

society for the  
**interpretation**  
of Britain's heritage

## Conserving Broadland

THE BROADLAND CONSERVATION CENTRE, RANWORTH, NORFOLK, ENGLAND by Ray Taylor

### 1 BROADLAND

Nearly 2,000 years ago, when the Romans occupied the area, much of what is now East Norfolk and Suffolk formed a great river estuary. The Romans' defensive forts still stand but the estuary has

(Photo: Courtesy of Eastern Daily Press)

long since disappeared with the falling sea level, natural accretion and colonisation of the land, and man's drainage of the land for farming. During the Middle Ages the naturally formed peat was ruthlessly exploited for fuel; over 2½ million cubic metres being extracted

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NEWSLETTER SEVEN

SUMMER 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

**President:** The Right Hon. The Countess of Albemarle, DBE DLitt DCL LID  
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**Publicity Officer:** Graham Taylor (Countryside Commission)  
**Editor:** Michael H Glen, (British Tourist Authority, 239 Old Marylebone Road, London NW1 5QT)

## The Newsletter

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over 500 years. Subsequent flooding of these peat workings and their further colonisation by marshland vegetation created the unique wetland habitat known as "The Broads".

Already 899 hectares of Broadland are protected as National Nature Reserves and another 11 areas are safeguarded as local reserves.

One such area is Ranworth Broad where the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust has created a centre to interpret to visitors the problems now facing Broadland and possible ways of solving them.

## 2 THE CONSERVATION CENTRE

### A Location, Design and Construction

The site selected for the Centre lay within the Bure Marshes National Nature Reserve on a spit of marshland separating a busy public waterway from the secluded nature reserve. This provides a sharp contrast between public and private Broads and emphasises the need for conservation.

Unstable ground conditions made a conventional building impractical so the architects, Feilden & Mawson of Norwich, decided to float the Centre on pontoons. This protects it against flooding, prevents damage to the Reserve and allows the Centre to be moved if circumstances, weather conditions or maintenance require it.

The pontoons were constructed of maintenance-free "Seacrete", a concrete material being increasingly used for boat hulls, and floated to an accessible site where the superstructure, with a floor area of 74 square metres was added. In order to make it harmonise with its surroundings a traditional building style was adopted but used in a modern way. The roof structure was supported on external timber columns which ensured total flexibility of infill panels and windows - a great asset to the exhibition designer.

Traditional reed thatch, harvested from the Reserve, was used for the roof. Exposed to view from the inside, the roof itself interprets one aspect of broadland management and one of the crops that the area has yielded for generations.

## B Interpretation

Although the Broads are a wetland habitat of international renown they are also a playground for hundreds of thousands of visitors. The Centre therefore sets out to tell the "ordinary visitor" the story of Broadland and explain the threats to the unique environment from Man and even Nature itself.

The board-walk approach, along which most visitors come, fortuitously passes through the six stages of natural colonisation from open water to oakwood. Each stage is explained by wayside signs, so that on arrival at the Centre visitors are already acquainted with the principal Broadland habitats. The signs are photocopies mounted on painted marine plywood.

The site signage and display in the Centre were designed by John Allwood, of Ightham, Kent, with advice from the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust and the Countryside Commission. It sets out to stimulate, involve and interest visitors in Broadland and its many problems. Although designed as a "permanent" exhibition, the Centre display was made flexible enough to be updated or changed. When the building is needed for lectures or audio-visual programmes the large windows can be blacked out by hingeing some of the display panels. The free-standing central displays can be moved aside to create an auditorium. The screen unrolls from the gallery beams and chairs are stacked on a single trolley behind a display panel.

A number of basic principles were adopted in the design of the interior. In the first part of the display, visitor circulation is controlled and basic information provided at highest density when visitors' interest is highest. Thereafter there is a choice of routes and a correspondingly flexible story-line. Visitors are then channelled once more to pass the thought-provoking displays on the future of Broadland and the information/sales point. The interior was laid out so that it is possible for one assistant to see the entire display area; control access to the Centre and the gallery above; receive admission charges;

dispense information, publications and sale items; and if necessary, control the projection equipment.



(Photo: Crown Copyright, courtesy of the Countryside Commission)

A very wide range of media and techniques is used to appeal to visitors of all ages and interests. In addition to conventional photo-enlargements and texts there are three dimensional objects, some of which can be handled (such as blocks of Broadland peat and a tank of Broadland water containing algae). Visitors can reproduce the effect of turbidity caused by boat propellers by activating a kitchen whisk suspended in a container of water and sediment. An analogy is then drawn with London smog to emphasise the effect of this turbidity on aquatic life.

Naturalists are catered for with three-dimensional displays that portray typical food-webs and how they might be distorted by man's actions. Children enjoy an enlarged "happy families" card house which demonstrates the inter-relatedness and fragility of the various interests in Broadland.

Everyone likes pressing buttons and

everyone likes a reward. A quiz-board, with nine questions about Broadland conservation and three alternative answers to each, displays further information on each topic when the correct button is pressed. Further visitor participation is encouraged in a display which simulates the transformation of open water into oak woodland.

Being located in the heart of the environment which it interprets the display in the Centre is linked wherever possible to the landscape outside. For example one question on the quiz-board relates to the view from an adjacent window and a picture window overlooks the nature reserve. Visitors may view the Broad at their leisure from the opening windows in the mezzanine gallery.

#### C Cost

The Centre was opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth on 25 November 1976 as part of the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust's Golden Jubilee Celebrations. In total the project cost about £50,000. Of this £25,000 was donated by the Countryside Commission and £17,500 by other outside bodies. The building itself cost about £32,000 (£432 per sq metre) and the exhibition about £6,000 (£82 per sq metre). Design and construction of the exterior information and interpretive signs cost about £2,000.

Visitors are charged 25 pence admission (children 10 pence).

The Centre is managed by a warden who is employed throughout the opening season (1 April - 31 October), and is assisted in peak times by volunteer members of the Trust.

#### D Conclusions

Whatever the outcome of the Countryside Commission's deliberations on the future of Broadland as a National Park the problems of the area will remain. But if the Centre engenders a greater awareness amongst visitors, and a commitment to action in protection of this unique habitat, the project will have achieved the aims of its sponsors.

**Acknowledgements:** The author expresses thanks to John Allwood for his help in compiling the article and for comment-

ing on the draft. The article first appeared in *PARKS* magazine.

#### TAYLOR'S GUIDE

Ray Taylor, while remaining with the Countryside Commission, will be moving to the regional office in Yorkshire at the beginning of July. His address will be Countryside Commission, Fairfax House, Merrion Street, Leeds. He tells us that his *Advisory Notes on Interpretive Planning*, though not yet published, can be made available to members who wish to contact Ray directly.

### Heritage Commended

The British Tourist Authority recently announced their annual 'Come to Britain' awards. The special award for the outstanding tourist development by public enterprise went to the Ulster-American Folk Park, Camphill, County Tyrone, and that for the outstanding tourist development by private enterprise went to the National Trust for Scotland's Georgian House in Edinburgh.

The winners of 14 special commendations were:

Acton Scott Working Farm Museum, Salop; North of England Open Air Museum, Beamish; Bickleigh Mill Craft Centre and Farm, Devon; Castle Ward Theatre, Strangford, County Down; Cornwall Aero Park, Cornwall; Barbara Hepworth Museum, Cornwall; Piece Hall, Halifax; Queen Elizabeth Country Park, near Portsmouth; Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester; Scottish Postbuses; Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre and Country Park; Theatre Clwyd, Mold; Town Docks Museum, Hull; Tucktonia, Christchurch.



### WORDS by Jenny Edwards

LEAFLETS, TRAILS, DISPLAYS, AV etc.

INDEPENDENT WRITER

End Cottage, Bankside, Youlgreave,  
Bakewell, Derbs. (Youlgreave 550)



## EDINBURGH

Over 50 members made the journey to Edinburgh to study the theme of Regional Interpretation in truly lovely surroundings. We assembled over lunch and afterwards the conference was opened by the Society's Chairman, Geraint Jenkins, with the comment that Interpretation should be able to give a clear picture of the personality and character of a region. He handed over the chairmanship of the session to David Lowe, a past secretary of the Carnegie UK Trust, and much involved with the development of SIBH in its early days.

### Don Aldridge

David Lowe introduced to us (if we needed it), Don Aldridge, head of the Conservation Education and Interpretation Branch which the Countryside Commission for Scotland (CCS) established 9 years ago. Don claimed he was merely introducing the next speaker, but gave us some very wise words in the process.

By humorous and skilful analogy with Lewis Carroll's *Hunting of the Snark*, much valuable advice was put over. He stressed the need to keep the aim of a regional interpretive plan in mind, that is, the avoidance of duplication and unnecessary expense. One must accept that no plan will ever be complete, because new factors will always come in. It is essential to consult widely, including within the Local Authority itself; the Plan should be a team job.

Regional strategy planning is not the same as local, it is the latter which should identify themes. With regional plans, one theme would be a straight-jacket. Subject headings should be avoided also. When proposing developments, management strategies should have priority.

### Valerie Thom

Valerie Thom, of the same Branch of the

CCS, described the hunting of a real snark, the Grampian Regional Plan, by means of the Grampian Workshop. The aim was to reduce the risk of duplication; the objective was to produce an outline framework for the interpretation of the region. The method was by a co-operative planning exercise; the plan would thus not be imposed from above or outside.

About 30 people from organisations actively or potentially involved in interpretation were invited to gather together for 3 days work, free from outside interruptions. The institutions represented covered regional and district local authorities, statutory bodies and other organisations.

An introduction to interpretation was given, but most of the work was done in five study groups, arranged along subject-discipline lines. Each group had to assess the gaps in its field and examine potential sites having in mind constraints and priorities. The final stage was for each group to present to the others its map of the characteristics and significant features it thought ought to be interpreted. Eventually, after much discussion and argument a composite map was produced.

The follow-up to the workshop is to publish the report, to stimulate surveys where knowledge was shown to be poor, to amend the plan, to encourage implementation, and above all, to maintain liaison.

### Frank Tindall

After tea Frank Tindall, the director of Lothian Region's Physical Planning, gave us an account of the approach to interpretation in Lothian. He said that this was pragmatic rather than co-ordinated and logical. The first steps, in the mid 1960's were to interpret towns for the people that lived in them, and the town of Haddington was taken as the subject of a conservation scheme to make people more aware of their surroundings.

Side by side with the architectural conservation went the development of trails, a small interpretive centre, information plaques on listed buildings and so on. The approach was later

extended to the rest of the region.

## Notts & Exmoor

We then heard about the two experimental projects being run by the Countryside Commission for England and Wales - Interpretive Plans for a county and for a National Park.

For Notts, Ruth Tillyard explained that the most important characteristic of the Plan is that it is being prepared not just for one organisation to carry out; it must be flexible enough to take into account the aims and ideas of many bodies quite outside the County Council, and must be able to dovetail into existing policies.

The stages followed have been conventional; so far an inventory of resources has been completed, and a way of determining themes in an objective manner was now sought. The next stages are the assessment of visitor management potential and constraints, and provision of facilities suitable for particular groups of people.

Terry Robinson, for Exmoor, explained that his Plan is for an organisation concerned with the management of a piece of land with the twin - and possibly opposed - aims of conservation and handling visitors. It was a Plan that had to be of use to other National Parks.

He was sure that any Plan had to allow for taking the right decisions at any time. He saw the need to build on local initiative.

He questioned whether planning is a good substitute for good people - after all, the work begins when the planning ends. And what about the visitor? He is the poor bloke at the end of all the interpretation without any real say in it.

## Skinner & Fraser

Chaired by Ralph Blain, the evening session consisted first of an excellent *View of Edinburgh* by Basil Skinner, Head of Extra-Mural Studies at the University. In lucid and entertaining manner he gave a fascinating illustrated account of the growth of the city and the way that had contributed to its character and buildings and led to a



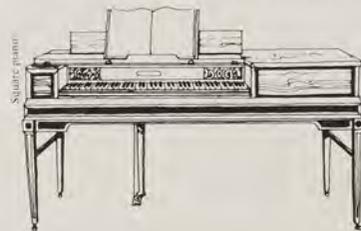
*City of Contrasts.* Then we had an interesting description of Cramond by Barclay Fraser of the Cramond Amenity Association. As a pretty village and former port on the edge of Edinburgh, Cramond already receives many tourists. It also contains what are possibly the most important Roman remains North of Hadrian's Wall (a fort and associated town, bath house etc) a medieval tower and exceptionally good documentation of the whole history of the place. It thus presented opportunities and problems at the same time.

## Cramond

Basil Skinner's delightful style guided us through much of Edinburgh as he explained, on the ground, how the city had developed. We reached Cramond on the outskirts and were ably led round its major features by Barclay Fraser. Largely 18th century in origin, its heart and core is the Church. Nick Holmes, the City Archivist, described the work done on the Roman remains and the plans for the future, including the full excavation of exciting recent finds. Also at Cramond, in the part of the village by the riverside, we were shown the old Maltings where a schools environmental centre is planned.

## Georgian House

The highlight of the morning was the visit to the Georgian House, owned and carefully restored to former elegance by the National Trust for Scotland. The



charm of the house was only matched by the eloquence of Marista Leishman, the leader of the veritable army of voluntary guides who staff all the rooms. She described the importance of the house and its contents and its place in living Edinburgh as well as in history.

## Urban Studies

The last stop before lunch was to the Castle Hill Urban Studies Centre which was explained to us by the Director, Dr Walter Stephen of the Regional Education Department. The Edinburgh area is ideal for environmental studies, but there has been no base for visiting school parties.

The centre operates on 3 levels: as a refuge to eat lunch, use loos etc; to display various themes relevant to school study of the area; and most important as a mainspring for outside activities, where schools can study, go out into the town, return and consolidate.

Without the Job Creation Scheme, the one time Board School could not have been converted into such an effective centre. The assistants had decorated the walls, prepared displays (colourful and to the point), helped with the AV room and aided the development of an urban trail.

## Royal Mile

After lunch, we gathered in groups on the Castle Esplanade before being led down the fascinating and, in many ways, timeless alleys and passages and courts



that make up the Royal Mile. Our guides were members of the Voluntary Guides Association whose anecdotes brought the old stones alive.

It was a suitable interlude before the

afternoon session which was chaired by Findlay McQuarrie. Barclay Fraser again spoke of the possibilities of Cramond; the Amenity Society was certainly aware of management problems. Ralph Blain emphasised the need for a joint approach with the Local Authority. A detailed local plan was suggested; this was now a more feasible suggestion as the village has just become a conservation area.

In contrast, while much of the old town of Edinburgh is a conservation area, the Royal Mile is rather too varied for people to understand, and some sort of orientation centre would help them, a function which it was hoped the Landmark conversion of the Camera Obscura might fulfil. Another suggestion was to use the several museums along the Royal Mile as stepping stones in its story. Cassette recordings might also help.

In response to a question about the volunteer service in the Georgian House, Marista Leishman said that it is boosted by a feeling of corporate entity and a commitment to the work.

## Research

The last session was chaired by Graham Taylor. So far, research had been rather haphazard, he said, opportunistic rather than carefully thought out, and we have tended to look more at media than anything else. He introduced us to Gillian Binks, who had joined DART in 1974 from the Goodwood estate.

Gillian began by explaining that DART is an independent organisation, and the Countryside Commission is included in its range of clients. DART has three main areas of involvement in interpretation:

- 1 A series monitoring provision and its effectiveness, followed up by a series of advisory booklets.
- 2 Wider projects, such as management plans. The Derwent Valley Plan, about to be commenced for Derbyshire CC, is an example.
- 3 Help in the interpretation of Morwellham in Devon.

With the numerous types of media, the wide variety of resources, and the

diversity of providers, there is an obvious need for interpretive planning. The providers are not necessarily sure of their objectives; they may be subordinate to another aim, such as information or management.

Interpretive facilities do not attract large initial use. There is in general a narrow range of users - informal family groups, in cars, from the upper socio-economic levels; they are already interested and most enjoy the interpretive experience although the extent of information given varies. However, user needs are not recognised enough; there needs to be more awareness that the public are divided into various levels. Research was fairly superficial until the Visitor Centre Study (just off the Countryside Commission press). A better understanding of visitor needs (eg more is learnt at centres where people enjoy themselves most) will lead to better provision. Interpretation should not be one-way enlightenment but the personal communication of enthusiasm.

The importance of monitoring was mentioned; the effectiveness, numbers, quality of experience should all be known. The support that education and interpretation should give each other was discussed. Research sometimes tends to confuse the medium with the message.

## A.G.M.

The Secretary reported on the Society's progress, and in particular the growth of contacts overseas.

The Treasurer thanked the CUKT for their help in launching the Society by providing an initial grant. Without it, the finances would be heavily in the red. He received the meeting's approval to raise the subscription from 1st April 1978 to £3

Graham Taylor (Countryside Commission) was elected Publicity Officer.

Future meetings were discussed in terms both of location and subject. It was agreed to meet in Devon in September 1977 and in the Peak District in September 1978. The committee will resolve the competing claims for other meetings. The topic of publications and other graphic media will feature at one meeting. Ruth Tillyard, MHG

## Windermere Museum

We reported in the last issue on the Windermere Steamboat Museum. The first stage of the Museum was successfully opened on 18 May by HRH The Prince of Wales.



An attractive *concertina* leaflet illustrating boats in the Museum's collection is given to all visitors; a guidebook is on sale and a handbill has been produced. Admission is 40p (children 25p).

The Windermere Building is not due for total completion until April 78 but a temporary display includes a Windermere yacht of 1780 and one of the first motor boats.

## Kendal's EAHY Survey

One of the most satisfactory exhibitions held recently at the Kendal Museum of Lakeland Life and Industry was the survey carried out by Cumbrian Women's Institutes. The project was designed to record dates, inscriptions or initials on buildings or furniture, in small houses, barns or other domestic buildings not covered by the Royal Commission's work. Over 100 groups took part and while much of the work was deliberately on the simplest scale, many members produced detailed plans or even local histories. The surveys were instigated by the Museum as a project for European Architectural Heritage Year.

M E Burkett, Director

### EARLY CONSERVATIONIST

Mary Burkett also tells of another successful exhibition held recently at her Museum. The subject was Lady Anne Clifford, a 17th century countess of Pembroke and Dorset who waited until she was over sixty before inheriting her estates in Westmorland and Yorkshire. She set about restoring all her properties - including Skipton, Appleby, Brougham and Pendragon Castles and Bardon Towers - rebuilding and refurbishing them all, which she then lived in in turn.

## membership

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

Don ALDRIDGE, Countryside Commission for Scotland; Assistant Director, Conservation Education & Interpretation  
O W BARRATT, The Cockburn Association  
Richard BATEMAN, Audio-Visual Productions Photography

Gillian BROWN (Miss), Civic Trust for the North West

H C CAFFREY (Mrs), Tameside Museum Service

John Williams DAVIES, Welsh Folk Museum

T W EDGE

J H GUILMANT, Southampton Tourist Guides Association

Alison HEATH

Andrew HELEM

Gillian HOUGHTON

Professor Terence LEE, University of Surrey

D J B LEWIS, Craftcentre Cymru Ltd; Chairman

Paul MILLIMORE

Tony PAGE, Designer and Photographer

J E PALMER, BA (Hons), MRTPI, Assistant County Planning Officer, Gwent County Council

David POTTS

Venetia RIST (Mrs)

B C SKINNER, University of Edinburgh  
Charles STEEL, Booth Museum of Natural History

K N V TOWNSEND, Forestry Commission



## the great cider revival

To many, the City of Hereford is synonymous with cider; that powerful acid thirst quencher, which for centuries has satisfied the countryman's needs in the field and helped to round off his few leisure hours at home or in the inn. Since orchards have always been such a conspicuous element in the Hereford countryside and since cider making has been so important in the life of this rural county, then it is only right that this activity should have its own interpretation centre. The new centre will be located at Field Farm, Hampton Bishop in Orchard country, a couple of miles from the centre of Hereford. It will be administered by the Hereford Cider Museum Trust, under the Chairmanship of Bertram Bulmer and the Trust is now on the point of appointing an Interpreter to develop the scheme.

The aim of the centre will be to explain the history of apple growing and cider making from its early beginning to the present day. Modern factory techniques as well as traditional skills will be presented and although the centre will have an important museum content, its terms of reference will have to be much wider, for it will also have an important research function. J. Geraint Jenkins

## FOR SALE

two Kodak lenses 60mm (£30 each)

one Electrosonic ES2009 encoder (useful for anyone with ES2000 series gear or who wants a simple two-frequency device) (£25)

one Electrosonic ES4 4-function encoder (for the old ES64 system) (£30)

one Tandberg slide synchroniser (£30)

one Teac A3340S 4-track tape recorder (10½" reels) (modified to 7½/3¼ ips, needs some attention) (£350)

one Animatic Convar dissolve unit (the original Mark One!) with hand controller (£40)

one Bowns Illumitran slide copier (£95)

one Philips N2000 battery cassette player (£8)

six sheets (6ft x 4ft) ICI Frost 900 back projection screen material (£25 per sheet)

large quantity of 5"/7"/10½" plastic cine spools and boxes (about 100 pieces - SAE for list)

large quantity of plugs and sockets, including locking and ordinary DIN types, jack plugs and sockets (about 200 pieces - SAE for list)

Offers and enquiries to Michael Quinion 59 High Street, Corsham, Wilts (Corsham 0249) 713964. Buyer arranges delivery (all equipment has original packing). Prices include VAT.

## Urban Techniques

At present the Education Unit of the Town and Country Planning Association is responsible for an experimental 'Art at the Built Environment' project for 16-to-19 year-olds sponsored by the Schools Council.

The project has led to the production of two issues of *The Bulletin of Environmental Education*, providing material for use in a group of trial schools. Both issues of BEE develop further the original town trail concept.

In *Sensing the Environment*, Brian Goodey and Walter Menzies of the Urban Design group at Oxford Polytechnic present a series of activities based on the idea of the 'sensory walk', experiences of the urban environment using the neglected senses. Contents include discussion of townscapes, street art and random walks in a given area. It is hoped that this material, which has partly developed from urban interpretation studies at Oxford Polytechnic will broaden the concept of the town trail and free potential trail users from the growing burden of historical and formal trail brochures.

Keith Wheeler of the Geography Department at Leicester Polytechnic has worked with staff of the Leicester Planning Department to develop an issue of BEE around the theme of 'Experiencing Townscape'. Townscape analysis has been a major feature of much urban design work in Britain with Gordon Cullen's book, *Townscape*, serving as a bible in the field. Wheeler introduces the teacher and student to the development of townscape analysis and provides notation and evaluation techniques which have been tested by school groups.

These two issues of BEE provide the interpreter of urban areas with a new range of experimental techniques that could find a place in the tool-chest of approaches used by the staff of urban museums who seek a meeting-point with local planning and architectural professionals and with local teaching staff.

Copies of BEE, price 30 pence, may be obtained from Colin Ward, TCPA Education Unit, 17 Carlton House Terrace,

London SW1. The *Townscape* issue is dated December 1976, the *Sensing the Environment* issue is of April 1977. Brian Goodey

## Avebury Folk Life

Negotiations by the Wiltshire Folk Life Society with the National Trust for the lease of the Great Barn and its immediate environs at Avebury, to be used as a centre for the study and interpretation of the past social economic and domestic life of Wiltshire, are now coming to a conclusion.

The project, for which a plan containing four phases has been drawn up, may take four to five years to implement with the timing of each phase depending on finance becoming available. The first priority is to put the barn and its adjoining buildings into a good state of repair, and the Society has already been offered a grant by The Civic Trust.



(By courtesy of the National Trust)

This barn, containing two side aisles, was built about 1690 when part of the bank of the Avebury Circle was removed to accommodate it, is not only of considerable antiquarian interest in its own right, but a distinctive building forming part of a self contained group consisting of the church, dovecote, manor house, and Alexander Keiller Museum. Because of its close juxtaposition with these and the Avebury Circle, the barn undoubtedly is of considerable aesthetic value.

H F W Cory

## CREATIVE ARTS

as tools in interpretation

A Proposal by Tony Escritt of the Peak National Park Study Centre

I am offering my services to put together a *What's Where* of creative arts in interpretation and to make this generally available. Given sufficient response I should like to try to get interested parties together to explore the scope of creative arts. The problem is that of knowing where to draw the line between creative arts and the rest of interpretation! By creative arts I mean those activities that involve personal contact with the public and an element of entertainment through demonstrations, performances, trails etc. The broad headings are indicated below and I invite you to complete the data sheet overleaf or to photocopy it and send me lots of data sheets. Even if you do not have the full details to hand please fill out a sheet and I will try to fill in the blanks.

### A Types of Creative Art (eg M2 = Folk Singing)

- |                 |                                       |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Visual (V)      | 1 Crafts                              |
|                 | 2 Painting                            |
|                 | 3 Sketching                           |
|                 | 4 Photography                         |
|                 | 5 Rubbings (bark, fossils, brass etc) |
|                 | 6 Sculptures and models               |
|                 | 7 Other                               |
| Music (M)       | 1 Instruments                         |
|                 | 2 Folk Singing                        |
|                 | 3 Period Music                        |
|                 | 4 In conjunction with Visual Arts     |
|                 | 5 Other                               |
| Dance (D)       | 1 As interpretation of a theme        |
|                 | 2 Traditional                         |
|                 | 3 Other                               |
| Spoken Word (S) | 1 Poetry                              |
|                 | 2 Writing                             |
|                 | 3 Recitation                          |
|                 | 4 Other                               |
| Drama (DR)      | 1 Living History                      |
|                 | 2 Plays                               |
|                 | 3 Sketches                            |
|                 | 4 Marionettes                         |
|                 | 5 Shadow Plays                        |
|                 | 6 Mummings                            |
|                 | 7 Others                              |

### B Types of Area

- C = Countryside  
 U = Urban  
 F = Urban Fringe  
 H = Historic Site

### C Location

State name of site, address or nearest settlement and county.

### D Brief Description

A few words elaborating on "A"

### E Contact

If possible name the best person to contact if anyone wants to make further enquiries.

### F Brochure

If you can send us a brochure please do so and tick the small box.

Note: It may be that you know only of someone who is interested in this approach to interpretation but who has not applied it yet himself. If so, please put him in touch by returning Form II.

## FORM I

A Type of Creative Art:	
B Type of Area:	
C Location:	
D Brief Description:	
E Contact:	
F	

## FORM II

I should be interested to participate in a seminar:
NAME/ADDRESS:
The following are also interested:
NAME/ADDRESS

Please return to: Tony Escritt, Vice-Principal, Peak National Park Study Centre, Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire S30 2WB.

## RISLEY MOSS

by Ian C.A. Parkin, Assistant Chief Landscape Architect and Sue Adams, Interpretive Planner, Warrington New Town Development Corporation.

### INTRODUCTION

Risley Moss is an area of 83 hectares on the north-east boundary of the New Town Designated Area and is largely owned by the Development Corporation. It is one of the few remaining pockets of the once extensive post-glacial moss-land system which covered hundreds of square miles of Lancashire between Manchester and Warrington. Since the middle of the 19th century the majority of this region has been reclaimed for intensive market gardening.



Risley Moss is in transition: whilst not reclaimed for agriculture, it was used as a game covert; and the general lowering of the water table in surrounding areas, and extensive peat cutting operations in the 80 years prior to 1940 have substantially altered the original ecology. Today it is a complex pattern of wet and semi-dry areas each with its associated flora.

The site consists of two distinct and contrasting zones; an area of semi-mature woodland to the north and west, which is partially on boulder clay, and a large expanse of flat open mossland to the east. The Moss supports over 50 species of breeding birds, including some such as the Nightjar and Whinchat which are declining in the sub-region. In addition, as many as 40 visiting

species have been recorded in a single year.

It has been recognised for some years that the Moss has potential as an educational resource for schools, colleges and the general public of the town. However, it is considered that by sensitive management and development it would be possible to exploit the site's proximity to new development and its excellent accessibility, to create a new concept in recreation.

The development proposals have been devised to minimise conflict and maximise enjoyment. The woodland is generally capable of withstanding human pressure, and will be the most attractive section of the site to the general public. It is envisaged that it will be used for informal recreation with woodland walks, picnicking and informal sitting areas in sheltered glades. Access to the more sensitive sections, ponds, damper, low lying ground, particularly valuable breeding areas, etc, will need to be carefully controlled by the design of narrow paths, careful edge detailing, planting and interpretive signs. A look-out tower and hides will be provided to enable visitors to view the Mossland from a distance, while a self-guided trail will link up the most interesting features.

### MOSSLAND RESTRICTED

By contrast, the use of the mossland area will be more restricted. A circular path using existing raised tracks and new timber boardwalks will penetrate into the area leading to hides and viewing platforms. By means of sluices it is hoped to substantially raise the water table so as to create conditions suitable for the moss system to regenerate again. In addition, this will provide water features which will attract ducks and wading birds.

### VISITOR MANAGEMENT

The Moss is situated in the District of Birchwood which has a target population of 20,000, some 5,000 of whom will be living there when the site opens in April 1979. Many of the new residents will be coming from the "inner-city stress areas" of Salford, Manchester and Liverpool where recreational facilities are scarce and access to the

countryside is difficult. In the short term, therefore, the site, with its attractive woodland areas, will act as an 'urban park' for adults and as an 'adventure playground' for children.

In the sub-regional context the Moss is easily reached from the national motorway network and a new railway station one mile away will be opened in the early 1980's with bus links to the site. Potential visitor pressure is therefore enormous.

A draft site Management Plan has been prepared and the development proposals reflect the need to conserve, upgrade and enhance the ecological quality of the site and to protect particularly sensitive features of interest.

#### VISITOR MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

- 1 To allow visitors to enjoy the facilities provided with the minimum restrictions necessary to prevent damage to the site or disruption of other activities.
- 2 To use the interpretive process to make visitors aware of the value of the site and the consequences of their actions; to influence their behaviour so as to reduce management problems.



- 3 To restrict public access on the more sensitive areas of the site by means of careful design of paths and access points, by locating the majority of the visitor facilities within the woodland zone, and by the use of interpretation.
- 4 To control access on to the whole site by channelling visitors through one entrance point where interpretive facilities are located.

- 5 To make maximum use of the ranger service to foster good public relations with visitors and the local community, to explain the management process and to interpret the site.
- 6 To separate, where appropriate, incompatible activities such as informal recreation, parties of schoolchildren and birdwatchers.

#### MEANS OF ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES:

There seem to be four ways to achieve these objective. Firstly, sensitive *design and good site management* are pre-requisites for the successful and proper use of the site.

Secondly, the *Ranger Service* has an often under-rated but essential part to play in the process. Face to face contact between the ranger and the visitor provides a medium by which advice, information and control can be successfully achieved.

It is then a natural extension for the rangers to become involved with the local community, instead of waiting for visitors to come to them.

#### TOTAL UNDERSTANDING

We have recently appointed the Head Ranger who will be in post two years before the project opens to the public. The aim is to involve him in all aspects of the development process so that he has a total understanding of the site, its characteristics, problems and potential.

Thirdly, the *provision of special facilities for school parties* provides an opportunity for school children to visit, learn about and hopefully to appreciate and conserve, not only Risley Moss, but other natural features. We aim to provide a classroom/workshop within the Visitor Centre as a 'base' for school parties, together with a range of interpretive publications specially written for children.

The fourth way of achieving the visitor management objective is by *interpretation* in all its forms. Although the most appropriate media for each aspect of the Risley 'story' have yet to be chosen it is likely that most of the following methods will be used:

- a) *Leaflets, information sheets and other interpretive literature:*

The most appropriate on-site distribution of written material is a shop or information counter.

Off-the-site distribution can be controlled through libraries, museums, other public offices and possibly shops.

- b) *On-site interpretation by signs, notice boards and listening posts:*

These are valuable where a short, simple message is needed, especially when it relates to a particular spot or object which might otherwise be difficult to find.

- c) *Trails:*

Trails are a useful management tool. By harnessing the visitor's desire for 'something to do', he can be guided to certain areas and away from others, and the things he sees can be interpreted.

- d) *Guided Walks:*

Although with the advantage of allowing the ranger to meet the visitor, only a relatively small proportion of visitors can take advantage of the service. However, it is hoped that a wide programme of guided walks can be set up, particularly in the mossland zone.

- e) *Hides, Observation towers, etc:*

Several hides are planned, both on the mossland and in the woodland zone, to take advantage of the wide variety of bird life.

- f) *Talks, lectures, A/V presentations, exhibits, etc:*

We will rely heavily on these forms of interpretation to influence visitor behaviour on the site.

#### THE VISITOR CENTRE

The particular need for very careful visitor management on this urban fringe site and the importance attached to the use of interpretation and the ranger service has been stressed. We feel that the best solution to the problems presented is the provision of a visitor centre, located just inside the main entrance. It is here that the main interpretive "message" is put across, where information and literature will be available and talks and A/V presentations can be given. It provides a 'focal point' on the Moss where, for

instance, guided walks can start and rangers can be based. Its location ensures that the major objective of the interpretation - visitor management - is most effectively achieved since all visitors will pass through it before going further into the site. Finally, because great emphasis is placed on the importance of involving the community in this project, we would like to see the centre being used by local people of all ages for a variety of activities such as talks, meetings, film-shows, etc all the year round and seven days a week.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The programme for development is very much subject to continued Government financial support. At present the scheme is phased over four years opening to the public at Easter 1979. The first two years programme has been geared to site management and we are now entering the "development state" including trails, picnic areas, viewing, car park and the Visitor Centre. The total capital cost of the scheme will be in the region of £200,000 with annual running costs of around £25,000.

The design proposals for the site, Visitor Management and Interpretive Plans, and their subsequent implementation are largely being undertaken 'in-house' by a small specialist team of landscape architects, ecologist, forester, interpretive planner, architect and quantity surveyor. Outside consultancy advice will be sought for the design of the exhibits and any audio-visual programme required. The project is being sponsored by the Countryside Commission

#### LATE NEWS

Since this paper was written the Corporation have appointed architectural and exhibition design consultants in relation to the content, design and implementation of the Visitor Centre. The two firms are Building Design Partnership, Manchester (partner in charge, W.H. Pearson) and Graphic Partners, Edinburgh (partner in charge Graham Duffy). It is hoped that the Feasibility Study, which forms an architectural brief, will be forwarded to the Countryside Commission at the end of June.

## Bookshelf

### .. .. . Purbeck

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES IN PURBECK, edited by W O Copland and J M Overton, Complete Party Leader's Kit, £7.50. Published by Globe Education Equipment, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2XS.

The Isle of Purbeck enjoys (or suffers from) great popularity as a site for field studies at all levels. The impact of school parties on this area can be greatly reduced if visits are carefully planned and pupils well briefed. "Environmental Studies in Purbeck" is a teacher resource pack designed to encourage such pre-planning and has been prepared by teaching advisory staff of Dorset Education Authority.

The neatly boxed pack includes two copies of the Basic Handbook to the area and 18 different pocket books. The handbook contains information and advice on the organisation of field studies, gives background information on the area ranging from its geography, through tourism and extractive industries, to forestry and ecology, and lists sites suitable for teaching field studies in a variety of subject disciplines. It also includes a resource list and bibliography.

Each of the 18 pocket books covers in greater depth some particular aspect of the Isle of Purbeck, eg Mammals, Woodland, Villages, Churches, Geology. The pack will be invaluable to teachers bringing field study groups to the area, but is not entirely without fault. There is at present considerable overlap of information between some of the pocket books and indeed, in some cases, between individual pocket books and the basic handbook.

The quality of illustration varies widely from one pocket book to another and the biological illustrations in particular would benefit from some indication of scale. The overall content could be strengthened by the inclusion of suggestions for pupils' work, both in the form of individual projects and overall itineraries.

At present all material in the pack is

copyright, and it would be helpful if at least some basic information sheets, eg outline geological settlement maps, guides to local architecture, etc could be included in a non-copyright form which could be reproduced for pupil use.

Despite these minor faults the pack provides an excellent example of a positive attempt to encourage the careful management of field studies in an area of great public pressure.

Graham Carter

### .. .. . Awareness

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS - A SURVEY OF TYPES OF FACILITIES USED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION IN EUROPE.

Published by Council of Europe (1976) and edited by Harry Wals (Director, School and Children's Gardens Service, Netherlands); George Epler (Principal Administrator, Environment and Natural Resources Division, Council of Europe) and Don Aldridge (Assistant Director, Conservation/Education, Countryside Commission for Scotland, UK)

This publication of less than 100 pages provides a valuable synthesis of thoughts many of us have had for some time. Different opinions on environmental education have been carefully sifted and a step-by-step analysis explains what is involved.

I have been comforted to find that the analysis confirms my own experience gleaned from several years involvement in the general sphere of environmental education of adults. Therefore, although the main emphasis of the publication is concerned with provisions for children (adults seem to be abandoned mid-way through the first part of the document), the discussion provides valuable insight and information for other educational situations.

The authors have obviously been selective in their choice of examples and the facilities they describe include some which they know personally very well.

The features of each example are shown in a diagram which summarises the facility types and the relationships between the amenities encompassed in

each definition. Unfortunately the layout of the document separates the table from the definitions and it would have been better if they could have been on opposite pages. Similarly, it was annoying to have illustrated guides on two other pages with the keys for the guides printed separately several pages later.

### VALUABLE IDEAS

The case studies (48 in all) are dealt with in some detail though the information about each is variable. Finance, for example, is presented as a heading for each facility but only limited information is shown. A chart showing relative costs, converted to common currency, would have been invaluable but there are obvious problems in obtaining this type of information in a survey such as this. The broad range of types (zoos to school camps, gardens to trails) and pertinent information about each should provide valuable ideas to all those who have thought of using local resources but have gone no further. It is worthwhile considering the achievements in other areas.

The theme of local learning environments is emphasised by the 'concentric system'. Initial local experiences are inter-related and children spread further afield with growing maturity and awareness.

Of the 12 types of facility listed, National Museums, botanical and zoological gardens have generally been with us the longest. Zoos have a great potential for environmental education and it is probably well time that we abandoned the idea of the mediaeval peep show in response to a much more valuable use of these resources.

The Wildlife Parks - distinct from Safari Parks which are not considered - show native animals. This is justified educationally though we need to consider anomalies such as falconries which are kept in order to justify the protection of raptors.

### INTERACTION

There are recurrent ideas which stress the needs for both inter-disciplinary co-operation and multi-disciplinary consideration of ecological and ethnological situations. All these components

are complementary - but where do we begin? Society is gradually surviving very rapid changes in values and understanding. It is, therefore, probably as useful to assess our environmental awareness and that of our children as it is to assess our IQ. It is also implicit that we should also be aware of the difficulties of so doing and the problems of interpreting the values. In the long term, however, this can only be a constructive process which in its achievement may well synthesize views of environmental concern and enable society to avoid future educational and planning disasters.

The encouragement of environmental awareness, understanding and appreciation in children parallels closely those patterns which have emerged for adults from a previous generation. Perception consisting of percipience leading to awareness through multi-disciplinary study will ensure a proper appreciation of conservation. In this context education at all levels has a useful role for the future of society. However, we need to guard against too much simulated realism. The authors stress the need to avoid visitor and interpretive centres becoming features in their own right.

The document therefore gives a valuable summary of what is being done and what is possible even at the present time. Schools, colleges, universities and local authorities have terrific opportunities to pursue some of these ideas and one hopes that initiative and co-operation will succeed even with shoestring budgets.

S. Frost

### .. .. . Another Bible?

David Hayes of *Landmark* is now stocking *Interpreting the Environment* edited by Grant W Sharpe.

The book is organised into five sections. *The Interpretive Process* presents a general overview and the historical origins of the interpretive urge. Sociological and planning aspects, media selection and programme management are also treated here. *Techniques of Interpretation* deals with both personal and non-personal services; information duty, conducted activities,

talks and living interpretations as well as audio devices, signs, publications, self guided activities and exhibits. *Supporting Activities* reviews interpretation off-season and off-site and in urban areas; structures, collections, photography and in the problems of vandalism. Included are two chapters dealing with special areas; sky and marine interpretive resources. *Professional Development* offers educational guidelines and a look at interpretive research. The last section *Interpretation Around the World* views the interpretive situation from a worldwide perspective.

Copies of the book are available at £11 post free from Landmark, Carrbridge, Inverness-shire PH23 3AJ. We hope to include a full review in the next issue.

## WEST WALES FARM PARK



Timothy and Gay Ash who farm Blaenbedw Isaf, Plwmp, some twelve miles north of Cardigan town opened their farm park in May 1977. Sixty acres out of a total acreage of 220 has been allocated to the presentation of about 70 breeds of farm animals and poultry. A large number of Welsh breeds ranging from Welsh black cattle to Beulah speckle-faced sheep, are particularly important in the park, but only those animals that have been imported for more than a hundred years are shown. Tim and Gay Ash are still dairy farmers and visitors to the Farm Park are also asked to see the excellent Grayswood herd of accredited Jersey cattle which is the mainstay of the farm.

The West Wales Farm Park (Telephone Rhyd Lewis 317) is open daily from 10 am to 6 pm from the beginning of May to the end of September.  
J. Geraint Jenkins

## MONASTIC BEAULIEU



Beaulieu Abbey was founded by the Cistercian Order of Monks in 1204, on land given by King John. It was King John's only foundation of an Abbey in this country, and was known as "Bellus Locus Regis" (the beautiful place of the King). Much of the Abbey was destroyed after the Dissolution of the Monasteries, but fortunately some buildings have survived to the present day.

It was, however, only in the 1870's after Lord Montagu's grandfather, Lord Henry Scott, came to Beaulieu that the plan and character of the buildings were recovered by expert excavation. Conservation of the Abbey Ruins has been a continuous policy since this time.

This work has culminated this year, on the 25th Anniversary of the opening of Beaulieu to the public, with a permanent Exhibition throughout the Cellarium below the Domus, devoted to "Monastic life at Beaulieu".

The Exhibition, which is an interpretive display, was designed by Robin Wade Design Associates. The main objectives of the exhibition are to help the visitor to understand the daily life of a Cistercian Monk at Beaulieu and to present the chronological story of Beaulieu Abbey and its relationship with other Cistercian Houses, its involvement, through its Abbots, with Royalty and its place in agriculture and trade.

An Abbey was a self-supporting community, and displays show the crafts and farming methods etc practised by the Monks. The

production of food, the weaving of cloth, the making of parchment, of tiles, the smithy, brewing, tanning and fishing.

As part of this presentation, there is a large detailed model of the Monk's Barn at St Leonards on the Beaulieu Estate, which was the largest barn in the Country. The model was the work of architect Frederick Charles, the expert on wooden constructions.

Much of the display stems from the recently published Beaulieu Abbey Accounts Book, which is the only known 13th century set of Cistercian accounts in existence.

## take note!

Stan Frost's team at the University of Salford have completed two more educational tape slide programmes for Blackpool Zoo Educational Unit - run by Joan Forshaw. One deals with animal adaptations - suitable for primary school children and another on Animal Geography for older groups.

A video tape for water bailiff training has also been produced - called "Small Fry".

Keith Wilson, who is now the Forestry Commission's Publications Officer, tells us that numbers 11 and 12 in the Commission's *Forest Trees in Britain* posters will be published this summer. The lime and the ash are featured in this useful series of display and interpretation items.

On April 22nd an historic engine made by Ashton National Gas and Oil Engine Co was formally switched on in Ashton-under-Lyne shopping precinct. It is a small horizontal engine, four stroke, single cylinder, with 12 BHP and 300 RPM. It is now running from 10 am to 5 pm daily, powered by an electric motor.

Members, particularly those who visited North Wales last year, will be interested to know that Gloddfa Ganol has produced a new guidebook called *Mining Welsh Slate: Candles to Caplamps*, by J G Isherwood. Many of the historic photographs were taken from *Caban*, the house journal of the Oakeley Quarry Company.

Denis Howell, Minister of State, Department of the Environment recently announced the members of the Committee on Recreation Management Training. Under the Chairmanship of Councillor Mrs Anne Yates CBE, the committee includes two of our members, Colin Bonsey, Recreation Officer of Hampshire County Council and Kenneth Robinson, Managing Director, Montagu Ventures Ltd.

The Committee have been asked to review and make recommendations on the training of staff in both the public and private sectors, in the management of resources and facilities for sport whether outdoors or indoors and all forms of outdoor recreation, whether in town or country. The review will cover England and Wales only.

A major job creation scheme was recently approved for work on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. It will assure valuable water supplies for industrial use and reopens a further section of 8 miles of the canal for navigation.

The 63rd Annual Report of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust shows the considerable emphasis given now by the Trust to *The Heritage* in general, and to conservation and interpretation in particular. Between 1971 and 1975, expenditure under these headings was committed to the extent of £376,000.

Warrington New Town recently produced its first Town Trail - of the old town. There is a clear, single map and good illustrations, many of details to be seen, as the relief here. A second trail is to be published shortly.



Relief in Suez Street

The third in the Tameside Trails series is now available. It covers Mottram and Broadbottom, in Longdendale, dealing mainly with buildings, but also mentioning laid hedges, dry stone walls, bootscrapers and tombstones. Available, price 25p from Libraries and Arts, Jowett's Walk, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

Yet another town trail has been published. It is for Wye, the small university town near Canterbury in Kent. The Manor of Wye was associated with William the Conqueror, and was part of the Abbey of Battle.

Copies are available from Mr A Ireland, Inglewhite, Scotton Street, Wye, Ashford, Kent at 25p each including postage and packing. It is on sale in local shops in the town, Ashford and Canterbury and is published by the Wye Historical Society.

Following the article in the last issue, we have been asked about the two publications for the Silver Jubilee Walkway. The pocket map guide is on sale at 25p and the souvenir guide costs £1.00. Both are available from bookshops but odd copies can be obtained from the Civic Trust (publishers) at 17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1, or the London Celebrations Committee for the Queen's Silver Jubilee at 4 Carlton Gardens, London SW1Y 5AB.

Richard Stone's address is: Land Use Consultants, 731 Fulham Road, London SW6 5UL. Telephone 01-736 7466.

Public transport systems - both regular and recreational - in the ten national parks are described in a new, fold-out leaflet published by the Countryside Commission.

The leaflet, titled *Public Transport in the National Parks 1977*, is available free from the Countryside Commission, National Park offices and information centres.

## SOUND IDEA

A new, inexpensive audio device for providing information to visitors has been developed by the Countryside Commission. Called Listening Points, eight of these devices have been installed in the new Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum which opened in May. Using only a simple tube and earpiece, visitors will be able to listen to taped descriptions of many exhibits. Commentaries begin at the touch of a button and sound reproduction is good.

Listening Points are suitable for a variety of indoor locations including

information centres, interpretive centres and museums. The flush-mounted Listening Point is made of plate steel and carries four magnetic sound outlets with bayonet-type fixings. The mains-operated cartridge players are remotely sited, so reducing the vandalism risk.

## DERWENT VALLEY

Derbyshire County Council, in association with the English Tourist Board, Peak Park Planning Board, Department of the Environment, Nottingham University (Department of Adult Education) and a number of local voluntary civic, historical and conservation societies have commissioned Dartington Amenity Research Trust to undertake a study of the natural and historic resources of the Cromford and Derwent Valley area to examine their potential for conservation, interpretation, recreation and tourism.

This area is very rich in industrial history from the early days of the cotton textile industry (eg Arkwright's development at Cromford), the development of communications (including the unique Cromford and High Peak Railway), lead mining from at least Roman times and the growth of tourism at the spa of Matlock Bath. There is also considerable geographical and natural history interest in the area to which reference will also be made.

The Study, provisionally called the Derwent Valley Interpretation Project, will examine subjects and sites in the area with potential for interpretation, use of sites already open to the public and demand for new facilities, the roles of voluntary and public organisations and the planning background to the area. From this base the study would consider and suggest:

- Objectives for the area in terms of conservation, recreation, education and tourism;
- Action needed to attain the objectives; and
- Possible agencies for this action.

DART have appointed Miss Gillian Binks as Project Officer for the Study which commenced in April 1977, and the final report is anticipated in March 1978. Harry Cowley

## CRESWELL CRAGS

### PICNIC SITE AND VISITOR CENTRE

Just over 4 miles southwest of Worksop in Nottinghamshire there is a scar in the landscape. A narrow gorge cut into a magnesian limestone hill comes as a surprise in a basically undulating landscape. Straddling the Nottinghamshire/ Derbyshire border by Creswell village, Creswell Crags is the type-site for the Creswellian Culture of Modern Man.



World famous in archaeological circles, the importance of the site has not been recognised generally by the public although there is intense pride among the locals. This has led to misuse and the resultant loss of valuable material from illicit diggings has increased the problem of finds by archaeologists at the turn of the century being unrecorded.

To combat these difficulties, to control public access and increase visitor awareness of the site a joint scheme was discussed between the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Councils early in the 1970's. The idea of a small picnic site with interpretive facilities was generally approved of by the local councils and interested bodies and the resultant visitor centre was opened by the Chairman of the East Midlands Tourist Board, Michael Gallagher, on 4th of April this year.

The 13-acre site consists of the 60 feet high gorge with a small lake in the valley bottom which also carries a public highway, a short woodland walk to the visitor centre which is set among the pine trees above the Crags, a carpark for about 30 cars, picnic site and of course the caves, some of

which are Ancient Monuments.

The visitor centre consists of a small display area with 24.5 square metres of floor area in which David Lewis, the designer of the interpretive display at the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre, has skilfully combined standard display panels and a reconstruction of a cave interior. The auditorium, seating between 30 and 40 visitors, shows a slide tape show. One of Michael Quinion's first efforts in this field, (the programme was completed long before the centre was finalised) with extensive help from the Nottinghamshire Ranger Service and Dr Paul Mellars of Sheffield University (the British expert on Creswellian Culture), it tells the story of settlement of the Crags in prehistoric times.

A small office has been provided for the Ranger, a graduate archaeologist who is carrying out detailed research of the site as well as conservation and visitor management work. Last, but not least, there are the toilets!

Although not nearly as spectacular as the Cheddar Gorge or similar prehistoric sites in the British Isles, Creswell Crags has proved unexpectedly popular.



Extra signing and interpretation will be provided as finances allow and the future development of the Centre to provide a research laboratory and records room for groups of serious students, both at school and university level is desirable.

Kate Curl, Notts County Council

## Interpretation '77 A PERSONAL VIEW

When considering gaps in Interpretation regarding Edinburgh or in Regional

Policy (Nottingham and Exmoor), the most striking omission, as far as I am concerned, is the apparent lack of awareness of the LIVING and TODAY.

The discovery of a blackbird's nest at the top of a drainpipe within Edinburgh Castle; the sudden appearance of two policemen followed quickly by their disappearance with additional company shortly after; the stumbling across a local unofficial event - are all experiences which are every bit as valid in interpreting the living as well as inherent past character of an area.

Although a great deal can be gained from all possible sub-committees, representatives, steering committees, over committees and through committees meeting each other to avoid duplication, surely a more positive approach is necessary? Why not accept the fact that all interpretation and experience is individual? Spend a week, month or whatever walking, talk to ordinary people in corner shops, factories on hills, whatever the weather. Look and see what is there, then go to the most remote spot in that area and think. Examine the spot on which you are standing even if this needs a microscope and think again. Only then return to your steering committee, sub-committee, etc with a little under your belt from which to base your viewpoint.

Perhaps the best form of interpretation involves the area in which the perfect example of Tudor architecture is NOT sighted or the most extreme example of fragmented limestone platform is not visible and the cliff face where a peregrine falcon has never been sighted. Myfanwy Greenwood

## FARM OPEN DAYS

### THE PUBLIC ON THE FARM

This one-day conference, held in March 1977 and organised by the Association of Agriculture, The Countryside Commission and the Royal Agricultural Society took place at Kenilworth.

John Higgs introduced the conference by giving three reasons for inviting the public on to farms - economics, a moral responsibility to try and bridge the urban-rural gap, and accepting and managing public access.

David Hadfield from Surrey explained the facilities he provided for various groups - children on holiday, foreigners on courses, young people on probation, and school parties. He devoted a great deal of his time (people prefer to meet the farmer) to organising these services, and incurred a very considerable expense in equipment and additional hired labour (c. £1500 pa).

Alan Scott from Teesdale has a farm adjacent to Cow Green Reservoir and picnic sites. The Pennine Way passes right through it, as do several other paths, and some of his land is controlled by the Nature Conservancy. During the summer, about one-third of farm labour is directed towards talking to people and pointing them to paths, explaining about the farm, moving campers on to suitable ground and so on. He believes it is cheaper to spend time in summer than to repair the damage done to walls and fences, but wonders how long the farming community can afford this type of activity.

Nigel Finch from Gloucestershire described his all-year-round farm trail which allows people to see a small farm unit working normally. Interpretation is by written and recorded means; a small display room gives the background information, and certain features are labelled.

Mrs Elizabeth Walker described how her farm had been opened up when a new milking unit was installed. A viewing platform was added for observation and explanation. Next year a calving box will be turned into an information centre, a new leaflet is being provided by the Countryside Commission, and a loop tape will be installed on the platform, so that people do not stay for too long.

Mrs Jean Chamberlain described her farm in Kent, only twelve miles from Charing Cross. By 1975 there were so many school visits that a decision had to be made either to restrict visits or to open a study centre. The latter was chosen, administered by a committee of five teachers and is financially self-supporting, with donations from various schools rather than grants, and a small charge per visit.

Ruth Tillyard



SIBH members who know of the experimental 'Norfolk Heritage' Project may like to hear a little about its progress. Its first publications, a booklet and series of thirty-two guide cards on the theme 'Water Transport in Norfolk' are now out (£3.25 complete with transparent wallet). The twenty-eight interpretive site panels associated with the theme are in preparation, but although one was completed in time for the official public launching of the project on March 29th, the others will not all be in place until perhaps mid-June.

A second series of publications and panels, on the theme 'Food from the Land' are in preparation, and should be ready during the summer. Production difficulties have set the project back a little, but it is hoped to catch up with the earlier schedule by the beginning of 1978, in which year it is planned to treat the topic 'A Roof Over Everyone's Head - according to his class'.

Norfolk Heritage is led by Andrew Pierssené as Project Officer, with Roger Flatt as Designer. Mrs Joy Lodey is part-time Secretary, and Alan Scowen, of the County Planning Department, works with the Project part-time. Andrew Pierssené

## Job, Please

At present on a job-creation project in Cheshire, Diana Raggett is looking for a permanent post from September. She has behind her a degree in geography, two years' teaching experience at Dale Fort Field Centre in Pembrokeshire, considerable travel and the production

of a teachers' pack for a medium-distance footpath in Cheshire. Any offers to Diana at 10 Hoole Bank, Hoole Village, Chester CH2 4ES.

## Display Centre

Merrist Wood Agricultural College, Guildford, Surrey, which launches a new OND course in Countryside Recreation in September 1977, is to develop a display centre of countryside equipment, including interpretation facilities.

Staff at the College, having been very impressed with the Scottish Countryside Commission's Battleby Display Centre near Perth are planning to build their development into the new warden/ranger Training Course.

The purpose will be to display, on the lines of the Design Centre, up-to-date and successful examples of car park, footpath, bridleway, cycle park surface materials and construction, fence, gate, stile and barrier examples (concentrating on use of local materials), litter receptacles, seating, picnic tables and platforms, a wide range of signs, 'Way Markings', symbol posts and other information aids, plus many other features.

The whole display area will be set against a backcloth of wild and native shrub, flower and tree production methods as a reminder that vegetation care and healthiness is a pre-requisite for much of the pleasure that the countryside provides. Part of the area will be grazed by a small unit of Southdown sheep, that are becoming increasingly less common. The sheep will be part of the Rare Breeds Survival genetic pool development. P Cradock

*continued from page 24*

course, on the subject of interpretation, to be run by the University of Washington's College of Forest Resources. Under the direction of Grant W Sharpe, Professor of Outdoor Recreation, it will utilise his textbook, *Interpreting the Environment*, which is referred to fully elsewhere in the issue. Details of the course are being sent to Tony Escritt, Vice Principal, Peak National Park Study Centre, Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire S30 2WB.

# what's on ... when & where?

## Events

25 Jun-21 Aug, Silver Jubilee Exhibition, Piper's Paintings and Silver from Elizabeth I to Elizabeth II. Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal.

Mon 18 July, Opening of *Waterways in Art* exhibition, RIBA, 66 Portland Place, London W1.

27 Aug-25 Sep, Approaches to Landscape - exhibition of work of artists and photographers from the area. Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal.

## Conferences

1-5 Sep, Museum Assistants' Group Annual Study Weekend, Southampton University. The theme is *Audio Visual Communication and Museums*. Details from Cynthia Merrett, Zoology Department, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff CF1 3NP. Booking fee and deposit £4.00.

21-22 Sep, Countryside Recreation Research Advisory Group Conference at Warwick University. Theme: *Providing for Countryside Recreation - the Role of Marketing*. £25 per person. Applications to CRRAG Secretary, Countryside Commission, John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3RA.

## A Dollop of Devon

The next meeting of the Society will be based in Dartington, Devon. The theme is *The Place of Interpretation amongst Established Tourist Attractions* and will concentrate on South Devon.

Starting in the early afternoon of FRIDAY 9 SEPTEMBER, at Newton Abbot, the programme will include visits to Kent's Cavern, Babbacombe Model Village and Berry Head Interpretive Centre, the Dartington Cider Press and, on the Saturday, Dartmoor National Park Morwellham and the Cotehele Estate. Talks will include Geraint Jenkins on *Regional Interpretation in the Devon context*, Michael Quinion on *Tourism in Devon* and a presentation on the *Farms for City Children* project. Entertainment will be provided in Dartington

Great Hall on the Saturday evening, and the meeting will end formally after lunch on SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER.

The fee for the weekend will be about £25, with accommodation at Dartington College of Arts. Full details from, and reservations to, Terry Robinson, Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset.

## Courses

The Countryside Commission for Scotland is to run a further Interpretive Planning Course this autumn, based on its Battleby Training Centre and the Scottish Field Studies Association's Kindrogan Field Centre. The course is designed for professional staff involved, or likely to be engaged, in interpretive planning. Participants will examine policy, management and design considerations, and will undertake a variety of practical exercises, related to the production and implementation of interpretive plans at both local and regional levels. The course will run from 28 September to 5 October inclusive. Further details and application forms can be obtained from: Countryside Commission for Scotland, Battleby, Redgorton, Perth, PH1 3EW.

21-27 Nov, Countryside Ranger/Warden Training Course, sponsored by the Countryside Commission. Details from Peter Townsend, Principal, Peak National Park Study Centre, Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire S30 2WB.

27 Jan-5 Feb 1978, Countryside Interpretation Training Course, sponsored by the Countryside Commission. This is the second such course and is intended for interpretation or information officers (or other groups of people involved in interpretation, such as rangers, wardens, museum staff) newly or recently appointed to work for organisations involved in Countryside conservation and recreation. Details from Peter Townsend, Losehill Hall.

## CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

We hear of a forthcoming correspondence  
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