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Mutual curiosity: fish and visitor see eye to eye at Woods Mill (see page 6)

In this issue

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A Rewarding Day

The harsh weather hardly seemed to deter those who attended the presentation ceremony for the 1984 Carnegie Interpret Britain Awards at the Mall Galleries in London on 12th February.

SIBH Chairman Brian Lymbery opened the proceedings and then handed over to our President, Lord Sandford, who welcomed the guests and spoke of how the art of interpretation was scarcely recognised until a year or so ago. It was right to recognise good practice in interpretation, and the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust were to be warmly thanked for providing the funds to make the awards possible, especially as the Society was "scarcely a teenager" alongside the many professional bodies now celebrating their jubilees.

The awards, taking the form of framed certificates, were presented by Timothy Colman, Chairman of CUKT. His enthusiastic and encouraging speech appears in full below. Ian Parkin read out the citations for each scheme as representatives received their certificates, and later he gave details of the 1985 scheme, expressing the hope that there would be an even greater number of entries. (The closing date is 30th April and forms are obtainable from him, address on back page). Thanks to a great deal of last minute work by Janet Cornish and Pat Riley, the pack of fact sheets and the travelling display on the successful schemes were both ready for the day. Publication of the pack was grant-aided by the English Tourist Board. Anyone who would like to book the display for their site should contact Janet (see back page). The pack will also be available to members (cost, if any, not known at the time of going to press).

"You are all pioneers . . ."

Speech by Timothy Colman

"First I must congratulate those who have earned and received awards today. I am sure there are many others who have worked in the background equally deserving of our congratulations.

"This is an exciting occasion for me personally and for anyone involved in our environment and its interpretation. One feature of the list of awards and commendations is the extraordinarily wide range of the schemes, from Roman baths to a Scottish distillery, from a horse racing museum to a folklore festival. There are large schemes and small schemes, sophisticated schemes and simple schemes, and it is right that it should be so.

Carnegie
INTERPRET
BRITAIN
Award

"At a time when some may be tempted to question the need or value of interpretation, these awards are proof of the interest and determination to raise standards. I believe that today there is overwhelming evidence of a mounting interest amongst members of the public in the history of their ancestors and the way they lived, in our heritage of buildings and countryside, and this is matched with a concern for the future security of that heritage.

"Interpretation is a relatively new skill, and today's events bring into focus the growing need for it. Interpretation in my submission should be fun. We have heard evidence of this today. It is open for the volunteer to complement the work of the professional and it is an occupation which gives a high degree of job satisfaction. The end result of interpretation should be entertaining. In this context I was struck by the caption to the cover picture in a recent issue of the Society's journal: depicting a smiling group of visitors in the Peak National Park, it read 'Happiness is a guided walk'.

"Today is the culmination of a very active first year of the Interpret Britain Awards, when 85 entries were received. In the future I feel sure it will grow. The Carnegie Trust has been delighted and very proud to be involved with the development of interpretation, the birth of the Society, and the introduction of these awards. I think many of you here will know that the Carnegie Trust has a long history of pioneering new projects, and this has been no exception. In due course when these awards become well established, I hope that some other organisation may come forward to take over the role of sponsorship on a more permanent basis, as there will undoubtedly be other pioneering projects to which the Carnegie Trustees will want to give their attention.

"Meanwhile I do thank all those in the SIBH who have been concerned with the arrangements for these awards. It must have involved a great deal of work. There is I believe however a hidden benefit in the rapport established as a result of this competition, between the Society and the numerous organisations who are now working in the heritage field. I believe that comments have been sent back to many of the entrants who on this occasion were not lucky enough to win a prize (though many did!), and I feel sure that these comments will have been helpful and appreciated by the recipients.

"Finally, I would remind you that the conservationists campaigned for years before their message was recognised as being something more than the mere emotive bleatings of an eccentric minority. Today conservation is recognised by governments throughout most of the world as an essential contributor to human survival and sustained development. One role of interpretation, in addition to that of the fun and interest to which I have already referred, is to make a contribution to public understanding of conservation issues. Events in this field are moving fast and I believe the day will come when the beneficial influence of interpretation will enjoy the status of government policy in this country.

"Meanwhile, you are all pioneers and doing, if I may say so, a wonderful job in helping thousands of people to reap a greater reward and greater understanding from their own surroundings."

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Up the Zambesi and down on the Clyde . . .

Gordon Lyall
Consultant-in-charge for the David Livingstone Centre redevelopment

Underneath its crisp whitewash the three-storey David Livingstone Centre at Blantyre, near Glasgow, is actually a brick tenement built in the 1780s by David Dale (of New Lanark fame) to house the workers in his expanding cotton mills on the adjacent banks of the Clyde. The building has been a visitor centre, museum and memorial to the famous African missionary and explorer since it was saved from demolition in 1929. Last year, after 50 years of little change, a complete redevelopment of the interpretation and displays was completed.

The present appearance is in complete contrast with the earliest photograph, about 1860, which shows strings of washing and a grubby limewashed exterior, so it was essential to give the building its real meaning and context as soon as the visitor set foot on the entrance stair. The simple panel also sets the pattern for the bold heading statements and (hopefully) crisp display-sized summary texts which are used throughout the new displays:

> 'Following the David Livingstone story
>
> . . . begin by following David Livingstone's footsteps up to the top of the spiral stair to the one-roomed house where he was born in 1813 and lived until he set out on his African adventures in 1840 . . .'

Challenge of the building

When the tenement was first converted to a museum in the late 1920s, the original warren of twenty-four one-roomed homes opening off six landings was variously knocked through and interconnected. Visitors followed a one-way route, winding back and forth through the whole building. The effect was a maze of awkward odd-shaped spaces, visually made even more disjointed by a contrasting two-tone institutional paint scheme.

The interpretation was frozen in almost its original 1930s form: someone aptly described the centre as having become a 'museum of a museum'. Despite the single most important visitor group being children

Once an 18th-century tenement, now the David Livingstone Centre

- organised parties from schools and Sunday Schools - many exhibits were high on the walls and smaller children could not properly see the contents of many of the old display cases.

As Livingstone relics and linked items were acquired in the early years, the display cases and walls had gradually filled to overflowing and any thematic structure had been overwhelmed. I remember an enigmatic faded red capital 'S' lost among the displays; later I found this small framed message (a monument perhaps to some frustrated proto-interpreter!):

WATCH ALONG THIS WALL FOR
S AND THE REST OF THE STORY.

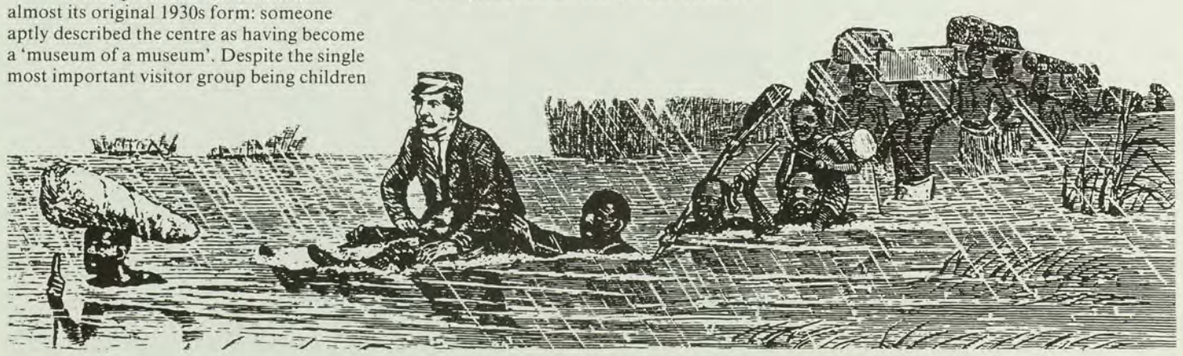
The centre's aim is to make David Livingstone's life and example more widely known, especially to young people. The new scheme had to cater for the large numbers of school parties led by the education staff. Education is well organised with talks in a separate classroom; questionnaires and worksheets are used and children are encouraged to extract information and find out for themselves from the displays. It was also hoped to attract many more tourists.

Planning the approach

After a detailed assessment of the museum collection and of the interpretive themes which could be developed, and much debate about Livingstone and his life and achievements, it was decided to adopt a strictly chronological approach and to tell Livingstone's life story in sequence from 'cradle to grave'. The visitor would ascend the entry stair, be immediately oriented to the building layout and the story plan, and after an introduction to life in the tenement as a preparation for the restored Livingstone home, pass on through all stages of his life culminating in the shrine with its replica of Livingstone's tomb in Westminster Abbey.

The major alternative which was considered involved creating a new introductory gallery on the ground floor where the whole Livingstone story could be dramatically summarised. This would have prepared the visitor for a series of thematic sections in the rest of the building on subjects such as David's childhood, exploration, or missionary work. At first sight, this seemed very attractive as a bold new approach. But on close examination it was realised that there would be many problems. For example, much geographical information might need to be repeated to make thematic sections self-sufficient, and, particularly in the presentation of Livingstone the explorer, chronology and timescale would anyway need to be clearly explained.

Interestingly, there was also an almost instinctive tendency to regard the 'cradle to grave' narrative as unimaginative, perhaps because it seemed to be the obvious solution. However, it became clear that the episodic nature of Livingstone's life story made this an ideal approach, that differing thematic emphasis could be given in the chronological sections and that several minor but important subject themes could



be brought in at points in the chronology where they best helped to flesh out the developing picture of Livingstone.

The use of the centre as a teaching resource was a strong influence on the choice of approach. Effectively the centre was used by children as a 3-D textbook, so there was a strong case for a logical content structure, indeed as is the case in an actual educational textbook.

Having chosen this fundamental 'cradle to grave' approach, the next stage was to test it against the resources available to illustrate and project the episodes: the museum collection of historic items and the interpretive possibilities which could be developed from the mass of raw information available. Closely linked to this was the need not just to reconcile the emerging plan with the difficulties of the building but a desire to positively exploit the building topography - to turn its problems into opportunities.

Most of the historic collection related to Livingstone's time in Africa, including scientific and medical instruments, some of his clothes, journals, maps and guns. There were fascinating items like Livingstone's baptismal shawl and first school book from his early life, but these were relatively much fewer in number. The top floor had been opened out more than elsewhere. In the lower two floors the original one-roomed houses were interlinked in linear fashion. The interpretive planning and the presentational ideas came together in a floor-by-floor scenario:

Top floor - interpretive displays

The top floor where the visitor begins, having come up the external stone stair tower, uses a bold display formula with the historic relics playing a supporting role. The emphasis is on reconstructions or tableaux. A series of changing scenes carry the story from David's birth and life in the tenement, through his childhood days as a worker in the cotton mill and studies of medicine and theology as a youth, to his first years as a young man on the mission stations in central southern Africa.

The interpretation works hard at *showing* the changing episodes while *explaining* the development of young David's interests, the influence of his father, his enthusiasms and doubts and his reconciliation of his own and his father's aspirations for him in a medical missionary career.

Various display techniques and approaches are employed. In the first few rooms the 19th-century ambience of the old stone spiral stair is sustained by keeping interpretive plinths and panels well out from the walls on free standing bases so as not to obstruct the original interiors.

In the room before the restored Livingstone house, a display of touchable everyday living items, like a meal barrel, water buckets and yoke, are brought to life by a couthie tape-recorded voice beginning "Welcome to my hoose, aye to my hoose, to you it's just one room but that's all a worker's hoose was 150 years ago." The cotton worker goes on to explain the mechanics of everyday life in the tenement and concludes with an exhortation . . . "Away with ye now! Across the landing and see Davie's mother's hoose where Davie lived till he went away to the learning and got well ken't for being a missionary and all that exploring he did in Africa."

David's years in the mill were also years of learning, often late into the night. A large tableau with dressed figures of David and a spinner at work on a replica spinning jenny is juxtaposed with displays of books, medical certificates and his hand-written application to be a missionary. The whole space, including the visitor, is a mill floor scene with dark stained floorboards underfoot, the glass of the windows painted black to suggest dark early morning or night. The props used to achieve the effect are very simple: a single massive dummy beam with two pillars and whitewashed (Sandtex) walls allied to carefully directed, low level concealed lighting were enough to create a convincing mill ambience. Elsewhere, new specially-constructed display cases were used for historic relic displays but here old cases were re-furbished and the relics displayed against rough, stained planking in sympathy with the period mill scene.

Two rooms were knocked together to make space for a major African set. Budget was a constraining factor working one way; the Livingstone Trust's desire for visitors to be suddenly confronted by the great vistas of Africa pulled strongly in the other! There was much argument and debate before a formula was devised which met the interpretive needs and powerfully prompted the visitor's 'willing suspension of disbelief' (see photograph).

The dressed figures of Livingstone and the Chief were made by a craftsman who cast the heads and hands in plaster.

Posture is vital - people are best caught as if in mid sentence or act. Eyes too are important, (think how important eye contact is when you look at someone); Livingstone really is looking at the bible and the Chief is intently watching his face. For all aspects of a set such as this, the most precise specification of every detail to the various artists and craftsmen is the key to success.

The mural backcloth is painted on a curved plywood skin. The artist was briefed to create the effect of shimmering desert heat in slanting evening sun, the sunlight streaming from the right. The mural is lit by concealed lighting at both sides but most strongly from the right where a vertical fluorescent fitting was used as well as a Par 38 flood. The combination works well: the eye is drawn into the bright background and the careful painting creates a real sense of distance and depth.

The two figures and the mural are framed by thick-trunked baobab trees and village huts. The budget would not run to 3-D representations, so a theatrical approach was adopted using 'flats' - cut out painted shapes fixed together at varying angles to create an illusion of three dimensions. The hut flats were painted to include shadows in accord with the direction of the 'sunlight'. The ground is hessian painted to grade back and merge with the base of the mural. Various twigs etc were sewn onto the surface. The fire consists of charred sticks bonded with a 'burning' core of translucent fibreglass. This was lit from underneath by a red bulb and the flicker created by a tin spiral turned by convection from the bulb. A number of native artefacts - gourds, drums, baskets, etc - were used to finally dress the set. The tubular barrier was kept to knee height to minimise the separation between the visitor and the tableau. Continuous sound provided background noises of the village, the cackle of geese, barking dogs, sounds of human voices, etc.

Museum floors - through the maze

On the floors below, where the interpretation is based on the rich relics collection, the visitor passes through a series of awkwardly small rooms, connected by door-sized openings; every room with a window and a big old central heating radiator. The thought of trying to create a cohesive interpretive experience here was at first a horrifying prospect.

The major theatrical setting of Livingstone reading from the Bible

Careful display technique disguises the awkward room spaces, while sound animates the view of Victoria Falls

It was essential to minimise the visitor's perception of the building and focus attention on the displays. The two-tone institutional decor was replaced by a dark-coloured paintout, i.e. the same colour on all surfaces including the ceiling. Daylight is excluded by matching blackout curtains; the carpet is a lighter but matching hue.

The relics are protected in display cases which were designed as internally illuminated 'shop windows'. The graphic panelling was horizontally aligned with these to create continuous 3-D and 2-D display. Track-hung fluorescent fittings (by Erco), fitted with special 'barn doors', direct a controlled horizontal band of light onto the graphic panels. The overall result of the lighting and the dark paintout makes the topography almost unnoticed and throws the display content forward. Some panels bridge across in front of windows (which are barely noticed), but because of the space above, below and behind them, they do not prevent access or obstruct the heating.

The editorial hierarchy here and throughout the building is akin to a newspaper page: bold headlines, the visually distinct introductory paragraphs mentioned earlier and, for those who wish to browse, the main body text. This is good for the educational use and, if anything, even better for the casual visitor who gets the gist of Livingstone's story with minimal reading.

Mindful of the large young audience, all panels and case 'windows' are about 200mm lower than usual. There were some doubters about this but in the event it works well for adults too - one visitor described its effect as making for a more intimate atmosphere.

Sound is used at six points throughout the building, one voice commentary and one continuous background sound on each floor (Reditronics Tape Talkers and four track player unit). The continuous sound is important in animating the 'museum hush' which might have become oppressive in the small spaces on quiet days. For example, on the first floor the visitor gradually becomes more aware of the sound of rushing water. In the end room is an enlarged photograph of the Victoria Falls, which Livingstone discovered, where a concealed speaker is playing an actual recording of the Falls. The voice tapes are used to highlight special features, like the cotton worker talking about his life in the tenement and the famous 'Dr Livingstone I presume' meeting between Livingstone and Stanley.

Cost control

The whole redevelopment took about 18 months from first assessment to completion and the cost was about £80,000, half of which was met by the largest single grant so far given by the Scottish Museums Council. This seemingly large budget was in fact not really enough to meet all the Livingstone Trust's aspirations - a common enough complaint today! - which underlines the need in large interpretive projects for a system of project and cost control which also keeps the true objectives in the mind when looking for cost savings. As well as continuous costs reviews, the menu approach is the most fundamentally useful weapon. Everything should be costed on a schedule basis broken down to base components in every case. With this full information costs can be successfully managed by subtle adjustment while preserving the integrity of the scheme.

Pictures by Antonia Reeve Photography

Not to be sniffed at

Dale Air Conditioning of Lytham St Annes have been the manufacturers of the Vortex deodorising unit for the last 15 years, specialising in removing unpleasant stale odours and replacing the air with a pleasant range of deodorising oils. However, during the last two years they have also been developing the use of the Vortex unit in museum settings, to enable members of the public not only to see the display but also to smell and experience the atmosphere which it attempts to re-create.

To do this one of the units is placed somewhere in the setting: it is small and unobstrusive and can be easily hidden. The Vortex creates the desired smell by vapourising a small amount of specially formulated oil into the air. This can be one of any number of smells; Dale have an ever-growing library of authentic oils, and can supply to suit most settings. To give a few examples: they have supplied a stewing meat smell to a farmhouse kitchen, an appropriate aroma for an old pub, coal fire or woodsmoke for rooms with a glowing fire, fresh apples for a greengrocer's, leather for a saddlery, coffee for a coffee grinder, mown grass, a farmyard smell, bacon, ironmonger's, old factories . . . and many more.

Visitor reaction to the smells has been extremely favourable at the various museums and other sites where they have been installed to add that extra dimension to viewing - among them the Jorvik Viking Centre, Beamish, Cornwall Aero Park and Beaulieu. Blackpool Pleasure Beach have just re-built their 'Haunted Hotel', and now have Dale's units installed to create a 'spooky' atmosphere!

Mr Dale and his company now look at this venture as a challenge to re-create any smell the client may require, within reason of course.

The Vortex is run on mains operation (only 40 watts), is easily fitted and fully portable. All that is required is a power point. The standard unit costs around £26 or there is a smaller one for enclosed settings at £15. The cost of the special oils depends on which odour is chosen, but an approximate cost is £30-£45 per kilo - and a kilo can last a season. Part of the service you can buy is for Mr Dale to visit for a survey, to advise personally on which smells may be appropriate and then provide a batch of sample oils to try. Mr Dale will be glad to hear from anyone interested on 0253-720128: more details and the company's full address are given on the paid insert with this issue.

Woods Mill Visitor and Education Centre

County Trusts in Action - 2

Frank Penfold
Chairman, Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation

One of the 1984 Interpret Britain Award winners, Woods Mill was described by the judges as 'a striking example of what can be achieved by a combination of personal generosity, dedicated voluntary effort and sensitive professional expertise'.

The Trust was founded in 1961 (as the Sussex Naturalists Trust) as a registered charity for the public benefit, to study and record objects and places of biological or geological interest or natural beauty, to acquire and manage nature reserves, to disseminate knowledge of the natural sciences and to encourage research therein, and generally to promote the conservation of wildlife in the county.

In 1966 the family of the late Dr Smith donated the Woods Mill property at Henfield to the Trust, for use as a headquarters and nature reserve. It consisted of an 18th century water mill, an attractive period house, sundry other buildings, and 15 acres of grounds. These included part of an ancient oakwood, a small lake, the mill leat, another stream, and varied areas of meadow, marsh, scrub, and garden.

The first actions were to appoint a full-time Resident Warden, recruit volunteers for much clearing and repair work, and to convert the buildings. Milling had ceased in 1927, and all the machinery had gone except for the wheel, which was damaged and out of action. It was decided to restore this and we were fortunate in finding an enthusiastic local millwright, Peter Stenning, who spent countless hours (unpaid) in constructing a traditional mill on the ground floor for the interest and education of the public.

The Mill House was adapted to a Warden's flat, with a Meetings Room and Offices beneath. The Mill and adjacent buildings were converted, largely by volunteers, for visitor reception, displays and a small shop, and the weatherboard exterior was repainted. In the grounds much work was done by Royal Engineers, mending penstocks, repairing culverts, and building a number of footbridges. Other jobs at this time included making a car park and providing toilets for visitors.

This first stage was completed by the Summer of 1968, when we welcomed the late James Fisher to perform the opening ceremony. In 1970 the Trust was presented with a 'Countryside in 1970' award by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, and in that same year Charlie Coleman moved in as Warden.

By 1974 it was apparent that further development was needed to cope with the growth of the Trust's work and the increase in public interest. In collaboration with the Area Museums Service, the Trust commissioned Robin Wade Design Associates to make a study and Report. In the following year a start was made on building a new house for the Warden and converting the old flat into additional offices: this was completed in 1976. Early in 1977 it was decided to launch a public appeal for £100,000, with the intention of proceeding with other phases of the Robin Wade scheme as funds came in. Later that year a start was made on structural alterations to the Mill, re-laying the roof, equipping an audio visual theatre, enlarging the car park, building and equipping a classroom and workshop and a new shopping area, and most importantly, a completely new professionally designed exhibition.

"Would you like to help at Woods Mill he said...!"

The displays include the history of the Mill and milling, on the ground floor; the first floor covers nature conservation and the work of the Trust, and the top floor illustrates the natural history of Woods Mill nature reserve. Live exhibits are an important feature, including an aquarium, a sectioned working beehive, and harvest mice. Many splendid paintings of birds on the reserve by James Fisher's son, Crispin, adorn the panels and a lifelike 30ft tall model of an oak is mounted in the stairwell. The audio visual programmes available are 'Sussex Trust Reserves' and 'Natural History of Sussex', thus carrying the theme outside the precincts of Woods Mill. Nature trails were laid out in the reserve, and educational features were provided, such as a dipping pond and a coppicing area.

These stages were completed in 1980 and officially opened by David Attenborough in 1981, to good publicity by BBC and local TV and radio, and the local press. Later that year a BBC television crew spent some days at the Mill with Angela Rippon and Tony Soper making a programme for 'In the Country'.

By that time costs had risen 50% above the 1974 estimate, to a total of £127,000. Contributors to the appeal included the Carnegie UK Trust, and a large bequest in 1983 from the late Elsie Tyrrell, enabled the appeal to meet that target. Miss Tyrrell's contribution to the success of the development went far beyond her posthumous gift; in life she had been an indefatigable Chairman of the Development Committee.

There is still much to be done at Woods Mill when funds are available. Already in hand are some outdoor display boards and improvements on the trails. Badly needed is land for a larger car park, new lavatories and sewerage system, and central heating in the offices. We also wish to relocate and expand the shop, and this would give us additional display space, to include a children's exhibit. But meeting the capital cost is only the beginning. We now have the problem of maintaining and staffing the Centre, with running costs far outstripping growth of income.

Visitors sometimes exceed 20,000 during the six month summer opening season. The classroom is always fully booked in advance by school parties, whose visit is carefully structured to offer a fruitful experience. Much pioneer work has been done by the Trust in using MSC teams to produce educational material for studies in ecology and conservation.

The Visitor and Education Centre is the direct responsibility of the Warden. For the past 14 years of growth this has been filled by an exceptional man, Charlie Coleman, but he had to retire in December 1984 due to ill health. He was greatly assisted by his wife, Dorothy, who worked part-time, and by a succession of Assistants recruited annually as sandwich students from Merrist Wood Agricultural and Seale Hayne Colleges. In addition there is a part-time Education Officer and a part-time Sales Officer. A new warden, Michael Russell has now started his duties.

But neither Woods Mill nor the Trust could function without the dedicated efforts of a large number of volunteers, whether as counter helpers, manual workers on the reserve, amateur electricians, members of committees, professional advisers, writers, naturalists, photographers, and many more humble workers; and it is this commitment, this sense of purpose which helps to impart the special atmosphere which makes Woods Mill such a welcoming place.

Cartoon by former Warden Charlie Coleman

The Colman Collection of Silver Mustard Pots

Honor Godfrey
Curator of the Collection

Silver on suede: mustard pots are displayed chronologically, with additional thematic panels. (GGS Photography)

Colman's have been makers of mustard since 1814 when Jeremiah Colman took over a flour and mustard mill at Stoke Holy Cross near Norwich. The business expanded and diversified, moving to Norwich in the 1850s. The company occupies the same site today and produces soft drinks and baby foods, honey, sauces and a wide range of condiments.

Colman's are firmly rooted in East Anglia. They were the first firm in England to issue contracts to local farmers and several generations of the same families have grown seed for Colman's mustard. Throughout the drier eastern part of the country, yellow fields of flowering mustard abound in June. Traditionally, the crop was harvested by hand and tied in sheaves with special mustard string: today it is combine-harvested.

The company's history and traditions, as well as the wealth of 'Colmanalia', prompted the firm to start its own archive in the early 1970s. When the Victorian-style Mustard Shop opened in Norwich in 1973, it contained nostalgic displays of old packaging and advertising. But the public wanted more - descriptions of mustard-making, a Colman family tree, and an outline of the company's early social welfare policies. The back of the Shop was converted into a museum which retained all the Victorian flavour of the selling area at the front. Donations to the archive multiplied and written and verbal memories added to the general store of knowledge.

It was at this point that the company was offered a collection of silver mustard pots that had been assembled by a member of the Colman family. When the Colman Collection was launched as a travelling exhibition in 1979, its aim was to show the finest mustard pots made by national and provincial silversmiths over the last 250 years. Today, the Collection stands at nearly 180 mustard pots, ranging in date from 1724 to the present day.

About 1720, a Mrs Clements of Durham began to market a fine mustard flour which could be made up into a mustard for the table by the addition of a liquid. This was served with a spoon either from a 'blind' mustard - a caster with its now superfluous holes blocked by the insertion of a sleeve - or from the little squat mustard pots with which we are familiar today.

The earliest mustards in the Colman Collection are of lidded cylindrical form with bodies made of solid plate. The solid bottoms found on these pots were later modified to open circular bases so that the glass liners, which actually held the mustard, could be more readily removed by pushing up from below. During the 1760s cylindrical mustards began to be hand-pierced with fine all-over repeating designs, while the influence of Neo-classicism is seen in mustards of the 1780s. Vase-shaped pots on pedestal bases were pierced and engraved with geometric designs and classical motifs, their domed lids surmounted by cast or turned finials.

Shorter oval mustard pots with straight sides appeared in the 1790s. Convex sides with moulded bands became fashionable in the early years of the 19th century, and other new shapes evolved c. 1800 - the rectangular mustard supported on ball feet and perhaps topped with a ball button, and the barrel, its body encircled with numerous incised rings.

The 1820s witnessed a revival of the exhuberant rococo style. Compressed circular mustards were embossed and chased with flowers and foliage, shells and sea monsters, birds and animals. The awakening Victorian interest in detailed naturalism manifested itself initially in floral engraving on cylindrical, hexagonal and octagonal mustards, and realistically cast flower and bud finials. By the mid 19th century, domestic silver was controlled and restrained. Cylindrical mustard pots - bigger and heavier in keeping with the Victorian family - were becoming stereotyped. On the other hand, some of the most delightful mustards in the Collection are the whimsical 'tabletoys' and novelties of the 1860s and 1870s. Scent bottles and inkwells, as well as salts, peppers and mustards, came in the shape of Punch and Judy, pigs and monkeys, cats and dogs, babies' heads and clowns.

In the Colman Collection, the 20th century is represented by a wide range of shapes and decorative styles: a bulbous mustard with scrolling strapwork and tendrils in the Arts & Crafts manner, pots with characteristic hammerwork finish by Omar Ramsden, a large mustard with contrasting textured surfaces by Stuart Devlin, and a silver and ivory pot of unusual form by Jocelyn Burton.

The Colman Collection mirrors - in minature - changing styles and fashions in domestic plate. A variety of methods has been used in its presentation. While the layout is essentially chronological, thematic displays concentrate on different styles, the work of particular partnerships, or individual assay offices. The pots are shown in ash-veneered cases lined with suede, or in table-top cases on damask. A single caption covers every piece in a case and individual pots are identified by maker, assay office and date. The accompanying catalogue is fully-illustrated and each pot is described in detail.

The Collection has now been seen in sixteen different locations, ranging from museums and art galleries to antiques fairs and the Ideal Home Exhibition. The design of the cases gives maximum flexibility in any situation and the system of separate plinths onto which the standing cases are lowered allows a layout to be tested with the least expenditure of energy. Handling by a dedicated team from Colman's has minimised wear and tear as have the stout cardboard outers in which the showcases travel.

The Colman Collection is novel for the layman and intriguing for the specialist. It revives the image of gracious dining and demonstrates the long-term achievements of English mustard.

Further information on the Colman Collection can be obtained from Mrs Jenny Mantle, Public Relations Manager, Colman's of Norwich, Carrow, Norwich NR1 2DD.

Overlord Wins a Beachhead – AV at the D-Day Museum

Peter Lloyd
Editor, Audio Visual

Left: "In the end the top job went to an American - there were more of them", scene from the multivision. Right: Dramatic landing-craft tableau. (Photos: Triangle Audio Visual Partnership)

Museums have often been talked of as being almost 'ideal' users of visual communications, but tradition and budget restraints tend to blight the potential. With money from the English Tourist Board as well as from the local authority, the D-Day Museum at Portsmouth has, however, risen above the ordinary AV level.

As any follower of last year's events will know, it took 40 years before everyone got round to arranging a D-Day celebration. But it didn't take that long for Portsmouth's city fathers to get round to producing a museum on the subject once the go-ahead was given.

Perhaps because it deals with a contemporary topic, rather than being an archive representing different historical periods, the D-Day Museum adjacent to Southsea Castle is more reminiscent of an 'experience'-type show than a traditional museum. It's an approach that has certainly paid off. In just three months between its opening last June and the beginning of September, over 155,000 visitors passed through the doors, paying £1.25 per adult into the city's coffers.

As well as providing a focal point for the D-Day reminiscences, the museum was founded in order to do two important jobs.

The centrepiece of the museum is the Overlord Embroidery, a 20th-century counterpoint to the Bayeux Tapestry, celebrating another invasion in a different direction. Commissioned in 1968 by Lord Dulverton as a tribute and memorial to the Allies' efforts during the Second World War, the embroidery is 41ft longer than its earlier French counterpart and was initially housed in Whitbread's premises at Chiswell Street, in the City of London. Attracting just 30,000 visitors a year, it needed a permanent home to which more people could come, and has now found one.

In addition to housing a unique artefact, the museum has also to provide a communications bridge between visitors and the events of 40 years ago: hence the 'experiential' nature of the presentations. These include a major introductory multivision, with supporting two- and three-projector slide/tape shows and a series of 'tableaux'. So a visit is more than just a slog around the nicely laid out aisles reading the text.

Invasion in perspective

Once the move to *really* do something on the fortieth anniversary of D-Day got underway (events for 25 and 30 years having been talked about but with little result), the local authority moved quickly. A museum brief was written, designs done and construction started by the end of October 1983, and in March 1984 the building was handed over.

"Right from the beginning," says Alastair Penfold, Portsmouth Museums' keeper of local history, "we decided we needed introductory AV shows to cope with the space limitations and the broad scope of the story." Dan Chadwick, principal keeper, was determined to make use of audio visual techniques and made sure that initial designs included a theatre in which the Overlord story could be told.

That theatre is the first point reached on the visitor's journey round the museum, and is located in the centre of a circular hall housing the Overlord embroidery. The preferred route is into the theatre for the 16-minute nine-projector show, round the embroidery, and then round the rest of the museum, a journey involving a minimum of one and a quarter hours and an average stay of about two hours.

The introductory multivision, produced by Triangle AV, has to do the job of putting the whole museum into perspective. Shown in an 80-seat theatre every 20 minutes, it opens with the familiar (to older people) shots of Blitzkrieg, and goes on to explain lucidly and carefully the thinking behind the Normandy landings, how they were organised and what happened not only on the day but in succeeding weeks. Graphics showing the invasion routes find meaning and counterpoint when archival photographs and sound effects of the landings themselves hit the screen. The whole build-up to the landings is carefully explained, right down to postcard appeals made by the BBC in order to get pictures of the beaches; the roles of the different commands, armies and nationalities are given due credit; deception techniques and individual heroics are balanced out.

Written by producer Vincent Joyce, the programme uses the 'hook' of a first person narration to engage the viewer's attention in whatever language. Mediatech built a special three-way headphone system to provide soundtracks spoken by the same voice in German and French as well as English. The idea was to try and give every visitor - ranging from a D-Day veteran to a schoolchild - background information which would introduce the subject matter of the tapestry and the museum.

Despite a few technical problems (e.g. the 46mm slide format makes it difficult to keep the registration smack on), the show is genuinely exciting, non-patronising, clear and lucid. In fact it is probably better than many of the pure 'experience' shows that have been made in the past, simply because its designers knew they were doing a valid educational job that did not have to be the main event.

And, with all possible credit to Triangle, it's not. All too often audiences exposed to a first class multivision then have no eyes for anything else. But the designers at Southsea have managed to string a series of 'climactic events' together so that the visitor is led onwards. After the multivision, which uses some 'colourised' black and white images in among the inevitable monochrome archive shots and the vivid graphics, the visitors stream out into an area full of colour: the dark circular walkway housing the specially-lit panels of the embroidery, which are in their own strange way a kind of storyboard echoing the multivision's concerns and explanations.

Set-piece tableaux

From the embroidery hall and the theatre visitors pass into the large area housing the D-Day exhibition itself. This consists of a series of 'corridors' made up by panels containing graphics and the three-language text. Folded back on one another in a way that must look like a maze in plan (but doesn't seem like one in practice), the corridors lead the visitors on to different aspects of the Overlord story - and lots of AV programmes and set-piece tableaux.

There is also lots and lots of ambient noise, which ranges from gunfire to the crackle of communications systems: the D-Day Museum is not a place to which archaeologists come in order to gaze at a potsherd in peace.

The tableaux vary widely but all have associated soundtracks and/or lighting effects. One shows a typical '40s living room with Churchill's voice coming from the radio; a mock-up of an Anderson shelter has a view of a burning building through the door and the sound of fire crackling outside; soldiers on 'deception' duty in a forest live in a softly changing twilight with the birds singing. There are martial moods as well - the view from inside a German blockhouse with shells landing all around, and the invasion fleet off the coast or (at the climax) the view of the beach seen through the lowering doors of a landing craft.

There are also important AV sequences. A three-projector show on *The Grand Strategy* explains how the Allies debated which front to open up and the composition of the forces which eventually took part in Overlord - sensible use of AV techniques in order to explain in four minutes what it could have taken a whole corridor of graphic panels to fail to do.

Another, soundless, three-projector show serves as a visual evocation of the landings by showing pictures of the men on their way to the beaches. Cast in an unusual format of three projectors, each on a vertically stacked screen area so that the screen goes down to the floor, it presented an interesting programming problem. "You have to establish a kind of silent rhythm", says Joyce.

Other sequences include more archive shots of activity on the beaches using a single projector on an interval timer, one screen for the American beaches, one for the British, and a mock-up operations room.

Central control

The installation for the museum (rather than the embroidery) is all run from a central control room, which houses no less than eight four-track Mackenzie message repeaters, amplification systems, projector control units and all the associated bits and pieces, including a patch bay for flexibility if anything goes wrong. The multivision has a separate control room with all the relevant gear, including an eight-track Teac to handle the six audio channels plus clock and programming data. Both control rooms were consulted on and engineered by Mediatech.

Taken as a whole, the D-Day Museum is a tribute not only to the people who caused it to be possible 40 years ago but also to the people who have designed and organised it. Two months in the building is not a long time in which to open a museum and there are few signs of over-hasty work or inconsistency. A plan which aimed to produce an interesting and stimulating, as well as academically accurate, museum has succeeded very well indeed.

Justifying the principal keeper's faith in the medium, the AV content is doing a useful job (and has kept running through a schedule of 30 shows a day, seven days a week).

The school parties now starting to arrive will undoubtedly leave having enjoyed themselves as well as learned something. And that's something that should not be forgotten: Portsmouth's latest tourist attraction is a place of learning, not just an entertainment complex. It is a good demonstration of what can be done when, for once, the kind of people in charge of museums these days can lay their hands on some halfway decent budgets.

Museums of the future would be a paradox, but the modern museum certainly doesn't seem to be.

This article was first published in the October 1984 issue of **Audio Visual** *and has been reproduced with its permission.*

picture point

Is this the most academic wayside sign ever erected? It may be found on an otherwise not obviously remarkable piece of mediaeval wall nearly opposite the Carnegie Birthplace Museum in Dunfermline. But go quickly if you want to see it, because it is about to be replaced by a new plaque, much to the regret of some local people. By the way, 'nethiryet' means 'lower gate'. Now are you happy?

(Contributed by Michael Quinion)

Conference Report

Told in the Market Place

The Society's autumn conference in West Cornwall, 13th-16th September 1984, took a hard look at a number of business ventures in interpretation. Not surprisingly, it prompted much discussion and some outspoken opinions about what members found there. Only a few aspects of Cornwall's varied heritage are interpreted for visitors, almost all of these by private ventures where the need to maintain commercial viability has determined the approach and scope of the presentation. Most of the 27 or so commercially based interpretive centres are managed by owners who are not professional interpreters, and standards vary widely.

Peter Hawkins of Wheal Martyn Museum put much of this in perspective in his talk, stressing that he himself was not a professional interpreter and came "from the touristy, tacky end of the market!" Over 60% of business is done in the short 6-7 week season, when the local population almost doubles; there are very few day visitors outside this period. The inland sites can only break even when there are enough wet days to bring the visitors indoors. Attempts by some sites to attract a local market by opening and offering concessions out of season have failed dismally, and marketing has to concentrate on providing 'all the family' entertainment for the holiday visitors, sometimes at the cost of obscuring the central theme. Ideas on what the family consists of and what its needs are vary greatly. The new nature trail at Wheal Martyn is a success because it is the first activity that can be done as a complete unit (except that grannies cannot climb the peak in the middle). Many sites do not actually meet the claim of appealing to all the family. It is in any case difficult to attract Cornwall's typical holidaymakers (families and honeymoon-type couples) to industrial archaeology sites: tin and china clay are unfamiliar to them.

The fact that the south coast attracts middle and upper class visitors while the north still has a working class image, is reflected in the standard and nature of the attractions aimed at them. But all over Cornwall tourist sites are suffering from a severe decline in visitor numbers, with only one really going against the trend - the Aero Park with its main road site and massive investment.

The Cornwall Association of Tourist Attractions is a joint marketing group for interpretive facilities which exercises a high level of control and inspection, and whose publicity accounts for about 20% of the gate for its members. In spite of CATA, however, there is no real integrated marketing initiative to promote Cornwall's heritage outside Cornwall.

Just how valuable and important that heritage is, was brought home by several of the speakers. Peter Lawes, ex-National Park Planning Officer and West Cornwall expert, conveyed his love and enthusiasm for the region with a splendid selection of slides of landscape and vernacular architecture, and convinced many that Cornwall was not just a county but a

Cornucopia - "it's one man's selection of Cornwall's heritage". (Photo: Michael Glen)

country with a culture, heritage and language of its own.

Professor Charles Thomas, head of the Institute of Cornish Studies at Exeter University, described how the ancient monuments of Cornwall were a vast and unused touristic resource. Cornwall's Sites and Monuments Register is the largest in Britain, yet hardly any of the sites are presented or the information given is not what people need. In Professor Thomas' view, where there is Guardianship it is bad, as at Chysauster Hamlet where there are no guided tours and the published booklet is bad, or at Tintagel, which is promoted as something it isn't. Private development of ancient monuments is worrying, because entrepreneurs think it is easy; local authorities could present some of the sites but "that only happens in enlightened places like Hampshire". He felt that people prepared to make the effort to visit sites deserve to have them interpreted: it was worth doing even for the minority, as these were the ones who would vote to preserve threatened monuments.

Conscious of the criticisms being voiced about the County Council's lack of involvement in interpretation, Mike Hawkey, a planning officer from the Countryside Section, bravely defended the past record of low interpretive provision within the budget available (just over £1,000 p.a. over the past five years). He explained how officers' requests for increased budgets have to compete with the elected members' desire for improved housing and employment for the local population. Tourism brings huge problems of traffic congestion, pollution, water shortage and 'blots on the landscape' like caravan sites and amusement parks. He did feel sympathy for the unfortunate tourists being "ripped off at the number of commercial enterprises which have sprung up over the last ten years". In areas where the private sector is not so active the local authority was justified in being more involved. Within the very limited resources available they are proud of the management measures they have taken. He mentioned here the partnership between the County and the National Trust along the heritage coast, and the recently appointed ranger who will become involved in interpretation and schools. He even suggested that the only real interpretation in the County was provided by the local authority.

Site visits

Tolgus Tin is not a mining site, but a place where tin is extracted from the waste of nearby 19th-century mines. It was worked as such by a family firm until 1960. After passing through several hands, including Madame Tussauds, it was bought by the present owner, Chandra Durve, a mining engineer, three years ago. His main objective is to produce saleable tin using the old machinery: the inherited tourist side of the business is a bonus. The area around the car park is unpicturesque, and clearly visible are 'family' attractions such as climbing frames and the giant set in the hillside, as well as the range of industrial buildings.

Jim Lawton, the site manager, gave us an excellent and articulate introduction. The extraction work currently employs 8-10 people who use the old methods as far as possible, but the mill must be economically viable regardless of the profit from visitors. Approximately 50,000 people visit between Easter and October, paying 50p and staying ½-1 hour. There was a good, if somewhat lengthy, guided tour, where the guide's use of a portable microphone that could be plugged into an unobtrusive socket at each stopping point was noted, and the movement of machinery and water proved mesmeric.

Cornucopia is 'a family enterprise which started out as a model village and now incorporates displays on shipwrecks and smuggling, Cornish industries and characters. These attractions related to the Cornish heritage co-exist with other facilities.' This description from the conference programme gives a fair impression: there is a lot on offer but the experiences co-exist rather than interrelate.

The model village is beautifully executed; music comes from the church, whistling and hammering can be heard in the forge. The owner's interest in history is reflected in the buildings he chose to reproduce in miniature. He is "recording history because some of the buildings I've modelled have been demolished". The heritage museum is a tribute to the patience and skill of this man, Leslie Caswell, who produced most of the dioramas, models and exhibition panels. Paintings of shipwrecks are accompanied by the sound of howling wind and high seas. To amuse the visitors the Cornish character section has a What the Butler Saw machine in working order, and alongside a coin-op ore-crushing machine is a Space Invader. The site has also amusements for children, a model train shed, café, shop and good parking facilities. Comments later included "a hobbyist's museum", "good value for £1.60" and "they need good advice but probably wouldn't take it".

The **Wayside Museum,** Zennor, is a tiny cottage with secluded garden and run-down outbuildings. In the low-ceilinged single room of the cottage most visitors are out of scale, far too tall for living in the past. In the garden the group picked its way through rows of implements painted black with clumsy name-tags. The collection is of anything and everything, but only from the locality. Lt Hurst, the original collector in the 1930s, went out in a trap with two men and hauled back stones, machinery, whatever he could find.

The new owner, Richard Williamson, plans to put the objects to use, creating spaces full of industry and history, affecting all the senses, not just sight. By Easter 1985 he hopes the wheelwright and blacksmith workshops will be completed. It will be exciting to return in two years time to see how his plans have evolved. When he bought the museum he anticipated the visitor figure might be 15,000 p.a.; in fact 7,000 is closer to the truth. He hopes to swell the numbers with local advertising, but does not want to jeopardise the peace and quiet of the museum, so limits the number of visitors to 25 at a time.

Peter Young, the Managing Director of **Poldark Mine,** paid £300 for three acres over 15 years ago; it was a site he could afford and the tall trees on the perimeter formed a perfect background to an arena now used for discos and concerts on summer evenings. For three years, with £3,000 capital, he developed craft workshops and a small museum with antique machines. During alterations in 1974 a mine shaft was uncovered, and with a £30,000 grant from ETB the mining theme was expanded. Mr Young described himself as a born extemporiser. Today over £1m is invested in the site: 128,000 people visited the mine between April 1st and our visit. The amusement business on the surface aimed at family entertainment is booming. In Ha'penny Park (½p to go in and open till 10pm) children were leaping on inflatable elephants and screaming with delight in the ball pond.

But where is the interpretation? In the mine reception cabin an AV presentation is available in four languages; the duration can be adjusted to suit numbers visiting - unfortunately there was no time to view it. Donning hard hats and clutching tufsealed A4 tour guides (50p returnable deposit), the group was led into the mine. Up to 120 ("a hutful") can be led through nose to tail in one go. The guide answered many questions: the policy seems to be don't give the visitors too much information, leave them to ask. The noise of pumping water is constant. A tableau of two men in modern waterproofs working a pump in extremely wet conditions, is a reminder of the hazards miners worked under a century ago. Out of the mine, but not yet on the surface, is a display of Cornish mining relics. With a collection of utilitarian items ranging from patriotic ephemera to early wireless sets, this forms the Cornish Heritage Collection,

Poldark Mine - "they're selling history as a commodity". (Photo: Michael Glen)

and is followed by a cinema showing tin extraction, a rock specimen room and a shop. Comments on the visit included "he's in business, he doesn't want to know about interpretation", "other sites don't masquerade as Cornish heritage" and "it is ethically wrong to force people to exit through the amusement arcade".

The owner of **Cornwall Aero Park,** Lt Cdr Douglas Hale, chose not to reveal his (undoubtedly very high) visitor numbers, but said that 122 staff were employed. The aims of the Park, which is his hobby and obsession, include providing an under cover attraction with facilities of the highest quality, well-laid out, attractive and with good signposting. Even the gardens have won awards.

Outside are the aeroplanes, many purchased from the Flambards TV programme, which formed the original attraction of the site, surrounded by the garden, with plants for sale. Inside the hangar are several facilities including the video parlour and ballpark, a large exhibition featuring aspects of the armed and rescue services, a Falklands exhibit (some thought in bad taste), and the two main three-dimensional exhibits: Flambards Village and Britain in the Blitz, both done to an exceptionally high standard. The village had some 50 old shop and house fronts rebuilt with their contents displayed; accuracy was evident throughout, even to having smells of sweets and cooking in relevant places (see article in this issue). The Blitz display succeeded in creating a strong sense of atmosphere, but there were reservations about a nostalgic presentation of only one side of war.

Land's End was bought by Davstone Holdings Ltd for £2.25m without them even seeing the site. The vendors said that 1.25 million people a year visited Land's End, but surveys carried out by General Manager Cairns Boston have shown this to be exaggerated. In 1982 the figure recorded was 550,000 excluding evening visits to watch the sunsets, with visitors staying an average of 12 minutes and spending 21p. In 1984 the figure was 300,000 but the average stay was 2½-3 hours and the average spending £3.50 plus £1 admission charge. However, one third of visitors turn round at the gate and do not enter.

There are two exhibitions, one telling the story of Land's End and the people associated with it; this has an excellent display on the perilous coastline, shipwrecks and the lighthouse, and a slide-tape programme giving an overview of Land's End, the Coastguard and associated rescue services. With yet more ex-RAF/Naval hardware, the second exhibition is also devoted to the rescue services. There is an excellent restaurant and souvenir shop. The site also includes Glebe Cottage, a small-holding down a steep slope overlooking the sea, where the Carter family live the life of rural inhabitants a century ago. They have no gas, electricity or running water, but live rent free in return for allowing visitors to visit their home and watch them at work. He is an artist while she spins wool and knits. Also part of the Land's End complex are buildings housing craft enterprises such as glassblowing.

The first work on the site was removing the wirescape and quasi-shanty town which existed in 1982, grassing over badly eroded areas and general reclamation. It was opened with an entrance charge in 1983. There was considerable opposition to putting a gate on the entrance, as it was claimed by local pressure groups to be a public right of way. It should be said that Davstone did not fence off the coastal footpath access, which remains free. However, the owners state that their search prior to purchase did not reveal any right of way.

The master plan is to take down the remaining buildings except for the Hotel and erect a new building on the site of the car park, with panorama windows overlooking the Western Approaches. There have been other plans for the site: a Robin Wade feasibility study suggested there could be two Land's Ends, the undeveloped headland itself, and a commercial site a short distance away to appeal to souvenir hunters. The National Trust also made a bid for ownership. Their plan was to clear the cliff top of development, but build visitor facilities underground. Cairns Boston argued that there is no way that Land's End could be run successfully on the basis of free and open access. He said he hoped the site would soon represent "the best of everything at the end of Cornwall, and we should be judged by our stewardship of it".

These notes were compiled from reports by Maria Murtagh, Ruth Tillyard and David Uzzell.

book reviews

Helping the Stones to Speak: simple ways to tell visitors about your church

by Moya Feehally. Published by SIBH (Advisory Guide no 1), 1984, 24pp, price £1.75 (£2.25 by post from Michael Glen, Ryeford Lodge, Ryeford, Stonehouse, Glos.). ISBN 0 948088 02 8.

Moya Feehally, whose guide complements the English Tourist Board's *English Churches and Visitors*, writes from a wealth of experience. After training as a primary school teacher at the Froebel Institute she took a degree in Rural Environmental Studies at Wye College. Before coming to her present post as Visitors' Officer at Norwich Cathedral she worked with the Peak National Park, and has also been involved in an open-air farm museum and a small parish church exhibition, amongst many other projects.

She therefore brings a great deal of experience to the task of presenting parish churches, which is what her book is all about. It is designed not for experts, nor for those with professional expertise. Any enthusiastic group of people with some time and a small amount of money will be able to interpret their church in a way which will help others to enjoy and appreciate not only the building but also what it tells of the community.

Helping the Stones to Speak basically divides into two sections. There are the preliminaries such as 'Making a start', 'Paying for it', 'Detective work' and 'Decision time'. Each part is thoroughly practical with facing pages of the stages to be worked through and the location of resources to carry them out.

The second section, entitled 'Tricks of the Trade', is packed with advice on how to set up an exhibition, make a church trail leaflet, construct worksheets for school parties and approach the use of audio visual presentations. Each of these is detailed with lists of resources and where they may be otained.

Moya and SIBH have presented us with an attractive and useful book, and it is beautifully illustrated by Patricia Riley. No one who is planning to add to the interest and maximise the information to be found in their parish church should be without it.

Prebendary Ian Calvert

The Local Museum: notes for amateur curators

produced and published by the Area Museum Service for South Eastern England and obtainable from them at 34 Burners Lane, Kiln Farm, Milton Keynes MK11 3HB; 1984, 72pp, many illustrations, price £5 incl. p. & p. ISBN 0 904752 02 X.

Don't be misled by the title. This booklet is aimed not so much at curators as at voluntary groups proposing to open museums. The main objective of the Area Museum Service with this booklet is to make such groups think about the problems and responsibilities facing them *before* they make a decision to go ahead. Indeed, the first section heading in the booklet is 'Is Your Museum Really Necessary?'. It is particularly valuable in stressing the need for a feasibility study before any commitment is made.

Once a decision to proceed is assumed to have been made, the booklet turns to giving advice. Within the limitations of space, it is excellent on the traditional concerns of the museum curator: the acquisition, documentation, preservation and conservation of a collection of objects. The management of small museums is also very well covered, including charitable status, fundraising, covenant administration, staffing, training, health & safety and friends' groups. There are many references to sources of more detailed advice and assistance, including good reading lists.

Unfortunately, the booklet unconsciously carries over into the voluntary field the priorities of museum professionals in the public sector. Insufficient attention is given to the often overwhelming need of voluntary groups to have their museum pay its way, requiring them to devote more time to promotion and marketing and to providing visitor services. The need to involve schools, organise lively special events and temporary exhibitions, to know who the museum's visitors are, to publicise the museum, are all mentioned. However, they are treated much more briefly than curatorial matters: the chapter on 'The Visitor' is less than half a page long.

There is no suggestion that an important role of museums is to interpret their collections entertainingly to their visitors and motivate them to understand what is on view. The concept of interpretation is not even mentioned.

And yet the Museums Association's codes of practice for museum authorities and museum curators are reprinted from the Association's Yearbook in full over 11 pages. The space could have been better used.

In short, the booklet takes too narrow a view of the responsibilities of a museum. A voluntary group following its advice would be well equipped to care for its collection, but would be in danger of giving an inadequate service to its visitors. Perhaps a second edition will redress the imbalance.

Michael B. Quinion

Recreation Planning and Management

edd. S.R. Leiber and D.R. Fesenmaier, 393pp. price £16.50. ISBN 0 419 12930 8.

Vandalism Control Management for Parks and Recreation Areas

by M.L. Christiansen, 123pp. price £10.50. ISBN 0 419 13250 3.

Recreation Site Survey Manual: methods and techniques for conducting visitor surveys

by the Tourism and Recreation Research Unit, 146pp, price £13.25. ISBN 0 419 12680 5.

All published by E. and F.N. Spon, 1984.

Publishers E. and F.N. Spon are responding to the growing demand for literature on recreation management issues in a very positive way. Already well-known for their publishing of the *Recreation Management Handbook*, seven years ago Spon's produced *Recreational Land Management* by Miles and Seabrooke. This was then followed by Torkildsen's comprehensive review *Leisure and Recreation Management* in 1983. Spon's have now produced three important volumes to aid and assist the development of a professional recreation service in these Islands.

Of the recent publications, those by Leiber et al and Christiansen have been published in conjunction with the Venture Publishing House in the States, but don't let the built-in prejudice or reluctance to accept American aid put you off. The third book, on site surveys by TRRU, is published in conjunction with the Countryside Commission for Scotland.

These three publications form a neat companion set that should be part of the library of everyone involved or seriously interested in recreation management.

Recreation Planning and Management involves thirty-three authors in a forceful and extremely valuable overview to the subject; the editors are modest in their description of the book as an introduction. *Vandalism Control* and *Site Survey Manual* may be regarded as a more detailed look at two important practical aspects of providing the services described by Leiber et al. Spon's attempt to reduce costs by using lower grade paper and typefaces reinforces the message that these are three books to be used, well thumbed and always to hand.

Recreation Planning and Management is divided into five sections each addressing an important aspect of the subject. These sections are: 1. The value of public outdoor recreation. 2. Some basic demand forecasting methods. 3. Information collection and analysis. 4. Planning and Policy issues. 5. Future directions in planning and decision making.

Several chapters are particularly apposite and stimulating in the context of the British 'state of the art'. For example, Schloeder and Fesenmaier provide a very timely debate on pricing policies in outdoor recreation, whilst the theories of renewable recreation resource management and the role of purchasing and co-operation are thoroughly aired. It is the chapters by Wilbur LaPage that really catch the imagination. This book is worth buying for his two chapters alone. LaPage articulates the cause célèbre of visitor satisfaction and quality of experience in a manner that will have practitioners nodding in agreement, supported by a surety of understanding that only they have. LaPage's second chapter on 'Planning and Research' is tremendous but all too short.

That effective management of any outdoor recreation facility is impossible without accurate information about the people who visit and use the site is a tenet to which Leiber et al subscribe. Indeed Section Three in their volume serves as a useful theoretical background to the TRRU Manual. This Manual (OED definition . . . 'a handy compendium') brings together information on site survey methodology and techniques that have been field tested from a wide range of experiences. The emphasis is on a practical book with ready to use methods. It will therefore be of great appeal to those hard pressed local government officers who have to venture into market research . . . and therein perhaps lies a danger, a danger of thoughtless application of techniques that work well elsewhere but may have limitations in a new context. That aside this is a useful volume that is a good companion to Martin Elson's review of long-run site survey methods recently published by the Countryside Commission for England and Wales.

Monty Christiansen worked with the US National Park Service giving technical advice on vandalism control. His book is essentially a report of his work written as a systematic programme aimed at prevention and reduction of costs through problem definition, objective setting, strategy selection, implementation and follow up. He writes for Park Managers and gives

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an easy to follow series of tips and approaches to help combat vandalism. Vandalism is one of the greatest problems most of us face, causing damage to the environment, facilities and equipment. This book makes a valuable contribution to the solution of this problem. It is an easy to use book that could also be used to guide the development of an agency-wide control programme and as a training manual for in-service training workshops.

The three books reviewed are worth buying, they are good value for money. It is a shame however we still have to rely so much on imports in our recreation balance of payment. The paucity of writing and publishing research is highlighted in the references contained in these volumes. E and F.N. Spon is playing its part, but there must be potential authors within these Islands surely? Until that time three cheers for these three titles.

T.R. Stevens

Plans for Monuments

English Heritage's proposals for **Stonehenge** were announced in January, with a period of three months allowed for public discussion.

Revealing that 50% of visitors to the most important prehistoric site in northern Europe spend less than half an hour there, the report proposes expenditure of £3m to improve tourist facilities. Rejecting any ideas of life-size replicas or protective perspex, the suggestion is that the 'deplorable clutter' of 'woefully inadequate' facilities (the much criticised toilets and car park) should be cleared and a new visitor centre built 15 minutes walk away. A section of the main road by the site would be turfed over and re-routed by a long diversion, a proposal strongly opposed by local people. Stonehenge would then once again be approached across its immemorial setting of rolling grassland landscape.

The Countryside Commission has published a comprehensive strategy agreed by the **Hadrian's Wall** Consultative Committee to conserve the Wall and develop new visitor attractions. Prime aims are to relieve the overcrowding of the most popular sites which has led to erosion and undue pressure on local services, and to take more sites into protective ownership.

The Wall crosses three counties, four districts and a national park. In its deliberations the Committee had to co-ordinate and reconcile the interests of 19 different government, voluntary and private bodies representing, among other things tourism, farming, nature conservation and archaeology. Action recommended includes excavation and display of new wall sites at the eastern and western ends, to spread the visitors, and better paths, signposting, public transport, publicity and visitor information. Two major visitor centres should be set up, based at Corbridge and Carlisle.

resources

CET and Prestel

The Prestel Education Service, a joint venture with the Council for Educational Technology, was launched in January to meet information needs within secondary schools and enhance resource provision for teachers. It covers courses and careers, educational microcomputing and curriculum developments in information technology, and is available as part of a special packaged education tariff. CET also operates the CET Prestel Educational Umbrella Service, to enable other education and training organisations to publish on Prestel (the public interactive information and communications service based on the telephone system). The service includes advice, design, editing and indexing. Contact: Alison Goslin, CET, Burleigh Centre, Wellfield Road, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 0BZ. Tel. 07072-74497.

Outdoors in Lancashire

Lancashire County Council (Public Relations and Planning Departments) have produced a series of large and attractive full-colour fold-out leaflets in a pack entitled *Lancashire's Great Outdoors*. The titles are Walking, Golf, Water Sports, Horse-riding and Canals. The last-named covers industrial architecture, museums, historic buildings and parks, boat hire, pubs, history and natural history. The leaflet on Walking covers viewpoints, country parks, picnic sites, nature trails and town trails. The packs are on sale at TICs and post offices at 50p each (10p per leaflet), or write to County Public Relations Office, Lancashire County Council, County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ.

Historic Gardens Register

This is being compiled on a county by county basis by English Heritage, who have now published the first ten county handbooks. Contact: Diana Phillips, English Heritage, 25 Savile Row, London W1X 2BT. Tel. 01-734 6010 ext 723.

Hampshire's Countryside Heritage

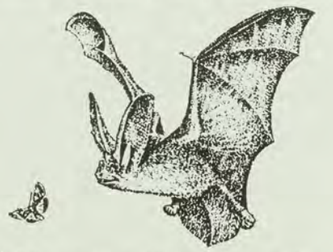
Individual habitats such as heath and rivers, scenic features like ancient tracks, and historic places such as parks and gardens are among the subjects covered by this conservation-oriented series of publications. Prices range from £1 to £1.95. Contact the County Planning Dept., The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ. Tel. 0962-54411.

Changing Countryside

The Countryside Commission have published a project-based teaching pack entitled *Look at the Changing Countryside*, designed to make children more aware of the changes taking place in our lowland landscapes and the causes and significance of these changes. The pack contains teachers' notes, a slide pack and commentary, a poster on map reading, a field study report format, and posters on landscapes through the ages, designing a farm, meadows, water etc. ISBN 0 11 701184 4, available from HMSO bookshops price £14.95.

Focus on Bats

This AV presentation complements the NCC's booklet of the same name. It describes the biology and conservation problems of bats and covers all the British species, by means of a set of



40 slides, a cassette with commentary, and an illustrated booklet. Price £15 incl. p. & p. from the Fauna & Flora Preservation Society, c/o Zoological Society of London, Regents Park, London NW1 4RY. A newsletter *Bat News*, reflecting the increasing interest in bat conservation and the work of local bat groups, is also available from this address.

Heritage Directory

A revised and updated second edition of the Directory, published by the British Tourist Authority, is now available. It comprises a comprehensive list of the main national and local bodies concerned with all aspects of the heritage, including details of the new Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission and an enlarged list of voluntary and local groups. Price £2.50 incl. p. & p. from BTA Finance Dept, 239 Old Marylebone Road, London NW1 5QT.

The Wildtown Files

CEE's Youth Unit has produced this pack for young people to investigate urban wildlife, involving them in activities and decision-making about issues such as pollution, trails, photography and habitat creation. Each 'file' covers a specific topic and can be photocopied. Price £2.50 incl. p. & p. from CEE Youth Unit, Zoological Gardens, Regents Park, London NW1 4RY.

Townscape Study Sheets

Another pack to promote urban awareness, this time concentrating more on architectural features, is this set of ten ideas for environmental activities produced by the Canterbury Urban Studies Centre. Grant-aided by the RIBA Architecture Workshops Project Fund, it contains suggestions for activities by young people on topics including a footpath study, good and bad building design, decorative and personalised features on buildings, infilling and other aspects of the townscape. The sheets home in on details normally taken for granted and prompt questions about their origin, usefulness and design. Available (no price given) from The Canterbury Centre, St. Alphege Lane, Canterbury, Kent. Tel. 0227-457009.

Urban Conservation

Completing a trio of urban studies packs received is the *DIY Urban Conservation Pack* of ideas for practical conservation projects, containing ten illustrated cards for display or use in the field. ISBN 0 9467520 0 1, available price £2.50 incl. p. & p. from Conservation Volunteers, 36 St. Mary's Street, Wallingford OX10 0EU. Tel. 0491-39766.

Volunteer Protection

Protecting volunteers - guidelines for volunteer organisers in statutory and voluntary agencies is a free booklet outlining the reasons why an agency should legally protect its volunteers, describing liability and risks, and advising on how to go about arranging insurance. Available with SAE (A5 size) from The Volunteer Centre, 29 Lower King's Road, Berkhamsted, Herts. HP4 2AB. Tel. 04427-73311.

in brief

A new independent Railway Heritage Trust has been set up, supported to the tune of £1m by British Railways Board, to preserve and enhance Britain's rail heritage and encourage public enjoyment of it. One field of activity will be concerned with preservation and upkeep of listed buildings and other structures still part of the operational railway (not rolling stock), the other with aspects of railway heritage no longer required, especially viaducts. In the latter field the aim will be to assist transfer of disused property to outside preservation bodies and encourage input of work and finance from local authorities and the voluntary and private sectors.

New features have been added to the displays at the Waterways Museum, Stoke Bruerne, covering canal wildlife, water supply and the great canal engineers. The full-size replica narrow boat cabin installed in 1963 has been repainted by a traditional 'roses and castles' artist, and in addition the museum's photographic archive has been catalogued and indexed to aid researchers. Visitor figures have increased with the re-opening of nearby Blisworth Tunnel to boat traffic.

The English Tourist Board has set up an advisory group, chaired by Neil Cossons, to make recommendations on the training needs of those who interpret the environment and heritage. Also in the group are Elizabeth Beazley, Gill Binks, Graham Carter, Andy Grant, David Sekers and Merlin Waterson, (all but one of whom are SIBH members).

The Robert Opie Collection, a museum of advertising and packaging material, opened in Gloucester last year. A quarter of a million items collected by Opie over 21 years are on show in temporary premises at Albert Warehouse, Gloucester Docks, Gloucester GL1 2EH. Tel. 0452-32309.

Middlesbrough Borough Council's Managing Agency Community Programme have set up a project to outline the past development of commercial and industrial properties in the St. Hilda's area, and the history of local authority housing estates, with a view to stimulating environmental awareness. They are appealing for old photographs and documents and personal recollections, for use in leaflet and resource packs. Paul Surtees is the Project Co-ordinator, at The Customs House, North Street, St. Hilda's, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS6 6AN. Tel. 0642-225803.

It's all change at Pennine Heritage (see 'Moving on'), and time to look back over the past five years. Interpretive activities have included a range of over 50 publications based around an intriguing matrix of 16 key booklets on the Pennine story. In addition to external display panels, they have also established a wide range of interpretive media and events such as the Heritage Swap Shop, drama, heritage holidays and practical training courses.

The 1984 Countryside Commission/Country Landowners' Association Award went to four operators of farming enterprises on the urban fringe, who use a variety of management projects, education and interpretation, to lessen conflict between town and country. Farm tours, viewing facilities, pick-your-own-fruit, school tours and camping are among the activities provided.

Groundwork trusts, hitherto restricted to pilot schemes in the north west, will soon be developed in other areas of England and Wales. The urban fringe countryside renewal strategy originated by the Countryside Commission is to become national, with the start of the new Groundwork Foundation.

Channel 4's *Worldwise* series of programmes on environment and conservation issues will culminate in a special show at the end of May, when celebrities will invite viewers to volunteer for conservation projects.

The ETB/Civic Trust-sponsored report on tourism in Chester, noted in *Interpretation 26*, has been duly completed by Land Use Consultants. A total of 40 projects are suggested to help reconcile preservation of the environment with the large volume of visitors, including better signposting and car parking and later opening for shops and tourist attractions.

Inter-Action are now operating an information service to help community groups, youth clubs and schools find affordable accommodation in countryside locations. Country Wings provides information free and also promotes the sharing of experience between voluntary organisations concerned with countryside access, through Country Wings Network. Contact: Country Wings, Inter-Action Centre, 15 Wilkin Street, London NW5 3NG. Tel. 01-267 9421.

The Kodak Conservation Awards scheme was launched in November, in conjunction with the World Wildlife Fund and CEE Youth Unit, to encourage young people in Britain to become more concerned with the environment and to take imaginative action to improve it. There are awards of from £100 to £1,000 for projects both within and outside the scope of conventional conservation work. Groups registering their intention to take part receive an advice manual including how to use photography to illustrate the project. Details from Kate Brooks, Hesketh House, 43-5 Portman Square, London W1H 9FG. Tel. 01-486 9021.

courses & conferences

12-14 April

SIBH Conference and AGM, Norwich: revised programme on the theme 'Interpretation for all . . . by all', looking at Norwich and the Broads and considering who is doing the interpreting and for whom. Contact: Diana Shipp, Broads Authority, Thomas Harvey House, 18 Colegate, Norwich NR3 1BQ. Fee £59.

17-19 April

Presenting Historic Parks and Gardens to the Visitors: CEI seminar at York. Contact CEI, John Dalton Building, Manchester Polytechnic, Chester Street, Manchester. Tel: 061-228 6171. Fee £75.

23 and 25 April

Institute of Industrial Archaeology short courses: on the interpretation and promotion of historic and archaeological sites (Birmingham) and the history and interpretation of working class costume (Ironbridge) respectively. Contact: Dr Michael Stratton, Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Ironbridge, Telford, Shropshire. Tel. 095245 2751.

20 May

Heritage Co-ordination Group Annual Conference, Museum of London. Detailed programme and tickets (£10) from Mrs Christopher Downes, Little Marsh, Beaulieu, Hants.

10-14 June

Video - its use in Environmental Interpretation: CEI course at Losehill Hall. Contact CEI, address above.

15 June

Newts, Gasholders and Scrapyards: SIBH/London Wildlife Trust joint workshop on the endless possibilities for interpreting Camley Street Natural Park, an urban conservation project in Kings Cross. Contact: Tim Laker, Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Gravel Hill, Horndean, Portsmouth. Tel. 0705-597445.

18-22 September

SIBH/Carnegie Anniversary Conference, Edinburgh, 'Interpretation and the challenge of leisure'. Contact Events Secretary.

30 September-4 October

First World Congress on Heritage Presentation and Interpretation, Banff, Canada. Contact CEI, address above.

Details of 'Learn at Leisure' Educational Weekend Breaks in Derbyshire and Residential Short Courses in Lincolnshire (Gibraltar Point Field Station) are available from University of Nottingham Dept of Adult Education, 14-22 Shakespeare Street, Nottingham NG1 4FJ. Tel. 0602-473022.

Other Events

27 April-6 May

First National Environment Week: events held around England and Wales under the auspices of the Civic Trust, to highlight the work and achievements of local amenity and voluntary organisations. Contact: Civic Trust, 17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AW. Tel. 01-930 0914.

27 May

Heritage Hullaballoo: a Heritage Day Event at the Piece Hall, Halifax, with music etc. Stalls available; contact Kitty Williams, Pennine Heritage, The Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge, HX7 8BP. Tel. 0422-844450.

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

The **membership** campaign has been very productive, with 101 new members joining in 1984, including a good number of corporate members; welcome to all of you. Production of a printed membership list is going ahead (see previous issue).

Sales of **'Helping the Stones to Speak'** got off to a good start and parishes are showing a lot of interest. It has been proposed that handling the growing list of Society publications could be made the job of a new designated officer on the committee, a publications secretary. Through the agency of **REACH**, the search continues for a retired executive to give voluntary back-up assistance to the committee.

Response to the call for papers for the **Edinburgh conference** was very helpful, and an exciting programme is being put together. We are delighted that HRH the Duke of Gloucester has agreed to be there to present the 1985 Interpret Britain Awards.

The SIBH **travelling display** has been to the Irish regional meeting, the AGM of CEE, Losehill Hall and a Civic Trust Northwest exhibition. Recent **regional events** have been very well supported, especially those on Interpreting Ireland's Heritage (where some new members were recruited) and Turning on to the Environment.

Correspondence and discussions have taken place with regional and national tourist board representatives and other interested groups, on aspects of the training and accreditation of **tourist guides.**

In its observer role on the committee, **CEI** has reported on various Centre activities. A 30% response was received to the questionnaire sent to planning and recreation departments, designed to determine priorities for the research team. CEI is working with BTCV, RSNC and the Civic Trust on promotion of courses.

Finally, with our **AGM** coming up, nominations (and volunteers) for the committee are welcome, as gradual replacement of members to make way for new talent is important. David Uzzell and Michael Quinion are resigning because of other commitments, and Michael Glen also leaves at the end of his term as ViceChairman (descending). Sincere thanks are due to all three for outstanding contributions to the work of the Society, among them Michael Quinion's invaluable computerisation of membership and subscriptions, David's part in the organisation of the Edinburgh Conference, and Michael Glen's recent hard work on several schemes including the *Stones* booklet.

Obituary

Frank Cottrill MA FMA, who joined the Society in 1975, died just before Christmas 1984. He attended many of our meetings and brought his rigorous intellect to bear on a wide range of subjects. He was also charming and interesting company and will be greatly missed by all who knew him in Hampshire and beyond. We extend our warmest sympathies to his widow Eleanor.

Moving on

Later this year **Michael Glen** will be leaving the Countryside Commission, where he is Head of Communications, to develop his own consultancy, Western Approaches. Michael, who was Chairman of SIBH in 1983/4, will provide a range of communications and interpretive services and will work closely with Michael Quinion Associates Ltd.

Bill Breakell, General Manager of Pennine Heritage, is leaving the organisation and emigrating to Scotland. He has been appointed Director for the new Bo'ness Heritage Area which is planned for the shores of the Forth just west of Edinburgh. Before going to Pennine Heritage in 1980 to establish the Heritage Network, he worked for the North York Moors National Park.

Maria Murtagh, who joined Pennine at the same time as Bill, has also moved on and is now lecturing in Graphic Design at Huddersfield Polytechnic.

Help Wanted

Marine interpretation

Dr. Philip Pearce, of the Department of Behavioural Sciences, James Cook University of North Queensland, is currently working on the development of an interpretive centre for a marine park. He would like to hear from anyone involved in the interpretation of aquaria or with experience in displaying and interpreting marine life. His address is James Cook University, Townsville Q 4811, Australia.

Cartoons

If you have used, or have comments on the use of, cartoons or cartoon characters to convey the message in interpretive displays, the Editor would be pleased to hear from you (address on back page). The location of examples of such use would also be welcome.

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