, sponsorship and consultancy.

Individual SIBH members can benefit from the Society's membership through:

a) 'News Exchange' - an occasional bulletin bringing together reports from members on their work in environmental education.
b) Review of Environmental Education Developments (REED) - a regular journal published three times a year.
c) CEE monthly newsletter.
d) Attendance at the General Assemblies - the next on 12th October is in the West Midlands discussing the UK response to the World Conservation Strategy.
e) The opportunity to obtain advice, information etc. from the Directorate: a specially designed indexing system based on a thesaurus of keywords has been introduced to handle information.
f) Being identified on CEE letterheads and publications.
g) Being the subject of an 'Environmental Education Resource Sheet'.
h) Being able to advertise meetings, conferences etc.
i) Jointly sponsored meetings such as a proposed meeting in November on the use of the media in environmental education and interpretation.

All enquiries should be addressed to The Director, Council for Environmental Education, University of Reading, London Road, Reading.

The Centre for English Cultural Tradition & Language

The Centre is a research institution which acts as a national repository for material on all aspects of language and cultural tradition throughout the British Isles. Located at the University of Sheffield, where it contributes to both the postgraduate and the undergraduate programmes of the Department of English Language, it aims to stimulate interest, encourage the collecting and recording of traditional material through individual contributors, societies and organisations, and provide a forum for discussion on all aspects of language and tradition.

Through its Archives, the Centre co-operates with local libraries, museums, record offices, colleges and other organisations, to draw attention to our traditional heritage through publications, courses, lectures and displays. An important resource for reference and research, the Archives include books, periodicals, original monographs, dissertations, pamphlets and ephemera. In addition, the audiovisual section includes photographs, slides and illustrations as well as some 2000 audio-tapes and over 600 films and videotapes.

The Centre's material culture collection includes a wide variety of items representative of urban and traditional occupations, pastimes, folklore, costume, arts and crafts. Special collections cover basketmaking, knifegrinding, silversmithing and filecutting, in addition to handicrafts, furniture and domestic equipment. A selection of exhibitions is available for hire.

At the present time the Centre is under considerable pressure because of the severe cutbacks in general funding for higher education across the country. While the University of Sheffield provides accommodation and logistical support, the Centre continues to be run on a shoestring budget and apart from secretarial staff all of its work is undertaken by volunteers. In Heritage Year, the Centre is concerned to make its facilities more widely known, firstly so that the substantial archival and material culture collections may be used to the best advantage and secondly to draw attention to the continuing need for support for staffing, general funding and special projects. In particular it is necessary to plan ahead to take account of projects directly related to the interpretation of Britain's heritage in which the Centre may play an active role. The unique resources available at the Centre remain underexploited largely because of the lack of staff and essential basic financial support.

CECTAL,
University of Sheffield,
Sheffield S10 2TN
0742 78555

Ian Vernon

in brief

Housesteads Information Centre, on the Roman Wall, was broken into and subsequently gutted by fire on 3rd June. It was built in 1981 at a cost of £165,000, with grant aid from the English Tourist Board, Countryside Commission, National Park Authority and Carnegie Trust. A Portakabin is being used until a new centre is built.

The Countryside Commission is to press ahead with the creation of a new long distance footpath along the Thames, from the Houses of Parliament to the river's source in Gloucestershire, after consultations about a proposed route are completed.

Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, has won the Museum of the Year Award under its Director (and SIBH member) David Sekers, who was also Director of the Gladstone Pottery Museum when it won in 1976. Other winners of special awards this year were the Fashion Gallery, Brighton Museums; the Boat Museum, Ellesmere Port; Devizes Museum, and the People's Palace, Glasgow.

The 1983 Come to Britain Award for the most outstanding tourist development, just announced, went to the Burrell Collection, with other awards to the Boat Museum, Quarry Bank Mill and the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television (Bradford). The usual long list of certificates of distinction and merit includes Big Pit Mining Museum, the Greater Manchester Museum of Science & Industry, and the National Horseracing Museum (Newmarket).

Northamptonshire Leisure & Libraries Department has set up a heritage interpretation project under the Community Programme. A Team Leader on a 1-year contract has been advertised for, to research and compile information leading to the production of publications and displays, especially countryside and town trails and teachers' information packs.

As requested by a reader: the address for membership of English Heritage is PO Box 43, Ruislip, Mddx, HA4 0XW. Subscriptions are £8 for adults, £4 for juniors and senior citizens.

CEI's application for 6 part time and 2 full time staff has been granted by the Manpower Services Commission. They will assist in the development of a national resources bank for environmental interpretation. CEI has also started producing its bi-monthly bulletin *CEI Focus*. In a most useful effort to co-ordinate publicity for interpretive training opportunities, CEI have produced a leaflet covering courses, workshops and seminars offered by themselves, SIBH, Pennine Heritage, Losehill Hall, Capel Manor and the Brathay Hall Trust. Contact: Centre for Environmental Interpretation, Manchester Polytechnic, John Dalton Building, Chester Street, M1 5GD.

Newly opened in Scotland this year are the Aberdeen Maritime Museum (Aberdeen District Council), tracing the town's seafaring history, and the Museum of Farming Life at Pitmedden (NTS), a re-creation of a small Aberdeen farm with rare breeds. There has also been a major redevelopment of displays at the David Livingstone Centre, by Gordon Lyall Associates. In England the Hampshire Farm Museum opened (Hampshire County Council), and the relocated Mary Rose Exhibition at No. 5 Boathouse in Portsmouth Naval Base (Mary Rose Trust).

Renovated displays at the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum, Dunfermline, include the Heritage Room and exhibits depicting the mid-19th century social background and the story of Carnegie's life and work. The project was managed by a team from the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, with Colin MacKenzie as principal designer, and funding came from the Scottish Tourist Board and the UK and USA Carnegie Trusts.

Pennine Heritage Network has installed its own Compugraphic phototypesetting equipment, which Carol South, Pennine's Production Manager, says will offer great opportunities for creativity and flexibility. It will be invaluable for displays, exhibitions and publications. Pennine also have facsimile equipment by which hard copy can be sent down the telephone line to anyone in the country (or abroad) who needs to see designs or text and who has the necessary receiving equipment.

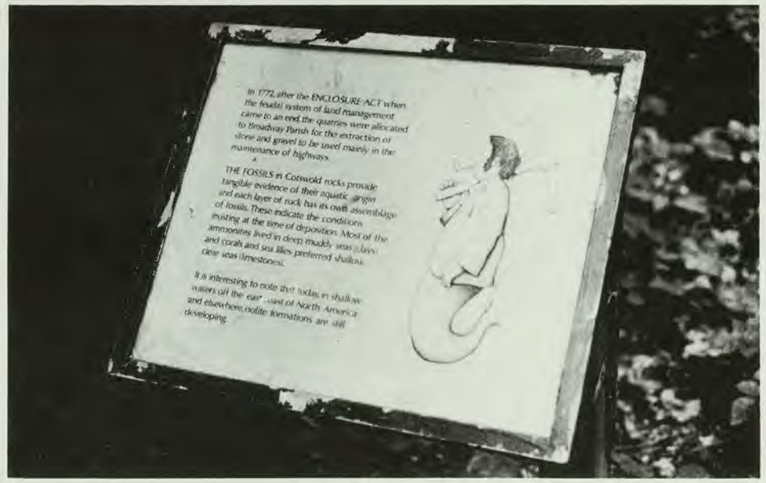
In response to a call to improve utilisation and reduce operating costs at the Snowdonia National Park Study Centre, Plas Tan Y Bwlch, the Countryside Commission have emphasised its crucial interpretive role, and there has been a new marketing initiative. Information on courses from: Alan Davies, 076 685 324.

Following the rescue package of special Treasury funds which secured Calke Abbey, Derbyshire, for the National Trust (subject to raising £1/4m by appeal), the Trust has been considering the problem of its presentation. Generations of the Harpur-Crewe family filled the rooms with boxes and trunks full of their collections, nothing ever thrown away, creating the "tremendous challenge in attempting to preserve and show its unique and peculiarly English character to the public. How does one show a house to thousands of visitors when the essence of its charm lies in jumbled rooms undisturbed for centuries?"

The Peak National Park Information Centre at Bakewell has been closed all season for the construction of new displays. When it reopens it will function jointly as a Tourist Information Centre for the District Council. Elsewhere in Derbyshire, the County Council have opened or extended four new visitor centres: on the High Peak Trail, Sett Valley Trail, Shipley Park and Cresswell Crags (jointly with Notts CC).

CUKT's seventieth Annual Report (1983) gives tables of grants approved in the fields of Community Service, the Arts and Heritage. The former two sections include city farms, Outward Bound, disabled groups, music and drama projects, while the latter includes £34,000 for Heritage Centres, £67,000 for education and training (including CEI) and £46,000 for interpretation schemes (including SIBH).

Ken Favell is progressing with his 'Washington Heritage' project in Britain and the USA. The idea has gained support from a financial advisory group in the UK, as detailed in his latest interim report. His new mailing address is Historic Productions, 29 St. John's Avenue, Knutsford, Cheshire.



picture point

A strong contender for the title of most baffling interpretive sign, this panel is the first encountered on the woodland trail at Fish Hill, Hereford & Worcester. It stands in an overgrown coomb, where pick-carrying mermen are apparently part of the local fauna. Now read on . . .

(More photographic contributions invited - see page 2).

book reviews

Interpretation of the Environment: A Bibliography

by Derrick Barclay, published by Carnegie UK Trust (Comely Park House, Dunfermline, KY12 7EJ), 1984, 60pp softback, price £3. ISBN 0 900259 04 3.

An attractively produced booklet with sections on Books & Reports, Articles in Journals, additional references and useful addresses. Each entry has a helpful resumé of subject content. The range of publications is wide, and includes some titles from overseas. It is illustrated with black-and-white photographs.

The publication results from an MSC scheme with additional funding from CUKT. It has the stated objective of providing a service which would be helpful to the many agencies, both professional and voluntary, who wish to learn more about interpretation but are unsure about sources of knowledge.

Despite the obviously detailed research it succeeds only up to a point, and should be regarded as a reading list rather than as a full bibliography. The major failing is the lack of a statement from the compiler regarding his parameters for inclusion, and one is therefore left in some confusion over certain of his selections. It is a brave attempt at an impossible task, and does include the major interpretive publications. Professional interpreters will however have little difficulty in finding omissions.

Many papers, particularly on interpretive plans, are available within the profession. There are no indications why some have been included and some not, and in this context it even begs the question as to what is and what is not a published item. The section on Articles in Journals clearly must have been selective. SIBH's *Interpretation* flatteringly has a separate list of its own, but the journal of the Institute of Landscape & Amenity Management gets no mention at all. The annual publication *English Heritage Monitor* also slips through the net.

The Books section probably raises the question of selection criteria most seriously. Rowland Parkes' *The Common Stream* (included) is undoubtedly a fine example of the art of interpretation as stated, but so are scores of others from Gilbert White to David Bellamy (excluded). Conversely *A Nature Conservation Review*, ed. D. Ratcliffe, is a superb work of its type - but is it interpretation? One might similarly question the inclusion of the excellent BTCV manuals on practical countryside management; other manuals are excluded. It seems astonishing that not a single reference is made to any books or journals produced by the National Trust or the RSPB, whilst RSNC and the Wildfowl Trust are listed.

The illustrations are an equally bewildering lot and without better captions the significance of including five photographs plus the cover design of New Lanark completely escapes this reviewer.

The contents page is largely unhelpful since after page 1 the contents as listed do not equate with the actual page numbers in the book.

This is a useful publication but its objectives should have been far better defined. At the apparently subsidised price of £3 for some 60 pages, would-be purchasers may still think twice about buying it.

E.E. Jackson

The Macmillan Guide to Britain's Nature Reserves

published in association with the Royal Society for Nature Conservation and Gulf Oil, 1984. 718pp. price £30. ISBN 0 333 35398 6.

This meaty work is a pleasure to own, clear in format and packed with information and atmospheric photographs in colour and black-and-white. Aiming to cover not just reserves but all other sites of wildlife interest to which there is some form of public access (including nature trails), it is thus a substantial and comprehensive work of reference.

The 2000 entries were researched and written by Jeremy Hywel-Davies for England and Wales, and Valerie Thom for Scotland. They are arranged alphabetically by county or group of counties, with introductions to each section by distinguished local experts, often from the County Trusts. Site entries include a description, usually brief, the name of the managing body or owner, and the best time of year to visit. Leaflets, visitor centres, walks and trails are usually mentioned where they exist, but not always. A map reference is included only when access is without permit. While this is an understandable attempt to avoid uncontrolled public visiting, the lack of at least some rough indication of locality (as these sites do not appear on the section maps either) is highly frustrating to the serious user who wishes to plan visits in a particular area, especially when the name is a non-commital one such as Park Wood, Cumbria.

Apart from some sensitive reserves omitted to protect rare species, and new sites declared since publication date, finding any significant omissions is not easy. Certain country parks do not appear - perhaps falling short on the criterion of wildlife interest? The compilers have decided not to include individually all sites managed by certain large owners such as Water Authorities and the Forestry Commission. Thus although there are entries for the National Parks, the Guide is silent on the delights of such a notable wildlife area as Thetford Forest.

The space devoted to each site varies greatly, even when places appear to be comparable: this is said to be in the cause of indicating the diversity of habitats in Britain. As for errors, it is only natural to turn to the entry for one's own 'patch' to test this. The introduction claims that each entry has been shown to a representative of the owner or managing body; surprising, then, to find the entry for Croxteth Country Park not only curiously incomplete but attributed to the non-existent 'Merseyside Metropolitan Borough Council'.

Nit-picking apart, this is a well-produced and useful book which fills a long-identified need and is highly recommended.

A.J. Maddock

resources

Interpreting parish churches

Due for publication this November under SIBH auspices is *Helping the Stones to Speak*, written by Moya Feehally and edited by Michael Glen. This advisory booklet for church personnel and others involved in presenting churches to visitors, has been grant-aided by the Cathedrals and Churches Pilgrim Association. Available to members at the reduced price of £1.15 from Michael Glen (see back page); retail price £1.75.

English Churches and Visitors

A follow up to *English Cathedrals and Tourism* (1979), this English Tourist Board report by Max Hanna analyses the replies to 4000 questionnaires completed by Anglican incumbents. Ten million tourists visited English parish churches in 1983, and in a series of summaries and tables are detailed what they spent, the facilities they found there (toilets, refreshments, bookstall . . .), vandalism, interpretive provision (guidebooks, volunteer guides, notices and displays), visitor management problems, signposting, cultural events, publicity and so on. The wealth of fascinating and sometimes touching detail should go a long way to help the solving of common problems, by the sharing of experiences and ideas brought together in this book. Price £6.50 incl. p. & p., from Dept D, ETB, 4 Grosvenor Gardens, SW1W 0DU.

The Waterlife Pack

This is a project pack for teachers to explore a pond or stream with children, and includes 20 repromasters, teacher's handbook, poster and photographs. Price £8 from the Environmental Resource Centre, Old Broughton School, McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4LD.

Environmental Education Resource Sheets

This series from CEE is a low cost source of information for teachers and school students. Each title selects from the range of material in the topic area and includes references to books, teaching packs, slides, filmstrips, films, videos and posters. For each item a brief description and details of price and availability are given where possible. Every title is updated annually, most recently *The Built Environment - primary and middle*, price 40p with SAE from CEE, School of Education, University of Reading, London Road, Reading RG1 5AQ.

Manual of Curatorship

This long-awaited publication from the Museums Association/Butterworths, edited by John Thompson, claims to be the definitive statement on museum practice. It contains 60 commissioned papers by specialist contributors, on collection management, research, presentation, conservation, administration, leisure and education. ISBN 0 408 01411 3, price £40.

Devon leaflets progress

The National Trust Devon Region has now produced 20 leaflets describing open space properties in the county, most recently ones for *Saltram Park*, *Lydford Gorge* and the revised

leaflet for *Kingswear to Brixham*. The latter incorporates a new path outside Trust property through land owned by the Jones family, and dedicated to the memory of Lt. Col. H. Jones VC OBE, killed in the Falklands. Available at 20p from all Trust shops and paying properties in Devon, each leaflet interprets the locality for the visitor and provides an outline map of all paths and places of interest. Brian Le Messurier, SIBH member and series editor, has 3 more leaflets in the pipeline, and is also engaged in producing interpretive panels for sites in the county.

Discovering Cottage Architecture

This new title from Shire, by Christopher Powell of UWIST, aids the recognition, understanding and historical interpretation of the surviving cottages of England and Wales. Changing forms, quality and methods of building are explained, and illustrated with photographs and

architectural line drawings, viewing the evolution of the cottage in a social and economic context from the 16th century to the First World War. ISBN 0 85263 673 3, price £1.50.

Countryside access

Early in 1985 the Countryside Commission expect to publish a brief statement on *Rights of Access to the Countryside*, in conjunction with a booklet on the use of the countryside for access and enjoyment, covering topics such as camping, car parking, maps and signs.

English Heritage Monitor

As well as recording a slight increase in visits to historic buildings and museums, the 1983 edition now out also points to greater conservation-consciousness in local authorities, with a 7% rise in the number of staff employed in environmental enhancement. Greatly increased visiting at Stratford and Warwick Castle was attributed to more American tourists, and at the Roman Baths in Bath to a marketing campaign and the opening of the Temple Precinct excavation. The report also covers charges, ownership, exhibitions, new facilities, conservation and expenditure, listing of buildings, heritage centres, town trails and interpretation, including our own award scheme. Price £5.50 incl. p. & p. from the ETB, address above.

Environmental Directory

The Civic Trust have brought out a new revised (6th) edition of the Directory, with 300 updated entries for national and regional organisations concerned with amenity and the environment. ISBN 900849 43 6. Price £3 incl. p. & p. from Civic Trust, 17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AW.

Periodicals

The first issue of the *Museum History Newsletter* is available with SAE from Gail Durbin, HBMC Education Service, 15 Great Marlborough St., London W1V 1AF. Also received is the Group of Designers/Interpreters in Museums *GDIM News* for Summer 1984, containing an enjoyably damning short review of a Handtools exhibition at the Boilerhouse Project, and the *Museums Journal* for September 1984, with a useful and not uncritical review of Jorvik by R.T. Schadla-Hall.

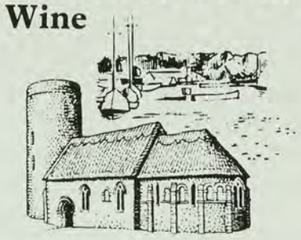
NCC Review

Nature Conservation in Great Britain was published by the Nature Conservancy Council in June, and is an important analysis and statement of strategy for future action by official and unofficial, public and private bodies. Improvements sought are more genuine protection for designated sites, increased public awareness, improved research, more money for conservation, and a better approach to conserving nature in the country as a whole. The A4 112-page publication with colour photographs is £7.50 post free to include a 16-page summary of objectives and strategy, or the latter alone is £1.25, from NCC Interpretive Branch, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury, SY4 4TW.

Notes for Amateur Curators

The Local Museum is a 72-page A4 publication setting out the do's and don'ts of setting up small museums, costing £5 incl. p. & p. from the Area Museum Service for South East England, 34 Burnets Lane, Kiln Farm, Milton Keynes MK11 3BH. We hope to review it in the next issue.

The Water and the Wine



Spring Meeting & AGM Norfolk 12-14 April 1985

Two of the best-loved and most striking features of the Norfolk scene are her medieval churches and the wetland expanses of the Broads. The Spring meeting follows the publication of SIBH's first Advisory Guide: *Helping the Stones to Speak - simple ways to tell visitors about your church*, and recent developments in the interpretation of the Broads. The programme will provide an opportunity to consider the role of voluntary organisations and volunteers in interpretive provision, and the problems and possibilities as professionals and non-professionals work together to interpret a region.

BOOK THE DATES NOW

The conference will be based at the University of East Anglia in Norwich. Contact: Patricia Riley, 2 Cock Street, Wymondham, Norfolk, Tel. 0953 606903 (answerphone).

Call for Papers

Do you think you have a contribution to make at the Conference as a speaker - or can you suggest someone else - on one of the Conference themes or a related topic?

ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE
SOCIETY FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF BRITAIN'S HERITAGE
Interpretation and the challenge of leisure
1835 ANDREW CARNEGIE 1965 — S·I·B·H — 1975 1985
CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST
EDINBURGH · 18-22 SEPTEMBER 1985

Reaching the Unconverted

1 Providing for the Disabled
2 Interpreting for Other Cultures
3 The Challenge of Unemployment
4 Reaching a Wider Audience
5 Taking Interpretation to People

The Profession

6 Training of Interpreters
7 Research in Interpretation
8 Making the Most of Volunteers
9 When and When Not to Interpret
10 Good Practice and New Directions

There will also be a choice of special interpretive planning workshops at sites in and around Edinburgh.

Contact: **NOW:** Dr. David Uzzell, SIBH Events Secretary, Dept of Psychology, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XH
Tel. 0483 571281 ext. 837/885.

courses & conferences

This autumn the Brathay Hall Trust, in association with Country Wings (Inter-Action), held two training courses on Environmental Awareness in the Urban Environment. Contact: Brathay Hall, Ambleside, Cumbria, Tel. 0966 33042.

14-17 January

Mounting Events and Special Activities: course at Capel Manor Institute, Bullsmoor Lane, Waltham Cross, Herts. Tel. 0992 24502.

18-27 January

Countryside Interpretation Training Course: Peak National Park Study Centre, Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbys, Tel. 0433 20373.

4-8 February

Practical Information and Interpretation Techniques: course at Pennine Heritage Network, The Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge, West Yorks, Tel. 0422 844450.

8 February

Turning on to the Environment: SIBH regional meeting on the use of TV. Contact: Bridget Cass, CEE Youth Unit, Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, London NW1, Tel. 01-722 7112.

11-15 February

Talking in Public for Countryside Staff: course at Losehill Hall, address above.

1 March

All You've Wanted to Know About Film-making: second SIBH workshop, in Birmingham. Contact: Ken Jackson, 201 Buryfield Road, Solihull, West Midlands, Tel. 021-704 3961.

11-15 March

Video - Its Use in Environmental Interpretation: CEI course at Losehill Hall. CEI, John Dalton Building, Manchester Polytechnic, Chester St., Manchester, Tel. 061-228 6171.

12-14 April

SIBH Annual Meeting/AGM: see panel.

17-19 April (rescheduled dates)

Presenting Historic Parks and Gardens to the Visitor: CEI seminar at York. CEI address above.

18-22 September

SIBH/Carnegie Anniversary Conference: see panel.

30 September - 4 October

First World Congress on Heritage Presentation and Interpretation, Banff National Park, Canada: to bring together, in Canada's National Parks Centenary year, interpretive planners, programmers, managers and decision makers, to share in and learn from the experiences of others working in this field. CEI, address above, is co-ordinating the British contribution.

Principles of Landscape Interpretation is a new undergraduate course at the Dorset Institute of Higher Education, forming a 3rd year option in the BSc Geography and Landscape degree. Taught jointly by Dr. Chris Cooper and Dr. David Prince (Museums Association), the course will begin during the 1984/5 academic year and will draw on outside speakers and visit interpreted sites in the region. Students will be introduced to philosophical and psychological issues of interpretation, but the thrust of the course will be interpretive planning and practice. Contact: Chris Cooper, Department of Tourism, Recreation & Field Sciences, DIHE, Wallisdown, Poole, Dorset, Tel. 0202 524111 Ext. 347.

COPY DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE:
February 8th 1985

The Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage

President: The Rev. and Rt. Hon. Lord Sandford DSC.

The Society was formed in 1975 to:

* provide a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas on the interpretation of Britain's heritage, both urban and rural;
* disseminate knowledge of interpretive philosophy, principles and techniques;
* promote the value and role of interpretation to those involved with recreation management, conservation, education, tourism and public relations in national and local government, charitable bodies and private organisations.

Annual subscription rates: Ordinary UK £9, Library £6, Corporate £25, Student £5, Overseas £9 (£12 airmail).

Officers 1984-5

Chairman: Brian Lymbery (59 Ermine Rd, Ladywell, London SE13).

Vice-Chairman (ascending): Terry Lee (Dept. of Psychology, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XH).

Vice-Chairman (descending): Michael Glen (Ryeford Lodge, Stonehouse, Glos. GL10 2LA).

Secretary: Ian Parkin (4 Holmewood Close, Kenilworth, Warwicks. CV8 2JE).

Treasurer: Graeme McLearie (19 Pepper St, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 0JG).

Membership Secretary: Michael Quinion (18 Pittville Close, Thornbury, Bristol BS12 1SE).

Events Secretary: David Uzzell (Dept. of Psychology, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XH).

Publicity Officer: Janet Cornish (Prince of Wales Committee, 6th Floor, Empire House, Mount Stuart Sq., Cardiff).

Editor: Alison Maddock (Croxteth Country Park, Liverpool L12 0HB).

SIBH matters

1985 Award dates

All intending entrants for the 1985 Interpret Britain Award please note: at the time of going to press it is expected that the launch date will be in mid-February, coinciding with the presentation of the 1984 awards. Application forms will be available from CEI and the Secretary in the new year, with a closing date of **30th April.** The earlier date is to allow judging to be complete in time for the Edinburgh conference.

Non-arrival of the Journal

It appears that the Post Office's delivery performance is deteriorating badly. If any member has not received their copy by one month after the publication date (except surface mailings overseas), please notify the Membership Secretary or Editor so that we can gauge the extent of the problem.

Design help

The committee has again cause to put on record warmest thanks to Pat Riley for much hard work helping with design for the Award exhibition, the 1985 Conference and the churches booklet (see page 14), as well as to Moya Feehally for writing the latter. If any other members can help with design work, e.g. for publicity or publications, for a modest honorarium where appropriate, they will be welcomed with open arms. Please contact Ian Parkin or Janet Cornish.

Cornwall meeting

A report on this very successful autumn conference came too late to be included in this issue. It is expected to be published in the Spring 1985 journal.

Stop Press: Award results

The following will receive the Carnegie Interpret Britain Award for 1984:

Temple Precinct, Bath Museum (Bath Archaeological Trust); 'Behind the Battlements' theatre presentation (Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority/MSC Theatre Interpretation Team); Blackgang Sawmill and St. Catherine's Quay, Isle of Wight (Blackgang Sawmill Ltd); Drift Gallery, Chatterley Whitfield Mining Museum, Stoke-on-Trent (Chatterley Whitfield Mining Museum Trust); The Walled Garden, Croxteth Country Park (Merseyside County Council); Culzean Country Park Young Naturalists' Club (Culzean Country Park, National Trust for Scotland); Durham County Countryside Service (Durham County Council Planning Department); Glenturret Distillery Visitors Heritage Centre, Perthshire (Glenturret Distillery Co.); Gibraltar Point Visitor Centre, Lincs (Lincolnshire & South Humberside Trust for Nature Conservation); 30th International Folklore Festival, Sidmouth (English Folk Dance & Song Society); Interpretation of Northumberland County's Footpath Network (Northumberland National Park and Countryside Department, Northumberland County Council); Operation Woodpecker, Irchester Country Park (Northamptonshire County Council Leisure & Libraries Department); Quarry Bank Mill & Styal Country Park, Cheshire (Quarry Bank Mill Trust and National Trust); Warrington and Runcorn Park Ranger Service, Cheshire (Warrington and Runcorn Development Corporation); Woodsmill Centre, Henfield (Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation).

The following schemes receive commendations:

Battlefield of Bosworth Project (Leicestershire County Council); Bersham Industrial Heritage Centre (Clwyd County Council); Coombes Farm Tour, Church Farm, Lancing, Sussex (Jenny Passmore); Craft and Countryside Museum, Holker Hall, Grange-over-Sands (Holker Hall); exhibition 'Ellesmere Port - a nostalgic history', Ellesmere Port Boat Museum (Boat Museum Trust); Greater Manchester Museum of Science and Industry; Lake District Natural History Gallery, Kendal (Kendal Museum); National Horseracing Museum, Newmarket; Risley Moss, Cheshire (Warrington and Runcorn Development Corporation); Roman River Centre, Colchester (Roman River Valley Conservation Zone); Scenesetter Publications - Interpretive leaflets for the Shropshire landscape; Weaver's Triangle Interpretive Display, Canal Toll House Heritage Centre, Burnley (Friends of the Weaver's Triangle); William Pengelly Cave Studies Centre, Buckfastleigh (William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust); Yorkshire Museum of Farming, Murton.

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