

society for the interpretation of Britain's heritage



To interpret all London is impossible, so to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee this year the London Celebrations Committee has conceived the idea of marking out a Silver Jubilee Walkway which will enable Londoners and visitors alike to sample briefly the changing and contrasting character of a slice of Central London and thereby gain greater insight into the complex interplay of physical, sociological, economic and political factors which have shaped the London landscape.

The idea of the Silver Jubilee Walkway originated from the desire to link the many projects included within the Environmental Programme. The concept crystallised early as a comprehensive, stimulating and economical way of leaving some mark from the Jubilee, not only on the face of London but on the attitudes of Londoners and visitors to the diverse London heritage.

Intended as a permanent part of London's

scene, the five-mile Walkway starts in Leicester Square, then passes through Trafalgar Square, St James's Park and Parliament Square to Lambeth Bridge, where it turns to follow the South Bank, the Royal Festival Hall and new National Theatre to Southwark Cathedral, and finally crosses the Thames again at Tower Bridge to finish on Tower Hill.

A VISIBLE BACKBONE

The route was selected partly to provide a visible "backbone" for the Jubilee Celebrations in Inner London, partly to form a link between the long divorced worlds of the West End, South Bank, East End and City of London, and partly to establish the pedestrian as king over driver in the areas through which it passes.

The Walkway is essentially a very special town trail. It has been named Walkway with the clear intention of emphasising that the route is permanent

and specifically designed for
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Any time you're Lambeth way...

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NEWSLETTER SIX

SPRING 1977

the society

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

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

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

Officers

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interpretation

In these days of devolutionary - and to some almost revolutionary - debates, there can be few who do not at least sympathise with the principle of decentralising decision-making. It may be difficult to achieve.

But much more difficult will it be to change the situation wherein the main-spring of so many ideas, of fashions, of cultural movements, seems to receive the decisive twist of the key in London. No matter where was the creation, the impetus from the capital seems a pre-requisite for general acceptance. Provincial thinkers - how derogatory

that sounds - will disagree with the thesis, perhaps, but facts speak loud!

It is refreshing, therefore, to consider our own profession, where the driving and creative forces are clearly non-metropolitan. Indeed the capital is curiously bereft of interpretive facilities. Its critics might point to a certain superficiality that goes with what is wrongly ascribed to sophistication; and an *amour* for the instant, predigested experience. This cannot form part of any real interpretation.

Perhaps the enormity of its task is London's greatest problem. Cameo interpretations might be achieved. The whole is too large to comprehend. A heritage centre for London would dwarf even the relative extravagances of that in York.

But the great crucible has produced a spark which will glow brightly this year. A brief illumination of part of the city will be attempted in the Silver Jubilee Walkway. Perhaps it will show the way to greater light being shed.

PUBLICITY OFFICER

At the last AGM in April 1976, Frank Bailey, Deputy Director of the RSPB, was appointed Publicity Officer for the Society. He has asked us to accept his resignation owing to other pressures and this we do, with regret.

We should be interested to hear from any member who would like to take on the task of promoting our Society more widely. Contact Martin Orrom, Secretary, SIBH (address on this page).

The Newsletter

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... doing the Jubilee Walk

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the pedestrian, being wherever possible segregated or safeguarded from disturbance by other forms of transport.

The Potteries Walkway in Stoke-on-Trent was the precursor for this ideal of creating a traffic-free town trail, but here in London the Walkway has the added significance of commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the accession of Her Majesty the Queen, for which it is being marked by special paving stones and wall plaques displaying the Jubilee emblem of crown incorporating the dome of St Paul's as a permanent reminder of this memorable occasion.



The necessary physical work, route improvements and waymarking, is being done by the combined efforts of the five respective London Boroughs - Westminster, Lambeth, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and City of London - in conjunction with the GLC and DoE. Under the guidance of the Environmental Committee the main executive role has been entrusted to the writer who has been responsible for coordinating the activities of the numerous organisations and individuals involved in the project. Because of the present economic situation, it has not been possible to draw on taxpayers' or ratepayers' money; therefore the funds necessary to manage and implement this project have come

from private sponsorship. Special mention must be made of Alcan (UK) Ltd who have generously provided not only the technical expertise but also the materials for the aluminium signs and interpretive windows to be used along the route.

Two official guides to the Walkway are being prepared: a pocket guide incorporating a route map and annotated list of points of interest and a souvenir guide which will serve as a reminder of the experience and explain more about what is seen along the route. The literature is designed not only to introduce visitors and tourist to London but to encourage Londoners to set out on foot and discover new things about their own surroundings.

CAPACITY FOR REJUVENATION

An important theme which the interpretive material will attempt to emphasise is London's capacity for rejuvenation and renewal and to show how this ability is now meeting the changing demands of its inhabitants. The route passes through some of the most dramatic illustrations of how London has responded to the challenges of the last twenty five years which the Jubilee is commemorating. The regeneration of the South Bank is a prime example of this as are views from this area to the City of London Skyline. Other sections of the Walkway emphasise how the efforts to adapt London have been accompanied by an awareness of historical values - a process well-illustrated by the successful adaptation of St Katherine's Dock as a marina complex incorporating the new World Trade Centre.

But, perhaps most surprising of all, the Walkway will reveal and highlight some of the many ongoing building and improvement schemes in London - the pedestrianisation of Leicester Square, the South Bank Jubilee Gardens, new riverside developments on both sides of Blackfriars Bridge, a new river vista and piazza in front of Southwark Cathedral, a new Crown Court at Hay's Wharf and the Ecological Park which is being permitted to spring up on three acres of vacant land adjacent of Tower Bridge. These contemporary changes are fundamental to the Walkway.

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The Silver Jubilee Walkway clearly has many purposes - a reminder of the Jubilee Year in 1977, a catalyst for improving some parts of London, a new attraction for visitors, a contemporary statement of London - but in the last analysis it is hoped that it will help promote a better understanding of what makes London tick as a unified whole and by so doing enhance the experience of exploring on foot other parts of the unique Capital.

Pembrokeshire Coast

Terry Stevens has sent us the following reports on various activities and developments within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

Farm Open Days

In a park where agriculture is so important and so varied, and where visitor pressures are so intense, opportunities for both groups to learn a little more about each other are essential. To further this mutual understanding the National Park Authority in conjunction with local agricultural organisations and landowners are presenting two public farm open days during the summer of 1977. The two days will take place on farms operating fundamentally different, yet representative, agricultural systems. Further details later.

Skomer Island

Following initial consideration of establishing a Marine Reserve around Skomer Island National Nature Reserve in 1972, a proposal led to the formation of a Steering Committee with the remit of clearly defining the nature conservation and recreational interests in the area, of identifying problems of marine conservation, and, finally, of establishing the reserve boundaries and drawing up a management plan.

Now, three years later, the Steering Committee, which included representation of both conservation and recreational interests, has produced the final

Management Plan for the Marine Reserve and a Management Committee has been formed.

Broad Haven

To mark the designation of 1977 as Underwater Conservation Year, the Countryside Commission has offered a special grant to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority towards the setting up of marine interpretation facilities at the Countryside Unit in Broad Haven, just a few miles along the coast from the newly-established marine reserve around Skomer Island. These facilities will include an interpretive exhibition on the marine habitats around the Pembrokeshire coast (including a cold-water aquarium), and an audio-visual room for the automatic presentation of slide/tape sequences on different aspects of seashore ecology and the need for marine conservation. Additional study accommodation for visiting school and field study groups will be provided.

It is also planned that, for the first time since the Park Authority took over in 1968, the Unit will be manned throughout the year rather than seasonally. This should allow the Unit to develop fully its identity as a marine interpretation and study centre. It is hoped that the new facilities will be open by Whitsun.

Walks & Talks

The 1977 Programme of Guided Walks and Talks arranged in and around the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park contains over 250 events between Easter and Christmas. The Programme covers a wide variety of subjects and provides the opportunity for everyone to enjoy to the full the qualities of the National Park and the adjoining countryside. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the Programme (price 8p) should write to The Information Service, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, County Offices, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Dyfed.

STOP PRESS: We hear that Terry Stevens has been awarded a Churchill Travelling Fellowship. Congratulations!

GLOVER'S CRITIQUE

INTERPRETATION ...
WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

Brian Glover and
Alison Richards
make a strong personal statement

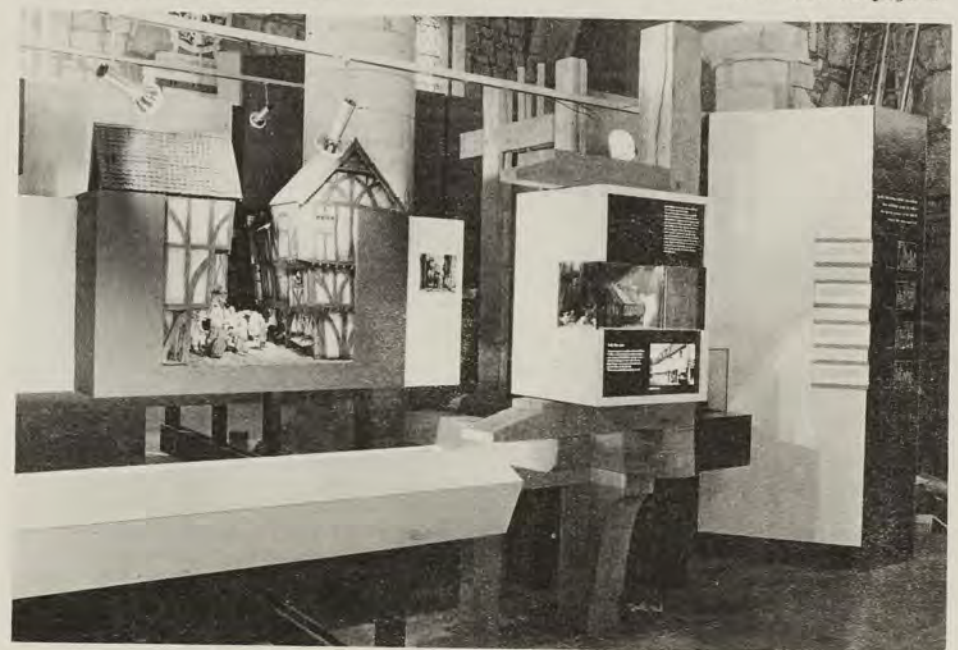


In November last year, we visited St. Mary's Heritage Centre in York, which was opened in 1975 as a major contribution to Architectural Heritage Year in Britain. It is housed in one of the city's redundant churches, and aims to introduce York's many thousands of visitors to the history and significance of its architecture, and the issues of modern conservation. We felt, however, that as an interpretive display it failed at a very fundamental level, and have tried to find the reasons for this in the present article. It will be seen that we are also making a strong personal statement about the philosophy of exhibition design. As this is still such a relatively small field it is

inevitable that any serious attempt at critical assessment will be directed at one of the few major exhibitions, and we wish to make it clear that we are in no way singling out for attack the work of Mr. James Gardner, the designer of the Heritage Centre. It does seem time, however, that the same rigorous critical scrutiny was applied to exhibitions as to films, theatre, books, or to any other serious medium.

Objects in any kind of museum or interpretive display have necessarily been taken from their original context and placed in an alien environment. It should be the job of the designer to create as sympathetic and helpful a setting as possible in an attempt to bridge the gap between the visitor and what he sees. While at one extreme he can attempt to recreate a whole world, as in the reconstructed streets of the Castle Museum in York, he can also recognise the educative value of such strong imaginative appeal, and aim to create an equally powerful environment using less literal techniques. The St. Mary's Heritage Centre fails to do either of these. One's sense of place,

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purpose, and different historical periods is not encouraged, but largely obscured by the aggressive uniformity of the modern unit design: the laminated display cases are as familiar and anonymous as an airport lounge or local gas showroom.

INACCESSIBLE TO CASUAL VISITORS

The absence of any thematic appropriateness in the structure is not compensated for by the presentation of a strong story-line in the exhibition generally. The entrance 'corridor' is clearly intended as a statement of theme, but the introductory remarks on architecture are compressed and abstract, making them inaccessible to most casual visitors. Nor is the Church setting used to focus or reinforce the theme, either here or elsewhere in the exhibition. In this particular area, its structural features are overshadowed by a dominating series of appliqué tapestries. These are beautifully worked, but largely fail in their intention to introduce the historical perspective of the exhibition. Whenever a designer cannot, or will not, use the original setting, documentary, or pictorial material to tell his story, he must evolve a form of modern presentation which will not overwhelm his subject matter with its own strength of style and period. And yet it is primarily to the very personal character and strong technical interest of these tapestries that the visitor responds, and not to the information they are designed to express. By their very nature they need interpretation in their own right, and insufficient help is given to the visitor whose historical knowledge is sketchy.

In contrast, the diorama of the medieval port with its timber-framed houses and square-sailed ships has immediate and appropriate impact, as well as a mass of informative detail. It is unfortunate that the potentially valuable technique of challenging the visitor with a question on what he sees is wasted on the complete irrelevance of a modern bicycle. Below the diorama is also the first of the unit text panels. Here, as frequently in the exhibition, they are set

uncomfortably high for an audience which will certainly include at least a few children, and their cumbersome lighting structures fail to provide satisfactory illumination.

GENUINE ARCHITECTURAL PRESENCE

Although at this point one is about to turn into the main body of the exhibition, the main theme has still not been established. Even the medieval scaffold structure, which almost succeeds in creating an imaginative bridge to the world we are about to enter, somehow fails to bring home the importance of the central architectural theme. It rightly excites and delights, but its flimsiness and stylisation again refer us back to this world, and not to the realities of medieval - or any other - building techniques. In immediate contrast, the careful reconstruction of a timber jetty has genuine architectural presence, but this time one is distracted by the audio-visual presentation set into its structure. As with the text panels, this is set uncomfortably high for viewing, and the accompanying handsets force the visitor to stand far too near the screen.

One is now in the main exhibition area, and the overwhelming impression is of all the modern structural activity, unrelated in form or texture to either the medieval world or the immediate church setting. One has a strong sense that this is a temporary exhibition, housed here only for the time being. One's confusion is increased by the fact that there is no clear indication of the relative importance or inter-relationships of the things being shown. It is not until one reads the (very) "small print" that one can discern how the power structure of the Middle Age was reflected in the city's architecture. The four strongholds of Church, Crown, Guild and Citizenry are, in fact, reflected in 4 exhibition 'zones', but the main identifying device for each - a heraldic-style shield - fails to work strongly enough for the exhibition situation. Composed of exquisitely detailed images related to the life and preoccupations of the group in question, they all appear superficially the same - and so fail to orientate the visitor. This is sad, because they are

a potentially effective source of more detailed information - which the visitor may fail to glean because of his confusion.

The same is true of most of the individual items in the exhibition. Beautifully detailed and executed, their significance is nevertheless largely lost through a lack of effective guidance for the visitor. And the absence of any dominating and sympathetic structural scheme to contain them means that one becomes increasingly distracted by the culminate variety of technique. The presentation has become a barrier rather than a bridge to understanding.

DOMINANT STYLE

Not only does a strong storyline fail to emerge from the three-dimensional aspects of the exhibition, it is also lacking in the script and graphic content. The simplest, or most 'popular', level of information is carried by the series of dramatised vignettes, and their accompanying graphics, but as with the tapestries, the technique creates a barrier between visitor and subject. Neither the figurines, nor the playlets and graphics, help one to identify with the York of medieval times; one is far more aware of the period of the presentation. The style is so dominant, that when the technique is used again in the eighteenth century section of the exhibition, it obscures any sense of our having moved into a different historical period.

The era of change between the two main areas of the exhibition is presented in a large mural under the tower. This again is finely worked, but suffers from the addition of inset transparency material which would have belonged more appropriately with the text. This, in fact, is carried by three panels which stand uneasily below the mural, and bear no formal relation to it, or to the immediate architectural environment.

And so the visitor passes from the medieval world into the post-Restoration period of elegance and reason. But as one enters this new era, there is in the exhibition no perceptible change in atmosphere. The structural motifs remain constant, and the text is again confusing with no main headlines or

directive. All boards carry a similar weight of text and repetitive pattern of layout. One cannot seem to distinguish primary and secondary levels of information, and the longer blocks of texts are almost impossible to read comfortably through to the end. The



illustrations are small, and the overall effect is of page after page of a book mounted along the text panel runs.

SKILFUL SELECTION AND STRUCTURING

This is partly a problem of the graphic presentation, but really goes back to the earliest planning stages. The amount of text it is feasible for a visitor to read and retain in an exhibition is severely limited, and any display should be planned with this as a first principle. It is part of the designer's task to find ways of communicating information as effectively and economically as possible. As in any teaching situation, the key to this lies in the skilful selection and structuring of ideas ... not just at the script stage, but as the very first step in planning the exhibition. These ideas are then organised and translated into three-dimensional form. Words themselves are only one aspect of the way in which a successful display should 'communicate' with the visitor. A properly integrated series of publications of different levels and interests should automatically form part of the total design strategy, and be seen as a natural extension of the exhibition and the source of more specialised information. After all, the aim of most interpretive displays is surely to stimulate the visitor to explore the subject or locale for himself, not to present him with a prepacked experience.

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It is also worth mentioning the importance of foreign language text. In a project such as this Heritage Centre, where there is likely to be a large number of foreign visitors, some kind of provision should have been planned as an integral part of the exhibition. It is not only that parallel texts, trilingual headlines, or whatever, are almost impossible to add later, but that the differing needs of foreign visitors, their probable lack of any 'feel' for the general shape of English history, for example, might usefully influence the display concept as a whole. As it is, there is nothing in the Centre to help the foreign visitor apart from a sadly inadequate pamphlet directing one around a 'Heritage Walk'.

MULTISCREEN ACROBATICS

And finally, what of the main audio-visual presentation? This confines itself to an attempt to involve the visitor with the reality of modern York, the problems and dilemmas of modern conservation. If it had been done well, it could have drawn the whole exhibition together - putting the buildings back into their present (and geographically recognisable) context, and giving the visitor the confidence to explore for himself with both an historical and conservationist perspective on what he sees. But the opportunity is lost. The commentary fails to make any points strongly or coherently, and the visuals deteriorate into multiscreen acrobatics for their own sake, distracting from, not enhancing, the images themselves. As throughout the exhibition, the medium dominates the message, and the visitor is as confused as ever.

As one leaves the exhibition, it is with no sense of the significance of overall pattern of what one can see in the streets of York. Individual items, like the model of the Shambles, or King's Manor, remain in the mind ... but to what real purpose? On their own they do very little to help one's understanding of the thing itself. Unfortunately, most people expect no more. For too long, this was all that Museums offered the general visitor, and all that many still do. The

present cult of prestige exhibitions purports to do more. But when one looks beyond the superficial attractiveness of blow-up photographs and soft carpeting, how many of them actually do?

Brian Glover is Exhibition Officer, and Alison Richards Assistant Exhibition Officer, at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, but the views expressed in this article are entirely personal.

Award Winner

The Forestry Commission's Coed y Brenin Visitor Centre at Maesgwm near Dolgellau, in Gwynedd, has won a Prince of Wales 1976 Award. The award, in the form of a plaque, was received by the Recreation Forester of Coed y Brenin, Mr. R. Wheeler, from the Prince of Wales at a presentation ceremony at Theatre Clwyd, Mold, on 21 December last.

The award recognises the successful teamwork between Forestry Commission staff and professional help involved in the establishment of the Centre. The exhibition designers for the Centre were Acme Design, Aberystwyth.

Colin Baker

MICHAEL QUINION

As he mentioned at the York meeting, Michael Quinion (Sight-Sound Productions) has been commissioned by the Museum and Art Gallery Service for Yorkshire and Humberside to produce a slide-tape programme for visitors to the National Trust's *Treasurer's House* in the City. The programme will chart the development of the House and will be narrated by Dr Patrick Nuttgens.

Across the water, Michael is preparing a multiscreen programme for the New Guernsey Museum in St. Peter Port (curator Rona Cole, designer Robert Reed).

And another interesting new commission of his is to prepare a half-hour guide to Basing House near Basingstoke for Hampshire County Council and the Southern Tourist Board. Visitors will be able to hire personal tape recorders and take a self-paced walk through the famous Civil War siege site.

we talk to — ROBIN WADE

Robin Wade's name is a conjuror's hat. Out of it comes a kaleidoscope of achievements - the Chinese Exhibition, Beamish, the Fox Talbot Museum, Ironbridge, Butser, 1776 ... Added to the repertoire soon will be displays at Hampton Court, Beaulieu, and Wimbledon, all opening this summer.

We went to see this designer with such a formidable tally of clients. We wanted to talk about the fascinating variety of commissions he had undertaken. His first comment was one of agreement - it was an exciting list - hair-raising at times, too, he said, but he had a strong feeling of privilege in being involved.

Robin Wade, Gemma Hunter and Pat Read are the trio of associates who conceive, research and design interpretive and other displays, exhibitions and complete schemes for country parks, historical tableaux, museums, industrial conservation and even a very gentlemanly Lawn Tennis Club. Crowded, with their staff, into a lively, workably untidy office in Richmond, they tackle large and small jobs with the same infectious enthusiasm.

The projects on the stocks at the moment include a new natural history gallery for Scunthorpe Museum. "We're turning history upside down," Robin explained, "and taking people back from today's steelmaking to the Jurassic period. In that way they can see how nature has evolved - and produced Scunthorpe."

Robin Wade likes to get things right, but yet has scant regard for pedantic academics. Arid logic is no good if Joe Public turns his back after two lines of the first explanatory notice. For Hampton Court, therefore, he is bringing visitors face to face with Henry VIII as they enter. "They know him," he explained. "We can take it on from there - Wolsey back to Domesday and Tudor through to Victorian. How many people know when they see this panelling," he said, pointing to a scale model of his display, "that it isn't Tudor at all - it's a Victorian reproduction. We'll tell them. A few misconceptions are going to be put right."

One of the misconceptions among many exhibition planners is that the public will read copious captions or notices. "Eight to ten seconds-worth, that's all they'll read at a time. Twenty-five words on a notice." Wade is adamant about this, one gathers from bitter experience. "And put any language translations on give-away leaflets," said Gemma. "Don't confuse everyone with multi-lingual texts on the wall."

"Oooh! Errr! exhibitions are comparatively easy," Robin Wade said, referring to displays of eye-catching, breath-taking items such as Ming vases or Egyptian mummies. "A sequential story is much more difficult. A theme has to be kept alive - and so has the visitor's interest."

Robin admitted that he learned an awful lot from the 1776 Exhibition. He commented on the great detail and wealth of display. "Yes, but how much do you remember of the complex political situation of the time - did you even really grasp it?" Wade's question was largely self-critical. Too many words had been required to explain the story. Many remained unread.

We asked about the difference of approach to temporary and permanent exhibitions. "Really not a lot, except for the physical structure - a permanent display has got to be that," he said. "Although we'd like them to make changes more often than they do," Gemma added. They both felt that temporary exhibitions could use fashionable techniques and employ interpretive media which might date. They tried not to be ephemeral or too didactic in permanent displays. And really outstanding exhibits - like Greek or Roman sculpture - spoke for themselves. Museums had a different role from, for example, countryside centres. The latter could be propagandist and indeed should be in many cases.

We were warned not to generalise about exhibition design. There was no comparison between the hobby horse show such as *The Destruction of the Country* continued on page 10

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House, staged to rally support for conservation, and the Egyptian galleries of the British Museum, a long-lasting treasure house.

This raised a fascinating question on the objectives of displays - and more-over on the motives of those who wanted them. "We tax ourselves trying to establish both," said Gemma. "We have to, to determine the approach we take." Wade felt that there were so many complexities in this aspect of design work that he could hold a seminar on the whole subject.

That seemed such a good idea for inclusion in a future Society conference that we stopped talking about it. The *Thoughts of Designer Wade* must, therefore, await later publication! His own motives we had no time to discuss - but his motivation was both obvious and enviable. The many achievements are the evidence.

MHG

On Guided Walks

Maybe the very idea of a 'Guided Walk' is enough to put you off: dim memories of school crocodiles winding wearily through the streets, exasperated by the drizzle and the drone of historical fact; or images of the eager platoons of foreign tourists tramping forever the aisles of Westminster Abbey. But take that old farmer you met in the pub last Summer now he told you a thing or two about the good old days even showed the kids one of those old carts they used to use.

The two may seem a far cry from one another, yet with sympathetic organisation, that same old farmer, or his equivalent, can offer a similar glimpse of another place or time to a much larger group of people. A retired quarryman at Gloddfa Ganol in North Wales talks warmly and easily of the slate and the men who worked it as he sits splitting and trimming the slates. The visitors pause to listen on their way through: questions are asked; discussions develop; soon a small boy is trying his own skill. The experience has lost nothing of the spontaneity and intimacy of a chance encounter.

In York, the city guides are all part-time volunteers; people with an enthusiasm for the city, and their own particular areas of interest. The idea is not to supply you with an exhaustive - and exhausting - talking guidebook, but rather with a chance to walk with someone whose life and work has given them an excited awareness of the city's past and present shape. We were a fairly large group - about 18, I think, but still small enough to hear Mr. Smith as he talked or, perhaps, chatted is a better word, about the city and its



buildings: no strident lecturing for those at the back: no sense of formality or grimly edifying effort. His broad Yorkshire accent and glimpses of dialect immediately gave one a sense of place, of contact. Points of interest ranged from the recent to the ancient, and the natural weaving together of historical fact, and apt, but entirely unselfconscious anachronism, created a powerful sense of the reality of past events, the continuity of then and now. One responded to a personality, with a particular sense of humour and range of interests; any sense of the 'official' guide and the 'ignorant' visitor was dispelled not only by the general informality, but by his own admitted vagueness on various points of detail. This, of course, encouraged people to comment, question, and discuss as we went along, creating an increasing sense of involvement and curiosity with the whole subject.

At the very least, one would simply enjoy the walk itself: the sudden discovery of the unknown or unexpected. At its best, a kind of bridge was built between the visitor and the city. One was reminded that however skilled one's interpretive strategies, however ambitious one's display techniques, most interpretive exhibitions are largely a substitute, and not always a very effective one, for Mr. Smith, the old farmer, and the North Wales quarryman.

Alison Richards

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YORK

'Living History'

The theme of the meeting held on 27th and 28th November was *The Interpretation of a City*. The visit was planned in order that contrasts and comparisons might be drawn between York and Chester, which we visited in November 1975. Ruth Tillyard contributed these reports.

Theatre Royal

A glorious Saturday morning saw 36 of us gather in the theatre foyer where Geraint Jenkins began the conference by introducing Chris Simmonds, the promotions manager. He gave a short talk on future developments at the theatre. Through its three companies - the Repertory Company, the Young People's Company and a new Community Theatre - the theatre aims to put on a balanced programme. Plans are hampered by lack of money, and various ways of adding to the annual grants have been tried. The theatre has attempted to cater for a tourist audience, but only with limited success, perhaps because York, to the visitor, is an "outdoor" city.

St Mary's Heritage Centre

A pleasant walk through town brought us to this former church which was converted during European Architectural Heritage Year 1975 as a centre to interpret the architecture of York. The church was first rehabilitated, then the exhibition installed. This depicts the development of building in the town, and shows the relative influences of the Church, the People, the Guilds and the Crown over the centuries. Attitudes of architect, builder and client are also depicted. There is excellent variety in the very high quality execution, including beautifully created items such as colourful appliques (viewed through the new plate glass entrance porch), painted shields, dioramas, photos and models, as well as short AV sequences using telephone-

type headpieces. A carpeted AV room is installed at the back of the church, where we watched a sophisticated multi-projector slide-tape sequence dealing with York's architecture.

'Curate of the Hermitage'

Peter Brears, Assistant Keeper of the Castle Museum, whose duties include running the centre, was introduced. He explained its origins: the idea was



originally put forward by the Civic Society who managed to procure first the building and then £40,000 of a £50,000 national fund for Architectural Heritage Centres. Eventually the City Council became involved, other monies were obtained and development went ahead. Mr. Brears was appointed three months before the opening, and the original committee dissolved itself soon afterwards.

The overall cost had been £140,000 of which £30,000 was for restoration of the church, and approximately £12,500 for the complete AV unit. The first year attracted 25,000 visitors, compared with the Castle's 900,000 and their own target of 80-100,000. One of the reasons could be the name - its ecclesiastical connotations might put people off altogether, and had misled other into thinking the place was a hermitage, run by a curate, or even a Heretics' Centre!



Encouraged no doubt by the first comment from the floor, Brian Glover of the National Museum of Wales delivered an outspoken and heartfelt criticism of the Heritage Centre. It appears in full elsewhere in the newsletter. He said that, although individual things are "nice", the centre lacks a great deal; nowhere are we told what the exhibition is about and what its aims are; there is no theme; there are far too many

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words; the introduction is corny; the entrance is badly designed - children cannot see the exhibits...

York needs a place to show visitors what there is to see but this exhibition does not relate at all to the character of York. There is no mention of many of its obvious features, such as the city walls, and even the building containing the exhibition is totally neglected.

Other criticisms were put forward. It was said that three-quarters of the photographs in the AV programme could have been taken anywhere in the country; many were already faded and the cost of renewing these and other items of maintenance had not been considered. The centre appeared to have been designed



without users, particularly children, in mind, so we were not surprised to hear that schools had made little use of the place. Running it is complicated because the Officer in Charge is the Chief Executive of York, who has many other pressing duties. There was even a suggestion that the centre would do more harm than good and therefore should be closed. We heard that York people had praised the centre, perhaps mainly because it is pretty. At the least, the centre is using and preserving one fine building.

The lively discussion was brought to a sudden close by visitors wishing to see the AV programme and so, chastened, we scattered into York for drinks, food and sightseeing.



The Undercroft

Starting in 1972, more than £2 million had been spent on shoring up York's magnificent Minster, mostly by pumping

20,000 tons of concrete into foundations made hollow by rotted oak beams, and strengthening this with 6 miles of stainless steel rod, firmly bolted in. The works had left a "hole" beneath the cathedral, and revealed in it the foundations of important Roman and medieval buildings. This area has been converted



into an exhibition dealing with the history of York and the cathedral. There is also a glittering collection of regalia.

After looking round, we gathered in the final section of the exhibition area, and met Mr. Featherstone, who manages the undercroft on behalf of the Dean and Chapter of the cathedral. He explained that the exhibition had been a great success both financially and in terms of visitor numbers, which run at 250-300,000 per year, although now slightly declining. After five years, it was possibly time for some revitalisation and we were asked for suggestions.

What most people were really interested in were the "nuts and bolts", and at present, because these were not explained until the end of the exhibition, and then in rather too great detail, visitors were still asking "what exactly did the builders do?". To the suggestion of giving some explanation at the beginning of the exhibition, Mr. Featherstone said this had already been pointed out, and would be carried out sometime. He said that most of the exhibition boards had been donated by those involved in the constructional, archaeological and historical works. It was then quickly pointed out that an obvious danger of receiving too many gifts was losing an overall design. The story needed to be told throughout, at the different levels that people want.

The illustrations for the York articles are from the Heritage Centre leaflets.

Castle Museum

There was time only to look briefly at some of the museum collection prior to a reception hosted by the Deputy Mayor. Those who could manage to leave the hospitality assembled in a 'schoolroom' where we again met Peter Brears. He emphasised the great success of the Castle which was being visited by more people each year, and up to 1,000 schoolchildren in a day. As he himself admits, the reasons are unclear, but York is within reach of a great number of people, who come for day trips as well as for longer stays. The role of museums was discussed and the influence of TV as a factor in increasing people's awareness and standards. But people still come to a museum to see objects, not a storyline, Brears said.

Jack Shannon

At the end of dinner in the hotel we listened to Jack Shannon, Chairman of the York Civic Society for the past 21 years.

Shannon said that York had remained virtually intact for three main reasons: people had always cared, the Industrial Revolution moved elsewhere, and the last war caused little damage. Two further influences were the work of the Civic Society and of the City Council. He told us that York must be preserved live rather than dead (as in Castle Museum's Kirkgate, superb though that is). Modern planning had led to a sameness in too many cities; York owed something to local lethargy. He mentioned briefly various historical aspects including the most important excavations, at present, of Viking remains. He said the message must be passed on to succeeding generations; interpreters must tell people why things are worth keeping. We must believe the message is worth communicating. He gave us, as the professionals and those in authority, the responsibility and said the job was not for amateurs such as himself.

Discussion inevitably led back to the Heritage Centre. The Civic Society had battled for 15 years to get the idea put into practice. Shannon said that the centre may not be perfect, but others

could learn from it; the Undercroft is not as good as it could be, but people still come out richer. The point was made that, as the future is what we are concerned with, it is never too late, here or elsewhere, to make improvements.

Jack Shannon's talk was an exciting, living interpretation of York, and an appropriate end to a day when our Society began to sharpen its professional claws.

LEEFE, OBE

The New Year Honours List this year included the name of John D Leefe. We warmly congratulate him on his award of the OBE for services towards the development of forestry in Cyprus. John, who



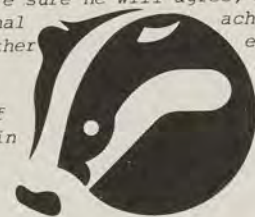
is now conservancy recreation planning officer for the Forestry Commission in the East of England, twice was Principal of the Cyprus Forestry College, in between periods of service with the Commission.

We welcomed John to the Society recently and now wish him continued success.

NETTLETON, MBE

It was also with great pleasure that we read in the New Year's Honours List of the award of the MBE to John A Nettleton, BA, Director of the National Park Centre at Brockhole in the Lake District. John was a speaker at our inauguration and a founding member.

John has been a leader in the field of interpretation and our warmest congratulations go to him. The recognition of his outstanding work at Brockhole is, as we are sure he will agree, not only a personal achievement, but further evidence of the acceptance of the vital place of interpretation in conservation.



TAYLOR, MSocSc...

Plaudits are due again, this time to Ray Taylor BSc, DipTP, MRTPI, an Interpretive Planner in the Visitor Services Branch of the Countryside Commission. He has recently received the degree of Master of Social Science from Birmingham University.

Subject to correction, we believe Ray is the first person to receive a master's degree in Interpretation from a British University. We offer him our congratulations. He, too, has been a member of our Society since its inception.

A synopsis of his thesis follows. If anyone wishes to consult it, Ray has a spare copy, but there is a waiting list! Write to him at the Commission, John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3RA.

...and his Thesis

One of the effects of increasing environmental awareness in Britain in the last decade has been the growth of environmental interpretation as a means of increasing the appreciation and understanding of visitors to places of interest. Originating in the work of the United States National Park Service, interpretation has been defined by a leading exponent, Freeman Tilden, as "an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first hand experience and by illustrative media, rather than by lecture or text."

Taylor's study looks at the evolution, philosophy and practice of interpretation in Britain and is structured into three parts. The first part considers the development of interpretation, first in the United States and then by looking at the three disciplines which, in the author's view, have contributed most to the subject in Britain - museums, environmental education and recreation planning and management.

The second part postulates a theoretical basis for interpretation by discussing the main objectives and principles of communication which might influence

interpretive programmes. These are then incorporated into a systematic planning process based on the key phrases: what? to whom? why? how, where and when?

To test the process it is applied, in the third part, to four National Trust properties: Hawksmoor, Mow Cop, Little Moreton Hall and Wightwick Manor. These were selected for their variety of resources, visitor use, management and interpretive potential. Each is analysed and proposals made in accordance with the theoretical process. It is apparent from the analysis that the process has validity for a wide range of situations and avoids many of the pitfalls associated with *ad hoc* provision.

Commissioned Pieces

SELF GUIDED TRAILS PROJECT

The study of self guided trails (nature trails, farm trails, forest trails, town trails) which Dartington Amenity Research Trust have undertaken for several government bodies is now complete. The Countryside Commission will be publishing the report later this year and are also asking DART to prepare an advisory booklet on setting up a trail.

ADVISORY BOOKLETS

The Countryside Commission has become aware of the need for concise advisory notes for practitioners in the field of countryside recreation and conservation. The intention is to cover most aspects of land and visitor management eventually. In the field of countryside interpretation several booklets are in course of preparation including advisory notes on interpretive planning, self guided trails, guided walks, and audio-visual equipment.

"LISTENING POST"

The experimental installation of 22 of the Countryside Commission's TALKING POINT (née Listening Post) at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum has shown the potential of this audio guide system. Following this experiment with a free-standing, self-contained outdoor model, an indoor model which will operate in

conjunction with standard tape machines is being developed. An experimental installation is to be made in the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum which is due to open in May of this year.

Graham Taylor

UPLAND MANAGEMENT

The report of the CC's Lake District Upland Management Experiment, 1969-76 is now available (£1.60 incl. postage). The Officer's task was to assist farmers in small schemes to improve a deteriorating landscape. The visitors benefitted from a better landscape, and a closer relationship developed among farmers, amenity groups and the National Park Authority. Other results of the experiment were the setting-up of an Upland Management Service by the Authority, and a project trail (leaflet available from CC).

FARMS PROJECT

The Countryside Commission's Demonstration Farms Project is looking at ten farms to discover means of countering the worst effect on the rural landscape of modern agricultural practice. Different approaches will be open to inspection at the farms.

DIGESTED STATISTICS

The latest *Digest of Countryside Recreation Statistics* published by the CC on behalf of CRRAG appeared in November 1976. A wide range of statistics is presented in loose-leaf form. Information (including 1975 when available) is presented in four sets of tables and a series of maps covering many aspects of Countryside Recreation and Conservation. Complete set £2.50, binder £1 post free from CC.

COUNTRYSIDE INTERPRETATION TRAINING COURSE

In February the Countryside Commission sponsored, for the second year running, a course in Countryside Interpretation at Losehill Hall, the Peak National Park Study Centre. It was attended by 32 people (more sought places) from a variety of backgrounds including Local Authorities, voluntary bodies and Ranger Services.

The Course set out to provide a basic training. Talks and discussion groups dealt with the philosophical and theoretical background, while lectures and demonstrations showed practical aspects. Various illustrated presentations provided a less arduous form of instruction and entertainment.

An important aspect was individual and group projects. The former allowed participants to experiment with new techniques on equipment provided at Losehill Hall and present the result for comments. Groupwork included an interpretive planning project and guided walks.

Contributions came from some 15 invited speakers which included staff from the Peak Park and the Countryside Commission, the participants themselves, and of course the Losehill Hall tutors. Many of them were available for advice and help throughout the week.

A good balance between lectures, entertainment, outdoor work, and individual and group work was obtained. A valuable part of the course was meeting the other participants, hearing talks about their jobs, and joining informal discussions. The seven days were not long enough (they never are), but the benefits will continue to be reaped as participants build on the knowledge and insight they have gained.

Ruth Tillyard

AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES

In their major policy document, *New Agricultural Landscapes: Issues, Objectives and Action*, the Countryside Commission analyse evidence about the rapidly changing countryside, and outline the action needed to counter trends in modern farming methods, urban and industrial development, inadequate landscape management and tree disease. These factors were identified in 1974 as causing public concern. They are certainly threats to the rural heritage.

FOOTPATHS

Another policy statement from the Commission came in the form of *Footpaths for Recreation*. Recognising that walking is probably the most popular

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form of Countryside recreation activity, the Commission stress the need for more emphasis on well-publicised signed and waymarked routes. There could be room, perhaps, for wayside interpretation on selected paths, to broaden the recreational outing.

Folk Life Centre

Avebury Centre for Folk Life Studies: The Wiltshire Folk Life Society have now agreed at a recent formal Council Meeting to go forward with the establishment of a Centre for recording the past social history of Wiltshire. An Honorary Director, Major Lance Vatcher is being appointed and the National Trust have now agreed, in principle, to enter into a lease with the Society. It is hoped to have a first "temporary" presence at the Avebury Centre by early summer and for the first rush of tourists who come in great numbers to the Stone Circle at Avebury. For more information contact Harold Cory at High Street Close Gate, Salisbury, Wiltshire (Telephone: Salisbury 5908).

Harold Cory

Martin Mere



Brian Gadsby
sends us
latest news

Our Nature Trail Information Boards will be in place within the next 2 weeks. The boards, 8 in number, will each carry a coloured line drawing with some factual information of the flora and fauna to be seen around it. This, we hope, will dispense with the necessity of producing a pamphlet and will mean that everybody who walks the trail from the main concourse to the Millers Bridge Hide will be able to interpret the trail.

In the autumn we are organising a Children's Art Exhibition on the theme - Natural History. The works will be on show in our main building from 16 September 1977 until 2 October 1977;

and then there will be an Exhibition/Sale of paintings and books on the theme of Natural History in our main Exhibition Hall and Lecture Theatre from 14 October to 30 October 1977.

On a different note, we are at present organising a photographic competition for photographs taken in any of the Wildfowl Trust establishments during the period 1 January to 31 October 1977. Three sections will be covered: colour transparencies, colour prints and black and white prints. Prizes are being donated by Kodak, and Johnson of Hendon. Entries will be on display at Martin Mere from 3 December to 18 December and it is hoped that later these will be shown at other Wildfowl Trust Refuges throughout the country.

Designers Team Up

Another flocking of birds of a feather, *The Group of Designer/Interpreters in Museums*, was officially formed at an open meeting held in October 1976. Its objectives are maintaining and improving professional standards of design and interpretation in museums and related interpretive centres, and promoting a greater understanding of the designer/interpreter's role.

Membership of the Group is invited from anyone with responsibility for or an interest in design and interpretation and who wishes to further the objectives of the Group. Further details may be obtained from the Membership Secretary, Michael Densley, at the Museum and Art Gallery, Clifton Park, Rotherham.

Robert Lee

Bookshelf

We received, just a little too late to review properly for this issue, *Manual for Museums* by Ralph H. Lewis, described in the foreword by Gary Everhardt as an outstanding museum administrator and curator. His experience in the National Park Service has allowed him to build on an earlier work, *Field Manual for Museums* by Ned J. Burns, and to produce a highly practical, intensive, and extensive (412pp) *vade mecum*. We shall carry a review in the next issue.

OADBY SYMBOLISED —'It's better than R.E.'

A fascinating issue of *BEE* (No 68, December 1976, 40p) arrived as we were preparing for press. Keith Wheeler devised it as chairman of the Schools Council Project Art and the Built Environment.

Under the general title of *Experiencing Townscape*, Wheeler offers six experiences from *Steeplechasing* (visual and sound spheres of influence of steeples) to *Townscape Notation* (symbolic recording of the urban scene) to *Townscape Assessments*, including the attractively titled *Memory Lane Technique* (testing recall of sensory experiences).

The issue uses a lot of symbolism, graphic and verbal, and is very well illustrated. Some comments from third year Oadby pupils on the notation study ranged from the hopeful "It could in the future give us a say in the designing of our own town instead of the planners going their own sweet way" to the honest "It is better than R.E.".

Aimed principally at the 16 to 19 age range, the project will be assessed in the light of teachers' reports. Many age groups could gain from using, or adapting, the suggested techniques. They could also be applied with some interest to urban or rural community situations.

Wheeler's
urban complexity symbol



Job, Please

Member Moya Feehally, graduating in July with a BSc in Rural Environment Studies, would like help in finding a job. She has made a special study of the provision of countryside interpretation in Britain and is a qualified teacher with four years' experience. Any aspect of interpretation - research, planning or practical work - would be of interest. Please write to Moya at the Junior Common Room, Wye College, Ashford, Kent TN25 5AH.

Windermere Museum Steams Ahead

Robert Meadows reports that he is working with architect David Matthews on the Windermere Steamboat Museum project.

Their previous undertaking was the Visitor Centre for Upper Teesdale which opened last year. The first stage of the Windermere project, a steamboat dock, is due to open in May 1977 and will be followed a year later by the opening of the Windermere Building.

The museum's symbol has been designed with a wide variety of applications in mind. The anchor shape is intended to connote a secure resting place and the propeller, activity, as this is to be a working museum. The base of the anchor forms the initial letter of Windermere and the whole design is intended to suggest a steamboat.

In addition to the steamboat museum Robert has several projects in hand.

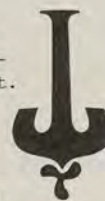
Morwellham Expands

Morwellham Visitor Centre has received grants from Devon County Council and South West Area Museums Council which enable it to expand its interpretive exhibits.

Gary Emerson, Manager/Warden at Morwellham, is busy preparing three new exhibits to complement the existing museum - one to illustrate the domestic life of a miner's family a century ago; one to display mining techniques and equipment in the same period; and one to show how the minerals were used after they had been shipped out through Morwellham. The latter exhibit will be "animated" through a display of glass-making, since many of the minerals - copper, arsenic, manganese and other - were used in the glass-making industry.

Extensions are also being made to the trails to enable visitors to see the incline planes and leat system. These improvements will be ready for the opening of the main season at Easter.

Michael Dower



Once a Year...

Annual Reports come - and, in the nature of things, go. One that ought to be around on shelves for longer than average is that from the Nature Conservancy Council. The latest (to 31 March 1976) is full of interest, stretching its reporting function to take aboard a review of issues relating to *Nature Conservation and Agriculture*.

This is not entirely unrelated to the opening paragraph of the Chapter on Publicity and Education:

"We have recently initiated measures to develop a more active promotional approach to the whole of our work in order to obtain more public understanding and recognition of our own role in achieving the aims of nature conservation. These have included the redeployment of two senior posts..."

Definitions Dept.

The Countryside Review Committee, as reported in the first issue of *Countryside Recreation Review*, feel that the term *Conservation* has been undermined and abused. It should be seen as the *creative synthesis of preservation and change*. But will all creative synthesis be seen as conservation?

National Park News

The Summer 1976 National Park News (it arrived too late for coverage in the last newsletter) referred to the following activities: On Exmoor, walks were organised for schoolchildren. Dartmoor and the Peak District were both running bus services to encourage people to leave their cars; the former opened four new information vans, each illustrating different themes on Dartmoor (three static, one mobile). The North Yorks Moors Park opened two new visitor centres at Banby Lodge and Sutton Bank for the Northern and Southern sectors respectively.

In Pembrokeshire, a scheme for the National Park Authority to manage a private estate at Upton Park, in return for public access was agreed. To help the aim of encouraging quiet enjoyment

of this asset, an information leaflet and interpretive display was being prepared.

The Lake District reported on Seatoller Barn, a new base where groups can learn about the area in which they are going to walk. A simple approach, which does not aim to attract people who would not otherwise be there, contrasts with the previous, relatively-sophisticated, information centres in the town and villages.

Ruth Tillyard

EXPLORING SHROPSHIRE

'Exploring Shropshire' is a guided walk programme with a difference: a difference not in the nature of the activity but in its inception. First it is organised and staffed largely by the Adult Education Tutors for Salop County Council as an exercise in informal adult education, rather than as part of an interpretive or information service. Secondly it is run in an area which is not one of mass tourist appeal, as compared for example with Dartmoor or the Pembrokeshire Coast. Despite this it succeeds, at least in such measurable terms as the numbers who attend, and perhaps my experience might be of value in other areas where there is a wish to provide a short term interpretive programme without the expense of capital investment.

Perhaps the most encouraging lesson is that there is a latent demand for interpretation of the 'ordinary' countryside. It is not essential to relate the guided walk to a pre-existing interpretive resource such as a country park, nature trail, or visitor centre. This demand is shown by both residents and tourists. As an extension of the normal adult education service the programme receives the support of a higher proportion of residents than is usual, though this has dropped from 66% in the previous two years to just under 50% last year. Many of those who visit the county do so because of its appeal to the more 'sophisticated' tastes: rural beauty rather than rugged grandeur, specialist interests in its history,

industrial archaeology or natural history, etc. People do not come to Shropshire (more than once!) for the bright lights, bingo and candy floss. Thus from the point of view of potential customers for guided walks the small size of the visitor population is more than compensated for by increased motivation. Added to which the county is relatively poorly documented and other forms of interpretive provision are few, so that participating in guided walks provides as many have said "a good way of finding out about the area".

Based on experience gained in the three preceeding summers, last year's programme continued 109 events distributed over the whole county in the eight weeks between 12 July and 4 September.

Initial fears that my enthusiasm for the guided walk as a means of interpretation might have out-stripped demand were soon dispelled. 1826 attendances and 300 miles later I am



'This one doesn't bite' [A Jenkinson]

planning for further developments this year. More efficient publicity, a very varied programme and careful planning based on known preferences were key factors in the success of the venture last year. With the support of my colleagues in archaeological and historical studies the programme could include such intrinsically attractive elements as an afternoon walk on Offa's Dyke which topped the poll with an almost unmanageable 99, or walks with both an academic and emotional appeal like *Walking the Roman Road*. Town walks were introduced for the first time and proved very popular, especially with the more elderly who felt able to manage the leisurely pace and shorter distances.

While town walks were patronised mainly by residents (of the county, not necessarily the town in question), farm walks had a marked appeal to the visitor.

If anyone is interested in seeing details of the programme or in receiving a copy of the report and analysis of last year's venture please drop a line to Andrew Jenkinson, Adult Education Tutor for Environmental Sciences, Bircher Cottage, Little Stretton, Church Stretton, Salop.

Plans are being laid for *Exploring Shropshire - 1977*, which will run on much the same lines as last year's programme, from July 11 to September 3. It will incorporate a special *Industrial Archaeology Festival* from 25 July to 6 August. The detailed programme will be available soon after Easter and can be obtained from Andrew Jenkinson.

New Strategy for Hadrian's Wall

An overall strategy for managing the flow of visitors to Hadrian's Wall could double their number in fifteen years' time. The Dartington Amenity Research Trust announced this in their report to the Countryside Commission published in November, *Hadrian's Wall: a Strategy for conservation and visitor services* (From the CC or DART, £2.20 post paid).

However, more coordination of publicity, information and interpretive services, a revision of transport facilities and site management are all necessary if this unique monument - and the landscape - are not to suffer serious damage.

DART confirmed that most of the problems arise from uncoordinated services. Sustained effort, after careful planning, will be needed to resolve the problems of visitor growth. Only gradual increases in visitors should be encouraged, and then largely in the outer, less pressurised, sections.

A consultation committee of involved organisations is suggested for formulating and implementing policies for the whole length of the Wall. An Education Officer is proposed for liaison with schools, as are further visitor centres

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and better liaison among present museums.

A much more flexible approach to road and rail access will be required, and improved footpath and cycle route systems are envisaged. Help should be given to local farmers to cope with the effects of visitors, and the Roman sites themselves must be protected.

The Commission hope a Consultative Committee will work towards a unified plan, and general support for its implementation.

The report itself is extremely detailed and thorough, reflecting the terms of reference given to the consultants. These included (a) establishing the nature and extent of the present and future pressures, and (b) identifying conflicting and potentially conflicting interests and activities and in the light of (a) and (b) giving guidance on broad planning strategy for the conservation of the Wall and its setting.

As there are important - and exciting - possibilities in the Wall for interpretation of heritage in the widest sense, we shall keep a close watch on the progress of DART's recommendations.

MHG

Directory

Robert Lee BA, MSIAD, (SIBH Member) has formed a new design practice, *Inscape*, located at 160 High Street, Lewes, Sussex (telephone Lewes 2303). Recent interpretation work carried out by members of the practice includes; displays for the Hambrook Barn at Singleton Open Air Museum, - winner of the 1975 Museum of the Year Award (designer Julian Hayward MSIAD) and new displays for Hastings Old Town Hall Museum of Local History (designer Robert Lee). Julian Hayward is currently working on displays for a new museum of local history at Tenterden. All three are or were Area Museum Service for South Eastern England projects.

Graphic Partners (members Craig, Duffy, Glen and Littlejohn) have recently moved to: 3 North Charlotte Street, Edinburgh EH2 4HB. Tel: 031-226 7033/4

Stuff & Ad Sense

We welcome advertising in the Newsletter. The rates for display ads are:

- 1 page (175mm x 120mm) £10
- 1/2 page (85mm x 120mm) £5.50
- 1/4 page (85mm x 58mm) £3
- 1/8 page (44mm x 58mm) £1.75

Sizes quoted are final sizes. Artwork must be supplied to the following sizes:

- 1 page: 250mm x 170mm
- 1/2 page: 124mm x 170mm
- 1/4 page: 124mm x 80mm
- 1/8 page: 62mm x 80mm

We also offer a 'stuffing' service - mailing advertisers' own printed matter with each copy of the Newsletter. The cost for each piece of print of, or folded to, A5 size or smaller and weighting no more than 5 grams is £10 for the present mailing of 250 copies. Two pounds will be added for every additional 50 copies or part thereof. Material increasing the cost of postage will incur a surcharge. The copy date is that for editorial matter.

take note!

A parliamentary committee is to be set up to review and make recommendations on the training of recreation management staff. The Government states that it will not be able to endorse recommendations involving increased expenditure, but remain convinced that the committee has much important work to do.

The Civic Trust has just published *Education and Heritage* (£1.80 incl. postage), describing how schools developed projects to explore and improve their environment. Town trails, exhibitions, models etc were used as a contribution to EAHY 1975.

John Campbell, Chief Executive of Economic Forestry Group, reports that following the Treasury's setting up an inter-departmental review of how forestry is affected by government policies (see Take Note, in last issue), his was one of several organisations asked to give oral evidence. The Treasury was expected to report to the Minister in February, but no decision on publishing the report has been taken.

Prestwold 2000 has demonstrated practical means to achieve a compromise between efficient food production and the maintenance of a countryside capable of sustaining landscape, conservation and recreation interests. The farm held two Open Days to show how the balance could be obtained. Those attending received a report covering estate management, took part in a tractor-trailer tour, and participated in discussions. Full report (£1.50 incl. postage) from Leicestershire Rural Community Council, 133 Loughborough Road, Leicester.

Jane Pearson has graduated from the Museum Studies Department at Leicester University and is now the Curator for Monmouth District Council Museum Service working at Chepstow and Caldicot Castle.

The Prince of Wales Committee has forwarded details of over 100 environmental projects undertaken by youth groups. There is an element of interpretation in many of the projects which include nature reserves and trails, town trails, waymarked walks and a film of industrial heritage. Full details from Brian Lymbery, 15 Wellfield Court, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2BZ.

A discussion paper, on *Information and Countryside Interpretation*, produced as part of the draft structure plan, is available (25p by post) from Brecon Beacons National Park Committee, Glamorgan Street, Brecon, Powys.

Parlez-vous Dutch? With the increasing number of European visitors to Britain, the Lake District National Park Centre, Brockhole, Windermere will be showing tape-slide sequences with French, German and Dutch commentaries during August. The talks will also be available to groups who make advanced bookings at any time. (As visitors from Europe continue to increase rapidly this would be appreciated in other centres - Ed)

In their Second Annual Report, the Council for Urban Studies Centres reaffirm the functions of the study centre as being, *inter alia*, a learning base, a teaching resource, a venue for community forums and a centre serving visitors to the area. In all cases, a prime function will be to interpret the built environment in a lively and informative way.

membership

The present membership of the Society is around the 250 mark. This is very encouraging but the Society depends not only on members who join for one year, but also on those members continuing their membership (and paying their subscriptions!). We are sure that most of our members would wish to continue within the Society, and we regret the departure of the few who have decided to resign. We recognise that the loss of some friends is inevitable.

It does make it all the more important, however, that our membership should always have a healthy intake. New blood adds to our corporate experience.

We should like all members to attract newcomers to our Society. We have much to offer and the place of interpretation is gaining further recognition all the time. We have, as a Society, the chance to play an influential part in the development of our profession, and this is an exciting role.

Application forms for membership are available from all the executive officers of the Society. In case of difficulty or special enquiry, please contact the Secretary, Martin Orom, whose address is on page 2.

The following members have joined since the issue of the previous newsletter.

J E BEELEY (Ms), North East of Scotland Museums Service, Museums Organiser.

P S DAVIS, Tyne & Wear Museums Service, Keeper of Natural Sciences.

S DAVIS (Miss) Bewdley Museum.

C L PRIOR, MA(Oxon), CertEd, Peak Park Joint Planning Board, Senior Assistant; Assistant Information/ Interpretation Officer.

Maureen RENDELL (Mrs), Camberley Museum, Curator.

Deborah ROLLAND, James Dun's House Children's Museum, Aberdeen

E SCOURFIELD, Welsh Folk Museum.

C A B STEEL, The Booth Museum of Natural History, Brighton

W B WALKER, Economic Forestry (Scotland) Ltd.

Timothy WILSON, University of Leicester

what's on ... when & where?

Conferences

15-17 Apr, *Countryside Recreation Management Association: AGM and Weekend Conference*. Based at Halls of Residence, University of Salford. Theme: *Farming and Recreation*. Visits to Beacon Fell Country Park, Lancs College of Agriculture, Rivington Park and proposed recreation area. Seminar: *The Man in the Middle* - role of recreation manager in relation to farmers and public. Fee: £4 for non-CRMA members. Details: Dr Stan Frost, Biology Dept, University of Salford, M5 4WT. Tel: 061-736 5843 (home: 0204 68397).

Sat 30 Apr, Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society's one-day conference at Hursley Park, near Winchester (by courtesy of IBM). Programme will include talks and a performance of folk songs from Hampshire by 'Forest Tracks'. Fee for non-members: £3.25. Enquiries to: Adrian Rance, Tudor House Museum, Bugle Street, Southampton.

EDINBURGH'S TURN

The Edinburgh meeting of the Society, from 1-3 April, promises to be a most stimulating weekend. As we went to press, final details were being confirmed and members will have received a copy of the programme and application form.

The Conference will open with a *state of play* report by the Countryside Commission for Scotland on regional interpretation and the associated research work. Saturday will be given over to Edinburgh itself and members will participate fully in assessing the city from an interpretive point of view.

During Sunday morning, the Second Annual General Meeting will be held.

Any member, or new member, who has not received details of the Conference, should contact the Secretary, Martin Orrom, 9 Greenhill Gardens, Edinburgh EH10 4BN.

Courses

7-10 Mar, *Course for Wardens & Rangers*, Abergavenny. Details: The Registrar, The Hall Residential College, Pen y Pound, Abergavenny, Gwent NP7 7RP. Tel: 0873 5221.

Courses at Snowdonia Park Centre

21-27 Mar, *Archaeology of North Wales*

23-27 Jun, *Mosses, Ferns and Flowers*

27 Jun- 3 Jul, *Practical Archaeology*

4-10 Jul, *Wild Flowers*

11-16 Jul, *Industrial Archaeology of Snowdonia*

24-30 Oct, *Perception - The Natural Way*
Full details from E.A.J. Buckhurst, Snowdonia National Park Study Centre, Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, Gwynedd, LL41 3YU



Events

Mon 7 Mar, lecture: *Canal Art and Architecture*, 19.00, Art Workers Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1.

Sat 23 Apr, lecture: *Waterways of the North of England and Scotland*, 15.00, National History Museum, London.

Sat 2 Apr, Official re-opening of the Harecastle Tunnel on the Trent and Mersey Canal

27-30 May, Bi-centennial of Trent and Mersey Canal

Jun, Exhibition of Canal Painting and Prints, Leeds Playhouse

4-7 Jun, Bi-centennial of Chesterfield Canal

Wed 15 Jun, lecture: *200 Years of Inland Waterways*. (Huddersfield Canal Society, venue to be fixed)

Abbeydale Hamlet, Sheffield

10-11 Mar & 13-14 Oct, *Children's Working Days*

12 Mar, 10 Sep & 15 Oct, *Working Days*

11-19 Jun, *Craftsman's Fair*