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# *InterpNEWS*

The International Heritage Interpretation e-Magazine.

*A John Veverka & Associates Publication*

Entrance to Petra.



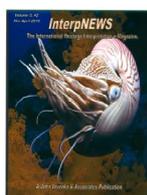


*JV on the Isle of Aaron, Scotland.*

Hi folks, and Happy New Year. This will be a jam-packed year for InterpNEWS. First InterpNEWS is now a **National Federation of Tourist Guides Association strategic alliance partner, and linked into the World Federation of Tourist Guides Associations.** That alliance adds over 150,000 members and folks who will receive InterpNews. That means that InterpNEWS now reaches over **300,000 folks, agencies and organizations in over 60 countries.** And it's still offered for FREE! **NEW - read back issues at: <https://issuu.com/interpnews>**

### **Our Heritage Interpretation Training Center**

([http://www.heritageinterp.com/interpretive\\_training\\_center\\_course\\_catalogue\\_.html](http://www.heritageinterp.com/interpretive_training_center_course_catalogue_.html)) now offers 22 different college level heritage interpretation training courses, with more courses coming for 2016. We are also offering three of our courses through "Museum Studies" (see the course announcement at **page 38** of this issue).



**Call for Articles for our March/April InterpNEWS issue** - deadline of 1st of February 2016. I am always looking for new and revealing/insightful articles for the magazine. Articles on interpretive/visitor research, living history programs, new exhibit ideas, new technology, working with volunteers, using agriculture - music - theater in interpretation, etc. If you have ideas please feel free to contact me: [jvainterp@aol.com](mailto:jvainterp@aol.com). Hope you enjoy this issue :) **John Veverka Publisher.**

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**InterpNEWS** is published six times a year as a **FREE** John Veverka & Associates publication and published as a service to the interpretive profession. If you would like to be added to our mailing list just send an e-mail to [jvainterp@aol.com](mailto:jvainterp@aol.com) and we will add you to our growing mailing list. Contributions of articles are welcomed. If you would like to have an article published in InterpNEWS let me know what you have in mind. **Cover photo: Entrance to Petra.**

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Experience and Outcome Based  
Interpretive Planning -  
Mass Customization, Markets of One and  
more...

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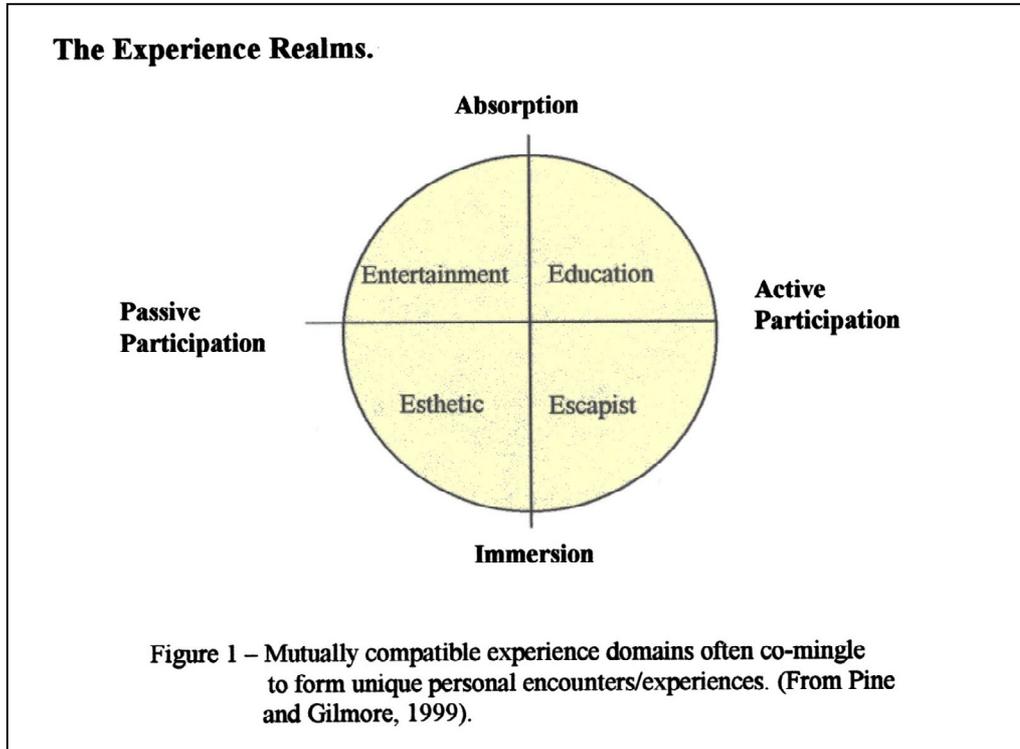
**Moving forward while standing still?** In preparation for developing this article on new cutting-edge approaches to interpretive planning, I spent some time looking through the now many text books on interpretation to see “what was new”. What I found was new ways of saying “old ideas”, or more complex ways of presenting simple concept and more convenient ways of getting the message out. While our visitors to parks, museums, historic sites and related interpretive attractions have change greatly in “why they visit” over the last few years, we have generally fought to keep pace with our interpretive planning strategies to meet visitors changing needs, interests, and their search for memorable “experiences”. And the word “experience” is the key to interpretive planning for programs or services, or interpretive master planning for parks, historic sites, or even regional interpretive systems planning. It’s time to update interpretive planning for today’s visitors.

**Stuff based interpretive planning** has been the norm. There seemed to be more effort in planning where and what interpretive media we would use, than consideration of “is that what the visitor wants or needs”? And many interpretive plans ignore the visitor except for basic demographics. I think that often we forget that the purpose of the interpretive plan is to eventually be implemented! And successful implementation involves accomplishing meaningful objectives related to “does the visitor get it!” about your site’s story. Do their on-site experiences relate well to our desired “outcomes” from those interpretive experiences? Today’s interpretive plans need to focus on accomplishing this.

**One planning philosophy we promote is that you should be able to demonstrate how every dollar spent on your interpretive programs and services will yield about five dollars in benefits.** These are benefits for the organization, resource, your mission, and most importantly, to your visitors. To accomplish this goal we need to consider content additions to interpretive plans. These benefits can be both tangible and intangible. For example benefits might include: reduce littering or solving management problems, recruiting more volunteers, increasing revenue, broadening appeal, building support in the community, providing more cost effective media and services, increasing visitation, and so on. This is how you argue for funding for implementing the plans recommend development, media and services – what will you get in return from your interpretive investment. Does your plan do that?

**The next big thing** we have been working on in our interpretive planning and training courses, is adding the elements of experience based and outcome based interpretive planning strategies. Besides the inventory of interpretive resources such as geological, historical, ecological features, etc. we have also included an “experience inventory” based on the book “*The Experience Economy*” by Joseph Pine and J. Gilmore. Essentially what we know is that different sets of experiences will attract or discourage visitors who are looking for a particular set of experiences.

Let's take a look at the experience model (Figure 1) and I'll give some examples as it applies to interpretive planning and marketing interpretive programs and services.



Essentially Pine and Gilmore illustrate that there are four basic ways of engaging in experiences you seek out or take part in:

**Passive Participation** – watching an interpretive amphitheater program for example.

**Active Participation** – taking part in a hands-on interpretive demonstration or activity.

**Immersion Experiences** – being in the forest, on a lake, in a historic home, scuba diving.

**Absorption Experience** – this is where you are so focused on the experience like watching a great play or movie that you forget about time (day dreaming while driving – ever miss an exit?).

Now, there are also four basic kinds of experiences you can engage in. You may be looking for:

**Entertainment experiences** – like going to a movie, playing a video game or watching a living history program.

**Educational experiences** – you want the experience to teach you something, challenge critical thinking and puzzle problem skills, or you want to learn a new skill or advance your knowledge level of a subject.

**Esthetic experiences** – watching the sun set, looking at and smelling wildflowers, being in and looking at a garden, visiting an art gallery (which could combine many different experiences).

**Escapist experience** – going on a long hike where you won't see another person – taking a canoe trip or getting lost in a good book.

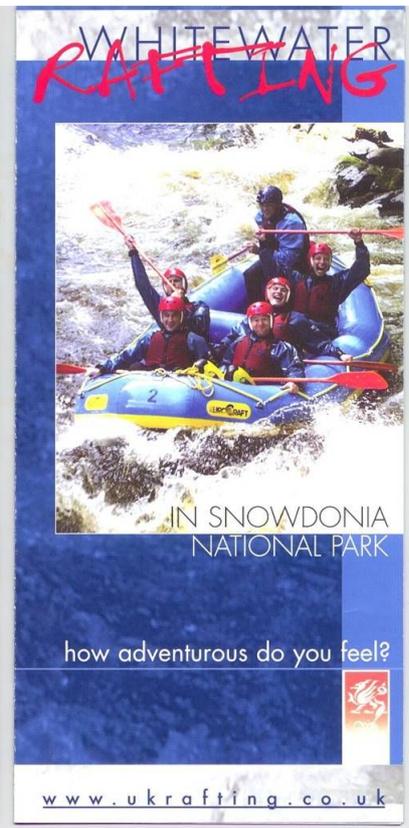
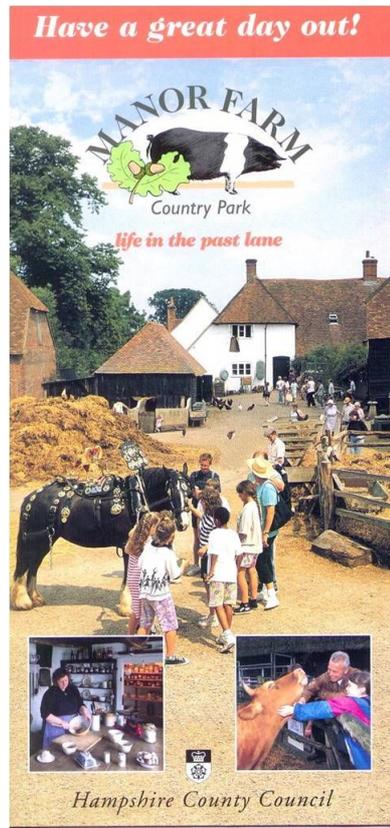
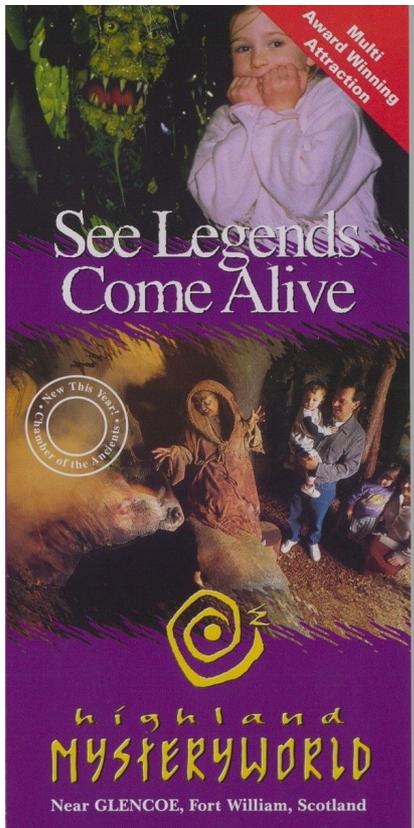
To me this is one of the most important aspects of any interpretive plan – what experiences do you offer, or want to offer? We do an experience inventory as part of the total plan interpretive inventory to address this issue and how it may affect current or future visitation or market shifts.

Now we know that visitors don't usually come to interpretive sites for just one experience nor do they come alone. I often think "if I brought my family" would there be something for everyone; mom, wife, daughter, son and I? The visitor may want an educational interpretive walk that is also entertaining (edutainment) in the morning, want to watch a demonstration in the afternoon, and just watch the sunset in the evening. If you're developing an interpretive program schedule – do you have just one kind of experience you're offering or a diversity of experiences?

Here is how it works in simple terms: The kinds of experiences you offer at your interpretive site or facility is often directly related to the kinds of audiences you can attract that "want" that kind of or mix of experience!

If you want to attract new or different audiences or age groups, you have to add or modify new kinds of experiences market groups would have an interest in as appropriate for your site.

If you look at advertising for interpretive sites you can see how that works. Here are three different brochures. What experiences are they offering and to which market groups?



So, in general, as part of cutting edge interpretive planning we now spend a lot of time in looking at authenticity, experience realms and experience inventories as part of our audience needs and marketability for interpretive programs and services – interpretive planning for new experience mixes.

**The Importance of authenticity** should be noted here. My associate Matt Kaser reminded me of this important aspect of our interpretive planning. “ I remember reading Josephs Pine where he mentions the highly and masterfully designed recreation of things. When the dad says to his son "we are going to see a real ship wreck" and the boys says " oh like in the movie..., or like the Pirates of the ... at Disney, or the haunted house, or the family entertainment center, etc.) In Mass customization idea I often think of the phrase – ‘**The truth remains consistent, no matter how fine you sift it**’. Interpretively speaking, the story and theme remains consistent no matter how you divide it up or repackage it ... because it is *authentic*, rooted in truth, rooted in the inherent resource.”

**But there’s more.** Related to the kinds of authentic experiences visitors may seek, we have to add in the kinds of interpretive **program topics** that visitors may have an intrinsic interest in as part of the draw too. I learned from my MS thesis on “Visitor Motives for Selecting and Attending Interpretive Programs” many years ago that different sexes and age groups like different program topics and different program delivery methods (experiences) for different reasons, which I have to add into the interpretive planning process. This can be accomplished with a survey of current programs or services and proposed new programs or services and having visitors’ select their topic choices for programs they have the most interest in attending and why? For example, of the 30 program topics I surveyed, I found that visitors over 45 years had an interest in a program topic on “*what your family can do to help the environment*” – but they wanted hands-on examples they could do at their own home in the program content. Visitors under 45 weren’t much interested in that topic. The program topic “Snakes the deadly hunters” was preferred by visitors under the age of 25 for esteem motives (and edutainment), while visitors over the age of 25 wanted to learn safety tips for avoiding snakes in the park. One audience but with a mix of different desired outcomes from the same program. Mostly women preferred the first program on the environmental issue while mostly men wanted the program on snakes. So program topics and the experiences and motives associated with them enter into the interpretive plan and marketing mix.

That’s just a taste of these new elements required for professional interpretive planning. Now let’s look at “Mass Customization” for interpretive planning strategies and program/services offerings.

**One size does not fit all in interpretive planning!** When I first read the book *The Experience Economy*, there were also companion books recommended. They included: “Mass Customization” and the book “Markets of One”. While designed for the retail and tourism markets, their ideas have direct implications for interpretive planning as well. I have been incorporating these concepts into our interpretive plans for several years now, and here is a summary of how they work.

**Mass Customization in interpretive planning** involves looking at the wide range of interpretive programs, services and topics that visitors might want to experience, learn about and enjoy. But in interpretation one size does not fit all. For example, most self-guiding trails have only “one” story or theme, and if that one story or topic is not to your interest, you might walk the trail, but not use the interpretive media. The interpretive content might be too simple, too complex or cover a topic they’re not interest in. With mass customization as part of an interpretive plan, we can phase in 10 or more different interpretive trail guides for “one” trail.

For our example here we could have many trail guides based one general theme like “Our forest landscape is always in a state of change.”, but we can have many different self-guiding topic options such as:

- Our forest landscape.... (guide for spring, summer, fall, winter).  
(guide for introductory, intermediate or advanced topics)  
(guide in 2-3,4 or more different languages)  
(guide for wildflowers, trees, succession, land management, etc.)

This range of guides could all be for the same trail. The guides would exist on your web site as a PDF for printing from a computer or be downloaded to a smart phone. They can exist as a printed guide, and audio guide, or a video guide. The visitor could “customize” the season, complexity, language and media (printed, smart phone) they want the guide to provide based on their interest or needs from a trail guide web based library.

Now imagine if you had more trails, each with many different themes, adaptations, learning styles and levels, and experiences. More mass customization – a mall of individualized opportunities for visitors to discover and experience your stories based on each visitors unique needs, interests and learning styles (Markets of One).

For larger projects, like the 500 mile long **Susquehanna River Greenway Interpretive Systems Plan** in Pennsylvania we developed a few years ago, the mass customization matrix included over 200 different interpretive sites, museums, parks, and related heritage areas that could be developed/marketed for Greenway wide auto tours, bus tours or theme/topic based tours or events. Each interpretive experience could be customized to the user’s interests, knowledge levels and experience types ready for them to find and select at the Greenway web site (currently in development).

The mass customization interpretive planning inventory and assessment for each individual site selected along the 500 mile long Greenway included:

- Main interpretive stories or topics or resources the site presented.
- Current experience opportunities at each site.
- Quality of the interpretive resources/experience (best example, average example, most accessible example of a particular category, such as civil war sites, environmental sites, railroad history, canal era history, etc.
- Analysis of existing interpretive media or services.
- Recommended new interpretive media, services and experiences.
- Tourism readiness issues (tour bus ready, up to 30 visitors at one time, only 5-10 visitors like for a historic home tour, or not tourism ready)

The data from all the sites were then summarized in a variety of mass customization matrices including:

- Site by topic (railroad, historic home, scenic vista, natural history features, etc.)
- Site by tourism readiness.
- Site by interpretive media or experiences.
- Site interpretive media implementation priority and costs.

When the mass customization matrices were completed they gave us a big picture of just what were the main interpretive topics, stories, resources and interpretive development opportunities for the whole 500 mile long greenway corridor and how we might be able to connect them for different themed experiences.

**How would we use this?** If a visitor was interested in historic cemeteries for example, they could click on a search engine at the Greenway web site for historic cemeteries and all the cemeteries that were available for interpretation, their key stories or residents, web sites, locations and any interpretive materials would pop up. This person (or group) could then plan a historic cemetery tour through the greenway. The same for any other topic such as historic homes, railroad history, Civil War sites, and so on.

The **tourism readiness analysis** gives future planners for tour bus route development and auto tour development a list of what different interpretive heritage sites could handle for visitor numbers. This ranking also included such issues as wayfinding, restroom facilities, hours of operation, and related logistic information.

It allows visitors traveling to, or living in a very large region, like a National Heritage Area, the ability to easily “customize” their visit based on the topics they are interested in and the kinds of experiences they are looking for.

**The Quest for Outcomes** is one of our main goals in interpretive planning, and the essence of outcome based planning. The interpretive plan has to provide the information and strategies (short and long term) to actually accomplish something, both tangible and intangible. What we look for in our interpretive plan outcomes includes, but are not limited to:

- Are learning, emotional and behavioral objectives actually being accomplished both for the total plan and organization, as well as for individual resources or features within the site?
- Getting \$5.00 in benefits for every \$1.00 spent on implementing the interpretive plan. This seems to always be left out of interpretation planning, but is our best arguing point to keep interpreters from being “let go” when budgets are cut. Interpretation should create more benefits than it costs whenever possible and interpreters need to be able to justify their work and benefits in real dollar terms.
- Sustainability – ensuring the resource with its unique place and message will live on and on for future generations. Sustainability will result by default if the Interpretive Planner stays true to the “rule” and tells the truth (maintains authenticity for the site story and its presentation or experiences). Truth is always stranger than fiction. Such trends of laser discs, slide shows, stiff mannequins, etc. will come and go and be replaced by new delivery systems, like the iPhone, but the authenticity remains.
- Attracting more visitors, or more theme based visitors, or more experience based visitors based on our mission and resources and more mass customization opportunities.
- Making more income from interpretive programs and services (experience based) – including more memberships and membership renewals based on the organization offering a wider range of experience opportunities to constantly changing visitor market needs and interests.
- Making our interpretive messages “memorable” – we remember 10% of what we hear, 30% of what we read, 50% of what we see and 90% of what we do. Experiences translate to memories, both bad or good ones. And visitors tend to remember bad ones for a long time! Interpretive planning needs to take an offensive approach of anticipating problems and issues in the interpretive plan before they occur and try to “plan them out”.

- Making our interpretive messages “exportable” – so visitors can actually use the information and inspiration from the interpretive experience beyond the park, historic site or facility boundary at their own home, community or in future interpretive experiences elsewhere.

All this fits into our general Interpretive Plan Outline and are integrated into the content of the interpretive plan. A copy of this outline is available to the JVA website.

For years interpretation and interpretive planning has focused on the same content, and many plans still focus mostly on the design and location of interpretive “media” without asking if “that’s what the visitors really wanted or needed” and how will this enhance the total site experience and outcomes? And we’re not leaving Tilden behind – the principles of provoke, relate and reveal and the use of tangible and intangible concepts are imbedded in all the final presentations and delivery media the interpretive plans recommend. That’s what makes the interpretive plan “interpretive”. But we must also use those principles in planning to create a diversity of interpretive experiences – to expand interpretive market groups, and to see visitors not as *numbers* but as a collection of unique individuals with a wide range of interpretive topics and experience interests.

**It’s time to ask** our visitors what they want, need or attracts them to our facilities and integrate our visitor research into creating new experiences for diverse audiences into our interpretive plans. Movie theaters have learned no matter how nice the theater looks, you have to change the film and movie watching experience to keep them coming back. What kinds of experiences do your visitors want? If your numbers are down, it might just be related to the experiences you are NOT offering. I have reviewed many different “visitor survey tools” for lots of organizations and many surveys have one big flaw. While telling you what your visitors may not like, or on a scale of 1...10 how they rank something, they don’t tell you what to fix! So if a visitor selects a 3 on a 1-10 scale, what does the “3” actually mean? What do I fix to improve or remove the perceived problem? Many of these surveys are not scientifically valid and designed by folks with little or no training in valid survey research design, so as part of interpretive planning we need to fix this too. Visitor surveys need to be tools we can make actual improvements or adjustments from.

### Summary

This short article provided a general summary of the new interpretive planning concepts from other retail and marketing sources that have direct implications for interpretive planners. We have been incorporating these concepts of Mass Customization, Markets of One and Experiential Marketing into our interpretive plans for several years and found it greatly enhances the outcomes the interpretive plan, when implemented, will deliver. We strive to meet the philosophy of “for every dollar you spend on interpretation you should get five dollars in benefits”, into each interpretive plan strategy as well, for obvious reasons. This interpretive planning approach helps this philosophy become reality and creates interpretive plans designed to celebrate and build upon the great diversity of our current and potential interpretive site visitors and get them coming back for more while helping ensure the sustainability of the site or organization

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## Interpretive Tip: A Road Trip with a Junior Ranger

*J. Patrick Barry*



*“The author’s son taking a junior ranger oath.”*

This summer I took a six-week road trip around the United States with my nine year-old son. We visited eighteen federal and state parks that offered junior ranger programs. Based on this experience and my experience as a visitor center manager I’d like to offer some advice for those offering junior ranger programs.

One of the ideas that all interpreters have heard (and many of us actually use) is to “consider your audience.” In the case of my son, when he tells me or tells the ranger that he wants to, or does not want to participate in a junior ranger program, his is the only opinion that matters.

At some of the sites we visited he wanted to participate; at others he did not. The reasons he did not varied from, “I’m tired.” to “I’m not very interested in this.” Even though we visited what I thought were fascinating sites some of them did not capture his imagination. More likely, he was ready to be out of the car to hike, climb and run.

At some sites he dove in and completed the junior ranger requirements enthusiastically. Sometimes it took a little help and encouragement from me. He ended up completing six junior ranger programs which I believe helped him remember the sites and perhaps something about their significance.

I asked myself, “What made the difference?” Why were some junior ranger programs more appealing to him than others?

Children have opinions, just like adults. Sometimes a site interests them; sometimes not. Sometimes they are tired from a long road trip and just want to move. Sometimes the ranger draws them in or pushes them away.

The attitude of the ranger seemed to be very important. Pushy rangers usually pushed my son away from participating. However, rangers who took the time to have a real and respectful conversation with him, explaining the requirements and the rewards and asking him if he would like to participate, seemed to get a much more positive response. Respect is important.

The worst case was a ranger who chose to ask my son question after difficult question. Although I’m sure his intentions were good I do not think he understood “age appropriate” teaching techniques. He was not reading my son’s body language which clearly said, “Leave me alone!” My son soon grew frustrated and angry and decided it was time to leave and not complete the program. Compare this with several outgoing and friendly rangers who took the time to have some fun and interact with him in a playful way. They patiently and enthusiastically answered questions. Those rangers elicited a very positive response and my son completed the programs.

In the chapter, “For the Younger Mind” in his book “Interpreting Our Heritage” Freeman Tilden stated that success with children is linked to the ability on the part of the interpreter to, “give the sense of companionship and conceal any show of direct instruction.”

Unfortunately many rangers cannot find the time during a busy summer season “give the sense of companionship” while interacting with a junior ranger. Sometimes, long lines of visitors are waiting to get their questions answered and the rangers are simply too busy.

One of the larger sites we visited solved this by having a dedicated junior ranger staff person. He was able to focus on the children, establish rapport, have real conversations with them and facilitate their learning without being in a rush. That ranger gave us the great option to mail the booklet back after the visit, which gave us more time to explore the site and enjoy the experience. Clearly, management at that site believes in connecting with young visitors through the junior ranger program.

Perhaps another option for busy sites would be to schedule time every hour for junior rangers and treat it as a pre-scheduled program? Small sites with low visitation were the best. My son had more uninterrupted time with the ranger.

At a historic ranch in Montana, he became a “junior rancher!” I was impressed how the site adapted their program to fit the mission and message.

I tried to remain constant at the sites we visited. When we arrived I usually made sure we were fed and hydrated and our other basic needs were met. We typically “watched the movie” or experienced whatever introduction was available so we would both have a basic understanding of the site. Then we selected activities like guided hikes or talks to learn more and have fun. Although I encouraged my son to participate in junior ranger activities I knew better than to try to force him to do it. He completed six programs and either chose not to participate or started and then stopped several others. Overall, these were good experiences as evidenced by the fact he has his junior ranger badges proudly displayed in his room.

If you are starting a new junior ranger program or refurbishing an existing program, the National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Parks Canada, Oregon Parks and Recreation are among the agencies I’m familiar with that have good examples. I know others do as well but the ones I’ve mentioned are the ones I’ve seen. Honor their efforts by “borrowing” their good ideas. Many of us have the gift of having professional teachers on our staff. Their suggestions can help a junior ranger program fit the age group and improve chances for success.

The badges, patches and booklets serve as rewards for their efforts and can help them remember key messages but selecting the topics is perhaps more important. My son likes to hear about deadly creatures, disasters and other extremes that nine year-olds love! He gravitates towards the “biggest” “deepest” “tallest” etc. Look for content to meet those desires!

## *JVA InterpNews*

It is fitting to end with a quote from David L. Larsen, “The visitor is sovereign...in what they think and feel. No matter how enthusiastic, professional, knowledgeable, and creative an interpreter is, it is the audience that will ultimately decide if they’ve had a meaningful experience, connected emotionally and intellectually, and believe the place is caring about and for.”

This message applies to children as well as adult visitors.

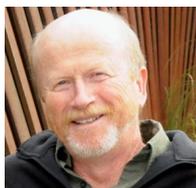
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*J. Patrick Barry, photo  
by: Kimber Dahlquist*

## *JVA InterpNews*



### **Avoid The Awkward**

#### **Close**

#### **Speaking Tip 104**

by

*Ethan Rotman*

Endings tend to be awkward. Saying goodbye to a friend, leaving family after a holiday gathering, ending a relationship, or even knowing what to say at the end of speech.

Those last words though, that final thought create the feeling that encapsulates the event. Do you want to walk away feeling awkward, unsettled, and unsure or do you prefer feeling happy, excited for the next encounter and inspired?

The answer is clear.

I heard a fabulous speaker recently who delivered an engaging, thought provoking, humorous talk with the phrase: “I guess that is all I have to say”. What a let-down for the audience and what a let-down for the speaker. You could almost see the awkwardness in the air as we politely applauded.

There is an easy solution for this predictable problem though: simply recap the purpose of your talk in one sentence – say it with a smile, and leave the stage.

What is it you hope to leave the audience with when you are done? What was the point of your talk? What do you hope they will do at this time? If you take the time to plan and practice this one line, you will end each meeting, each conversation, and each presentation leaving a very positive impression on your audience.

The next time you are speak, take the message of your talk, put it into a single sentence and use it as your closing line. You will be amazed at how good that feels and how well the audience responds.

(Hint: Did you notice what I just did there?)

*This Speaking Tip is one in a series from iSpeakEASY. We help people present information in an exciting and relevant manner – usually by helping them avoid the mistakes discussed here. Contact us for information on workshops and coaching. Visit us at [www.iSpeakEASYblog.wordpress.com](http://www.iSpeakEASYblog.wordpress.com).*



***Interpretive Training Course in  
Nada, Lithuania with  
Focus on the Curonian Spit  
Trans-boundary World  
Heritage Site***

*John A. Veverka  
Certified Interpretive Planner/Trainer  
Heritage Interpretation Training Center*

*Photos of a section of the Curonian Spit. Other photos are available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/gallery/>.*

This past September I had the honor of being invited by the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO to present a one day workshop (as part of a two-day training seminar) on the importance of interpretation for the interpretation of World Heritage Sites to WHS visitors.

The formal title of the training seminar was "Capacity Building Training in Communication and Management of Trans-Boundary Properties". A trans-boundary property is a WHI which spans the management of two countries. We used the Curonian Spit (Nida, Lithuania) as the working example as it is managed by both UNESCO in Lithuania and Russia.

The topic of the first day of the seminar (28 September 2015) focused on "Management of UNESCO trans-boundary cultural landscape territories locally and internationally (theory, requirements and best practice examples). Speakers for this days seminar included:

- Mr. Dennis Rodwell (author and UNESCO consultat).
- Mr. Vidmantas Bezaras (Curonian Spit, Lithuania).
- Ms. Rita Johanne Johansen (Vega Archipelago, Norway).
- Mr. Sacha Klopper (Wadden Sea, Germany).
- Latvian colleagues (Historic Centre of Rega, Latvia).

The seminar on the second day (29 September, 2015) focused on the topic of "Explanation, presentation and communication about Outstanding Universal Value (theory and best practice examples).

- Lectures and workshops led by Prof. John Veverka - Heritage Interpretation Consultants.
- Presentations by practitioners from other trans-boundary World Heritage Sites.

## JVA InterpNews

Part of the workshop was an interpretive presentation by the Curonian Spit WHS manager interpreting some of the history, geology-development of the Curonian Spit, and interpretive management issues and visitor communication needs.



*Seminar participants working our way to a Curonian Spit viewing area (left photo) and the author at the viewing vista, a key location for Curonian Spit visitors. The Baltic Sea is in the distant background. Additional information on the Curonian Spit UNESCO WHS can be found at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994>*

The post field trip included several excellent short presentations by:

- Ms. Karin Dallo (Struve Geodetic Arc, Estonia).
- Mr. Oleksandr Demianiuk (Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and the Ancient Beech Forests of Germany, Ukraine).
- Ms. Rita Johanne Johansen (Vega Archipelago, Norway).
- Mr. Sascha Klopper (Wadden Sea, Germany).

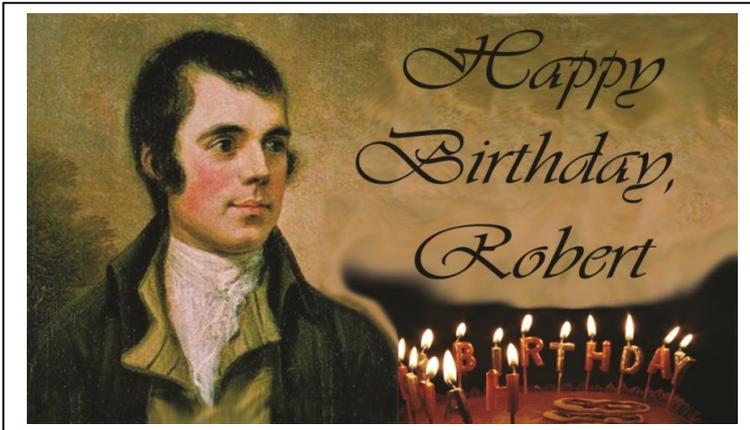
The afternoon session was wrapped up by a summary presentation by Prof. Veverka on "What Interpretation Can Be - New Frontiers for Heritage Interpretation".

This was a super successful two-day seminar with lots of idea sharing and discussions, especially during delightful meals featuring local foods.

Copies of papers presented or other information about the seminar can be obtained by contacting Ms. Rugile Balkaite, Project Coordinator: [rugile.balkaite@gmail.com](mailto:rugile.balkaite@gmail.com).

John A. Veverka  
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## “Let’s Celebrate Robert Burns Birthday”

by Dr. Martha Benn Macdonald

Note: Article includes many suggestions for the reader to celebrate his/own party. This is not a process essay, definitely not how-to. D’accord, my dear readers?

What lovelier way to bring warmth and merriment on a cold winter’s evening in late January than to celebrate Robert Burns Birthday with piping in haggis on January 25<sup>th</sup>?

Imagine the wee piper as haggis is carried in! Of course, if you can’t imagine eating the liver, heart, and lungs of a sheep blended with other ingredients (and I cannot), why not make your favorite vegetarian dish and serve it in a pottery bowl? Hoist it high as the piper accompanies your servers. For the celebration, enjoy some root vegetables, perhaps carrots and potatoes, oat cakes, and drink a round of the finest Scotch whiskey or hot chocolate or herbal tea if the young folks are present. For dessert enjoy fruit and short bread.

Invite someone to read “Address to a Haggis,” and share highlights of Scotland’s beloved poet’s life. For example, as all disciples of Burns know, despite his poverty and suffering from rheumatic fever, Burns never ceased to laugh, nor to have compassion for the poor, including animals, and the downtrodden. He never lost his sense of humor, nor his love for the ladies and the bottle.

As he wrote in “Scotch Drink,”

“Let other poets raise a fracas.  
'Gout vines, an' wines, an' drucken Bacchus,  
An' crabbit names an' stories wrack us,  
An' grate our Lug: 'I sing the juice Scotch bear can mak us,  
In glass or jug.”

For his sins with one or more ladies, Burns had to sit in front of those gathered to worship at a Presbyterian church.

In one poem, he wrote,  
“Ord, hear my earnest cry  
Against that Presbyt'ry of Ayr!  
Thy strong right hand, Lord, mak it bare

Upo' their heads! Lord, visit them, an' dina spare, For their misdeeds!”

Much to his stern, Presbyterian father’s chagrin, Robert and his brother, Gilbert, learned French and dancing. A lady’s man, he fathered fifteen children, some legitimate, others illegitimate, but as scholars agree, Jean Armour was the love of his life. They were married in 1788. Burns wrote verses to her:

“O Jenny, thou hast stolen away my soul!  
In vain I strive against the lov’d idea:  
Thy tender image sallies on my thoughts,  
My firm resolves become an easy prey!” is especially enchanting.

Burns wrote poem after poem, and I would encourage you to have someone read several of these beautiful lyrics at the celebration. If you are planning the event, go through a volume of Burns, and select your favorite poems, being certain to include “Bless Jesus Christ, O Cardoness” (“On a Galloway Laird”), “Holy Willie’s Prayer,” “To a Mouse,” “To a Louse,” “No Churchman am I,” and others.

“Lament of Mary Queen of Scots” could be turned into an interesting dramatic monologue if you know a performer who would like to take on that challenge. In addition, be sure to sing some of Burns’ enchanting melodies as well, perhaps “My Luv Is Like a Red, Red Rose,” “Masonic Song,” “Ye banks and braes bonnie Doon,” “Auld Lang Sygn,” “Charlie, He’s My Darling,” “Corn Rigs Are Bonie,” “Highland Mary,” “Green Grow the Rashes,” and many others. You decide; after all, you know your audience. In addition, find some anonymous Scottish ballads.

In the narrative poems, there are some marvelously haunting stories. For example, “Tam O’ Shanter,” A Tale, remains one of the best. Tam is out one windy night. He passes Kirk-Alloway where he sees more than he imagined. Warlocks and witches in a dance:

Nae cotillion, brent new frae France,  
But hornpipes, jigs, strathespeys, and reels,  
Put life and mettle in their heels  
.....  
Cioffins stood round, like open presses,  
That shaw’d the dead in their last dresses,  
.....  
But whiter’d beldame, auld and droll,  
Rigwoodie hags was spean a foal,  
Louping and flinging on a crummock,  
I wonder did na turn thy stomach!

But Tam kennd what was what fa’ brawlie:  
There was ae winsome wench and wawlie,  
That night enlisted in the core,  
Lang after kend on Carrick shore  
(For mone a beast to dead she shot,  
An’ perish’d monie a bonie boat,  
And shook baithemeikle corn and bear,  
And kept the country-side in fear,  
Her cuttysark, o  
Paisley harm,  
That while a basic she had worn,

(Tam) roars out: "Weel done, Cutty-sark!

.....  
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,  
Wi' monie an elderichskrietch and hollo,  
Ah, Tam! Ah, Tam, thou'll get thy fairn!  
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!  
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!  
Now, do thy speety utmost, Meg.

.....  
(And when Maggie crossed the water),the carlinclaught her by the rump "And left poor Maggie scarce a stump. ....

.....  
Think! Ye may buy the joys o'er dear:  
Remember Tam o' Shanter'smeare.

Not only do Burns' poems contain good stories, but there are other enticing stories as well: there are stories of Flora MacDonald and Bonnie Prince Charlie, ghostly tales of ruined castles, and many others, including legends portrayed in Scottish ballads, to say nothing of snippets from Sir Walter Scott's books, and collections of Scottish folk tales online. After all, there's nothing like a good yarn to capture the attention of an audience, especially on a cold winter's eve.

In addition, you may invite someone to dance "The Highland Fling" or "The Sword Dance," and invite some Scottish Country Dancers to perform "The Express," "General Stuart's Reel," "The Highland Fair," "The Ladies of Dingwall," or others. The footwork and the moves in Scottish Country dancing are especially lovely.

Finally, if you want a little exercise, the men and boys have a variant of football, and ladies and girls often play a ball game whereby they throw the ball against a wall and catch it before it bounces. Then, there's the tossing of the caber. You can make your own caber if you don't want a heavy one. Then, there's a word game which I made up from Burns' word which means topsy-turvy. His word is

TAPSALTEERIE. You could ask participants to make up words that rhyme with Tap and Salt, or you could simply ask them to make as many words as they can from TAPSALTEERIE. This is a fun game. I have tried it with my college classes when I was teaching a course in Romantic Poetry, beginning with Gray, Blake, Burns, and others.

Again, I celebrate the Scottish bard's birthday each January and invite a host of friends to join me. This may not appeal to you, but if it does, just be creative, and have fun. Decorate if you wish, and by all means, have a piper.

**Martha Benn Macdonald, Ph.D.,**  
**English instructor, author, performer**  
**doctorbenn@gmail.com**



From the painting by Nasmyth, National Portrait Gallery.  
*Robert Burns*

## GUIDES ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK CITY

P.O. Box 4648, New York, NY 10185-4648 ph. (855)-57-GANYC (42692) <http://www.ganyc.org/>  
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**GANYC**, the *Guides Association of New York City*, is represented by licensed tour guides and has been for over four decades. We started as a foreign-language concern and have evolved into a general group with many niche interests.

We speak to our audiences on foot, from buses, and boats. We put on workshops, FAM tours, and lectures.

**GANYC** has elected officials, like President and Treasurer, and we have many committees such as Public Relations, Industry Relations, and Government Relations. We have monthly meetings and we publish a quarterly newsletter: “GuideLines”.

**GANYC** has kept current with a website, a blog, a podcast, and a Facebook page – to name a few. We have made many industry partners and continue to do so. We create tours and recommend each others for tour requests and just this past year, we mounted our most ambitious project yet: an awards ceremony.



*Tour Guide Georgina Castanon with attentive audience.*



*Interpreters at Fort Rinella, Malta.*

## Interpretation In Malta...

*Bringing 7000 years of history to life.*

By.

John A. Veverka  
John Veverka & Associates  
*jvainterp@aol.com*

**What do ancient temples, Romans, The Order of St. John, seven UNESCO world heritage sites, Cutthroat Island, Gladiator and Popeye all have in common?** They are all part of the Malta story. But first you are probably wondering just where is Malta? Nestled in the warm waters of the Mediterranean, Malta is about 60 miles to the Southeast of Sicily and about 250 miles to the Northwest of the coast of Africa. And to the thousands of tourists that come to Malta and its sister island Gozo, they find an overwhelming historic story with heritage sites spanning 7000 years of history waiting for them. You have probably seen Malta, or at least a part of it, already! Malta is a frequent movie location. The pirate movie **Cutthroat Island**, and **Gladiator** had portions of their film shot here. Also the movie **Popeye** with Robin Williams was filmed here. The village of *Sweet Haven* that features in Popeye still remains and has been preserved on its island location as a tourist attraction.

### **Why is interpretation seen as something so important for Malta tourism?**

Malta officially joined the European Union on 1 May 2004 with tourism having been given major importance through the country's deliberations on membership. In looking the tourism markets being attracted to Malta, the main market group was the "sun, sea and sand" groups. Malta beaches and resorts are first rate and thousands of cruise ship visitors embark to explore the island on almost a daily basis. But with the downturn in tourism since 9/11 and competition from other destinations for the sun, sea and sand markets, Malta tourism began to look more closely at the increasing and powerful heritage tourism market. Heritage tourists are a different kind of tourist, seeking out different kinds of experiences and products. They want to stand, see and feel where history took place. And with 7000 years of history – Malta is a treasure chest of sites and experiences ripe for discovery. But a historic site without interpretation is just an "old site". It is the interpretation of the story of the site - the who, what, when and why - expressed in a memorable, provocative and evocative manner that brings the story to life. Simply put, you can't really have quality "heritage tourism" without quality "heritage interpretation" to tell that sites story.

## *JVA InterpNews*

To this end, the Malta Tourism Authority feels that developing a more powerful heritage tourism market required excellence in interpretation as well. In November 2003 the Malta Tourism Authority sponsored its first ever week-long interpretive planning training course, attended by representatives from many of Malta's main attractions and service organizations, including Heritage Malta and the Malta Tourism Authority. Developed and presented by John Veverka in 2002, the intensive 5-day training focused on what interpretation was, but more importantly, how to use interpretive planning and design principles in developing, marketing, and evaluating heritage tourism programs, services and media to accomplish real objectives.



*Graduates of Malta's first Interpretation Course.*

### **What are The Malta Tourism Authority goals for interpretation?**

In general, the goals for interpretation in Malta are based on the general benefits interpretation can provide any heritage agency or organization using interpretation. These benefits can include:

- Interpretation shows the visitors why the heritage site has value – to them (the visitor), to the community, and perhaps regionally or nationally.
- Interpretation can inspire visitors and create a sense of individual and national pride.
- It is the interpretation (programs, living history, guided tours, exhibits, etc.) that visitors come to the heritage site for – the story and site experience. Without interpretation a historic site is, in the eyes of the visitor, just another OLD site.
- Interpretation gets visitors to CARE about heritage (theirs or other cultures).
- Interpretive services are the reasons visitors **come back** to heritage sites.
- Interpretive programs and services can increase visitation by increasing the perception of BENEFITS tourists receive by going to a particular heritage site.
- Interpretive programs and services can produce reductions in site maintenance, and related management issues when used as a management tool.
- Interpretive programs and services can make money!
- Interpretive programs and services provide added value to any heritage tourism experience, and heritage site marketing efforts.

***World Heritage Sites.***

Malta has seven of them, ranging from the ancient temples like the one at Hagar Qim, built in 2700 B.C. and the Hypogeum – a unique underground temple built in 2500 B.C, to the city of Valleta (Malta’s capital) itself. The newly formed organization ***Heritage Malta*** is currently involved in bringing innovative and imaginative interpretation to these and related temple sites. Current interpretation is provided by tour group leaders with currently no on-site interpretation. This will change as future plans call for interpretive facilities and more self-guiding opportunities. These are some of the typical “successes in waiting” that will soon emerge as interpretive site “super powers” on Malta.



*Interpretive workshop with Malta Heritage staff at the Hagar Qim temple site, built in 2700 B.C*

Malta’s temples receive thousands of visitors a year, many arriving from cruise ships. Plans are in place to provide both self-guiding interpretation for these visitors, as well as conducted tours by trained interpreters as part of ongoing planning for better interpretive opportunities.



*A group of tourists on an interpretive tour of Hagar Qim temple site.*

The historic city (and capital of Malta) Valletta began with the corner stone of the city being laid on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1566, and was named after the Grand Master La Valette who led the Knights of St. John and the Maltese to victory over the Turks in 1565. Upon visiting Valletta Sir Walter Scott described the city as “that splendid town, quite like a dream”. It still holds that same sense of wonder today, which is one of the reasons it is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Thousands of visitors go on guided heritage walks (interpretive tours) – many offered by licensed tour guides, through the city.

Besides its lengthy list of museums, galleries, and other unique and memorable experiences, Malta also has some other outstanding interpretive opportunities waiting and ready for visitors.

**The Malta Experience**, located in the capitol of Valletta, is a must “first stop” for any heritage tourist. Here through a audio visual spectacular, you can witness Malta’s unique 7,000 year history in just 45 minutes. This is the place to come for the “big picture” – and then decide which of the many sites and attractions you would want to go and see next.

**Fort Rinella** gives the visitors a totally different experience. Fort Rinella was built in the late 1800’s at a time when the growing naval power of nearby Italy posed a potential threat to British commerce and navigation in the Mediterranean. The main feature of this Fort was its 100-ton gun batteries. The site and story of this important historic site is now managed by *Foundazzjoni Wirt Artna* (Malta Heritage Trust), which restored the site, and provides both self-guided, and on weekends “living history presentations and tours”. We had the pleasure of attending one of the living history programs and found them to be of the highest interpretive quality, a feeling expressed by the many visitors to the site.



*Living history interpretation of Malta’s military heritage at Fort Rinella.*

**Working with the transportation sections to create new and innovative interpretive experiences.**

Besides the traditional way of seeing Malta and its heritage attractions, interpretive opportunities that are under development include several “historic” transportation means around the city that are still in use today.

**Karrozzin** – or the Horse-Drawn Cab were once the main transportation means in Malta until the coming of the motor car. But they are still favorite heritage experience.



Depending on the driver, a visitor can not only get to their destinations, but receive some first-hand interpretation of the history of the city too.

**The Dghajsa** – or the taxi boat has been in use at Malta for centuries. The *dghajsa* (pronounced “dye-sah”) is a brightly painted cousin of the Venetian gondola – each boat with its “eye of Osiris, God of the Under-World” painted on the bows to ward off the evil eye. Today it is being developed as another unique Malta heritage tourism product, with the Captains providing interpretation of the harbor and its history.



*The author enjoying interpretation from the water taxi “interpreter”.*

***We can't forget the famous Malta Buses!***

While still providing transportation around the island for locals and tourists alike, these buses have their own character and historical stories. Malta Tourism has been working to develop interpretive bus tours with trained “interpretive” drivers to drop off and pick up tourists at standard destinations throughout the island. This is an interpretive experience in itself!

This is just a small sample of the more than 70 sights to visit and unique interpretive experiences, from historic churches, cities and villages, to forts, harbors, and museums, that waits for Malta visitors, with interpretation becoming more important for each.

**Malta Tourism Authorities goals and vision for interpretation in the future.**

The main goals for Malta interpretation include:

- Continue to provide interpretive training for commercial and non-profit tourism providers.
- Use interpretation principles more widely in heritage tourism development and marketing.
- To insure the quality of the interpretive experience.
- To provide interpretive training for Malta's Licensed Tour Guides.

**Summary**

Malta is a treasure trove of interpretive experiences, stories and visions reflecting over 7000 years of history. The heritage tourist will have to spend weeks here to see and do it all, and interpretation will be the cornerstone to help make Malta's many stories come to life for visitors. But more than that, interpretation will be a key part of Malta Tourism marketing strategy to help lure more heritage tourists to this enchanting location. The sun, sand and sea are still here too, but now “heritage” will be an ever growing part of the Malta Tourism market – with interpretation in the forefront to help that happen.

**Acknowledgements:**

I would like to thank the Malta Tourism Authority and Heritage Malta for their support and photo contributions for this article.

For more information on Malta, visit their web site at: <http://www.visitmalta.com>.



*Volunteers engaged in Phragmites (an invasive plant) removal.*

## **From historians to artists, Oakland County Parks discovers talents of its 1,000+ volunteers**

*by*

*Julee Erskine,  
Volunteer Coordinator,  
Oakland County Parks, Michigan*

To offer more special events and programs for its 1.8 million visitors, Oakland County Parks and Recreation in Southeast Michigan started a volunteer program in 2011. Today, more than 1,000 volunteers dedicate their time and talents year round.

The 13-park system, located 45 minutes north of Detroit, covers 6,700 acres and offers 68 miles of trails, five golf courses, two campgrounds, two water parks, two nature centers and three dog parks. Winter recreation includes cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice fishing and sledding. Additionally, Oakland County Parks sponsors large scale regional events like the Fifth Third Bank Michigan State Fair, Ford Arts Beats and Eats, the Brooksie Way, Michigan Senior Olympics and more. All these facilities and events, whether large or small, are supported by volunteer efforts that supplement the efforts of 70 full-time and 600 seasonal staff. During the past year, 1,164 volunteer contributed 26,035 hours.

Volunteer Coordinator Julee Erskine said the strengths volunteers bring to their role are as varied as the tasks they perform.

“We have people who work with our History Corps who identify, research, document and archive historical assets of the parks system. An undertaking last summer was an historical privy dig at site where the Ellis Barn was originally located. Farmers threw everything from newspapers to dishes in the privy,” Erskine said. “Their skill set comes with years of interest in and study of history. Another volunteer may carve pumpkins or assist with invasive species removal or be a dog park ambassador who opens and closes the gates daily at one of our three dog parks. Literally, there is something for everyone in terms of volunteering.”

Although the volunteer program alleviates cost for the organization, it’s the relationship building between staff and volunteers that is of real value.

“We have volunteers who prefer to assist at a certain location, like a nature center, because they feel so invested in and aligned with that facility and its mission to educate children,” Terry Fields, chief of recreation programs and services said. “Our volunteers really become an extension of our staff and feel valued because we invest in training them and treat them with respect.”

**Recruitment**

How does the parks system recruit so many volunteers? While its website, social media, email, and collaboration with local schools and businesses have helped, word of mouth has really attracted people's interest in the program.

Recently, Erskine had corporate volunteers from DTE Energy and Roeper School participate in clean-up days at two parks, which brought large numbers of volunteers out to organized work days.

"Volunteers are some of our biggest advocates. They literally sell the parks system to their family and friends and recruit other volunteers based on their experiences," Executive Officer Dan Stencil said.

**Opportunities**

The volunteer program has four components. Volunteers can choose to work a weekly shift at a golf course, a campground, or as a gatekeeper at one of three dog parks. If a weekly shift doesn't work out, volunteers can choose general programs or special events where there are specific dates to assist. These may include special events like Catalpa Oaks Get Out and Play, a free event for the local community feature mobile recreation unit, Halloween events where volunteers are asked to dress in costume, or Fire & Ice, an annual event held in downtown Rochester in January where the parks system contributes a sledding hill, ice rink, sled dog rides, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

Potential volunteers can find out the available opportunities and print out the application from the website, fill it out, and email it in for review.

"Whether individuals seek out the volunteer program because they have a passion for recreation or the outdoors or they prefer something low key indoors, the most important factor is that they are matched to opportunities based on their skills, interests, and level of time they are able to commit," Fields said. "We're mindful of their time. Even if they have only a few hours to give, we make sure they know we are appreciative of their time."

Areas of interest include campground recreation, trails ambassador, maintaining outdoor gardens, golf course starter, ranger or cart attendant, bluebird nest box monitor and more. John Meyland volunteers as a photographer. His work has been included in the yearly Annual Report, in photographic displays, e-newsletters and more. "Everyone calls John 'my photographer' when he arrives at an event," Erskine said. "He's become an integral part of our crew. He photographs nature center events primarily, but recently took photos of the Ellis Barn Dance. His talent is invaluable."

**Training**

For one-time events, volunteers are given a condensed training session onsite. Those who want to help with ongoing programs attend an orientation to learn more about their specific role and expectations. If they decide to volunteer on a regular basis, they receive name badges and an official T-shirt.

"It's important volunteers are trained and feel in sync with staff so they know what to expect at an event," Erskine said. "Can you imagine if we just dropped 200 volunteers at the Marshmallow Drop that draws 7,000 people and didn't give them any instructions? It would be chaos. However, upon arrival, volunteers are assigned a task and each team meets before guests start arriving."

## **Rewards**

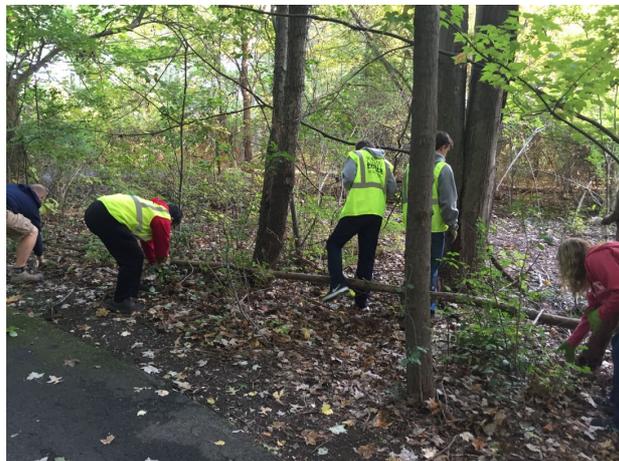
The reward program has been modified over time and rewards volunteers for their time with each hour of service counting toward recreation opportunities within the Oakland County Parks system.

“The program gives our volunteers the opportunity to explore the parks and programs and promote them through word of mouth to family and friends. It’s a win-win for all of us,” Stencil says.

Volunteer Recreation Point cards are issued to all volunteers. Individuals earn points, equal in value to \$1, each time they volunteer. The number of points depends on the type of work performed. For example, someone taking photographs would earn more points than someone pulling weeds because more skill is required. Supervisors approve the points which are loaded onto the volunteer’s card. All points expire annually at the end of December. Reward points can be used at the golf courses, campgrounds, waterparks or on equipment rentals, facility rentals, mobile unit rentals, program fees, park entry or annual vehicle permits. Some exceptions do apply. Employees cannot earn points.

Additionally, outstanding volunteers are recognized at quarterly supervisors meetings and have their photo and a feature story with their accomplishments published in the monthly employee digital newsletter.

Volunteer programs, whether using individuals for programs or large groups or corporate employees for special events and programs, can benefit any municipal or corporate business. Groundwork, such as job descriptions, guidelines, recruitment and methods to build loyalty such as reward programs will prove beneficial to both the volunteers and the organizations.



*Volunteers providing a wealth of services to help park visitors enjoy the park and have a safe experience.*

*Julee Erskine,  
Volunteer Coordinator,  
Oakland County Parks. Michigan*



*Luke gets into his role in the Living and Working Together Gallery.*

## **Volunteerability at Eureka! The National Children's Museum, UK**

*Trizia Wells*

*Inclusion Manager*

*Eureka! The National Children's Museum*

**Accessibility to museums and collections is, for the most part, taken seriously within the international cultural institution sector.** Within the UK, museums have also begun to involve disabled people in the development and curation of exhibition content, ensuring these reflect disabled people's history and experiences (two examples are Matt Fraser's 2014 travelling exhibition, *Cabinet of Curiosities*, at, amongst others, the Royal College of Physicians, and the Science and Hunterian Museums, London; *Recovery Flanders to Afghanistan* at the Thackray Medical Museum, Leeds).

**Museums and cultural organizations are then beginning to recognize the importance of involving disabled audiences and reflecting their stories.** Eureka! The National Children's Museum, based in the north of England, differs from traditional heritage settings in that exhibitions are predominantly permanent and exhibits are highly interactive. Galleries focus on experiences which are relevant to everyone – our bodies, health, transport, the environment and shopping. Interpretation is unique for each visitor as it arises from their own exploration and the way they interact with the exhibits. This makes the museum a very popular destination for disabled people of all ages, including adults with profound and complex disabilities.

Since 2011 the Museum has been running an award winning inclusion programme, Access All Areas, which provides services for disabled children and their families. While the Museum's visitor audience and marketing were beginning to reflect disability within the community, we felt there was space for a public facing role within the Museum team as well. We already had links with a local organisation, the Next Step Trust, which supports adults with learning disabilities and complex health needs and wanted to work with them more closely to provide a workplace experience for young people who would otherwise never have that opportunity.

This led us to apply for the Promising Practice ReImagined Award Program, run by the MetLife Foundation and Association of Children's Museums. The award funded skilled support staff to facilitate volunteer placement experience for young adults with severe and complex needs – we called the scheme **Volunteerability**.

## *JVA InterpNews*

The ACM award funded Volunteerability for a year, and our goal was to provide a full workplace experience for 4 volunteers who would apply for the role, attend an interview and participate in induction training. They would be subject to the same expectations regarding punctuality, appearance, health and safety, customer service and workplace etiquette, and once a week for 6-8 weeks they would be regarded as a member of the Eureka! team. In other words, they would go through the same recruitment process as any other Eureka! employee – a process which would be tailored and supported to their individual needs.

We knew that careful preparation would be key to the success of the project and from the beginning, worked closely with the Next Step staff. The prospective volunteers and their carers came to a familiarization day which gave them a chance to visit the museum without any pressure or expectations. They were given a tour of the galleries and met the Eureka! staff who might become their colleagues. The familiarization process worked both ways too – it gave staff a chance to meet the Next Steppers, ask questions and begin to understand communication and other needs.

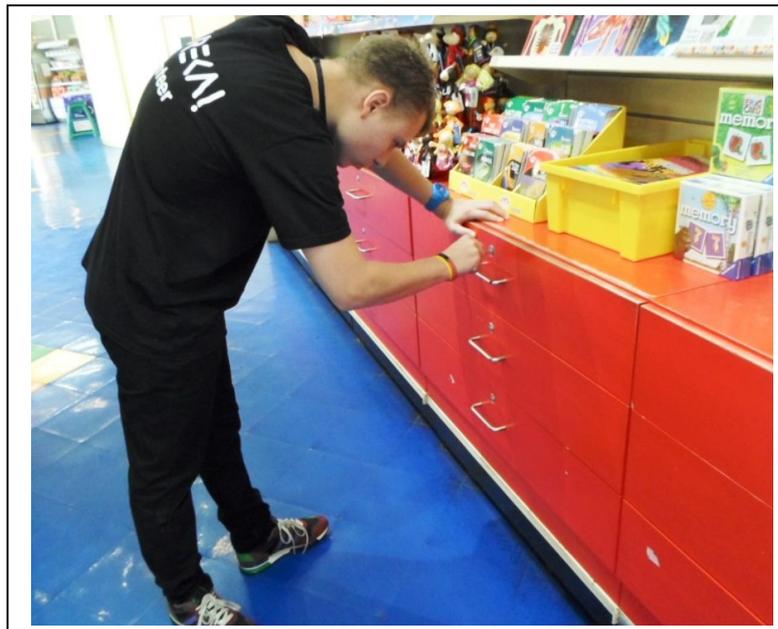
The museum's Visitor Services team and the Next Step carers did a "walkthrough" of volunteer roles in the Museum shop, and our newest gallery, All About Me, identifying barriers to the role and identifying ways in which these could be overcome. We tailored role descriptions to the strengths, qualities and interests of the young people put forward by the Next Step team. We advertised the volunteer roles in the Next Step Centre and invited applications. These were written with the help of support staff, who also attended the interviews where the Next Steppers were encouraged to "sell" themselves, highlighting their capabilities and enthusiasm for working in the museum.

Two successful candidates were appointed on a 6-8 week volunteer placement and completed the museum's induction process, as well as individual risk assessments. We were presented with a few challenges along the way, for example, when it came to emergency evacuation, one of the Next Steppers was unable to be moved from her wheelchair in any circumstances. No problem at the Next Step Centre, where all activities took place on the ground floor, however this Next Stepper particularly wanted to work in the museum's All About Me gallery, based on the first floor. With the help of the Next Step staff, we were able to reassure her parents that she would be safe in the museum's fire refuge area in the event of an emergency, and they consented to her working on this level.

It was vital that the Next Steppers' personal assistants undergo our induction process too and this presented some logistical challenges as the Next Steppers would be supported by a team of half a dozen across the 4 months of the placement. We overcame this by holding a separate group induction to ensure that everyone involved had been given the same information and the same opportunity to ask questions.

For some of the Volunteerability team, confidence with strangers was going to be a challenge, and so we gave them a few stock phrases to get them started, for example, asking how visitors were enjoying their day, what their favourite part of the museum was, etc. Other duties included helping our Enablers to explain exhibits to school parties, or directing visitors to our talking robot, Zoom. As the weeks went on, the volunteers' confidence grew, and this was a major benefit for all those who participated in Volunteerability. We measured impacts such as confidence, fulfilling the role requirements proactively and visitor interaction – this might be verbal or simply smiling. We carried out reviews at the beginning, middle and end of each placement, where we asked volunteers and their carers to rate their progress in each area, and to make sure that any difficulties were dealt with at an early stage.

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*Paul helps to price stock (left) and Sam puts stock away in the shop (right).*

The Eureka! team were asked for feedback too. Disability awareness was already a core part of the museum's training for all staff, and most of our team had already delivered activity clubs for disabled children, which contributed to their confidence in working alongside the Volunteerability crew. Once the programme was under way however, the suggestions flowed thick and fast! We introduced pen portraits and photographs of the young people, which were displayed on our staff notice board. We also gave the Next Steppers a more active role in our morning meeting – teaching the team a new BSL sign, or showing them a game – all at the suggestion of the Eureka! team.

The placements conclude with a ceremony to which families are invited, and volunteers are presented with a certificate of thanks from our Chief Executive, Leigh-Anne Stradeski. Currently we run 3 Volunteerability programmes a year, managed by me as the Inclusion Manager, and our Team Leader with responsibility for volunteers.

Disabled people are often seen as passive recipients of assistance, and through this programme we aim to give profoundly disabled people a more positive profile within our local community. Throughout their placement volunteers contribute to the running of the museum, and expand our team's understanding and awareness of disability. By simply being there, our Volunteerability crew challenge the assumptions of the visiting public and reflect the inclusive ethos towards which Eureka! strives. How fantastic it would be if every cultural organization had a Volunteerability crew!

***Trizia Wells***

***Inclusion Manager***

***Eureka! The National Children's Museum, UK***



## THE DIMENSIONS OF VISITOR MOVEMENT IN MUSEUMS

*Stephen Bitgood*

*Jacksonville State University*

The significant role of navigation in museum design has been recognized since the early days of studying visitors (e. g., Robinson, 1928; Melton, 1935). More recently, a number of journal articles and book chapters have reported on the findings of individual studies, while others have summarized important findings in the literature and/or have suggested guidelines for effective circulation and wayfinding systems (e.g., Bitgood, 2006; 2011; 2013; 2014; Griggs, 1985; Loomis, 1987).

Navigation can be conceptualized as a two-part process: (1) patterns of *pedestrian movement* (or circulation) through a museum; and (2) *orientation* including *conceptual* (what is there to see and do, how is the museum organized) and *physical* (information related to wayfinding). Griggs (1983) provided an excellent analysis of conceptual and physical (wayfinding) orientation based on the experience of the Natural History Museum (London). The current article focuses on movement patterns that, although they are intertwined with orientation, need to be analyzed separately because of their complexity and their key role in the navigation process.

Many human experiences involve staying in one place. A museum visit, on the other hand, requires the individual to walk through an environment (art museum, aquarium, history museum, natural history museum, science center, zoo or any other type of interpretive center) and make choices of where to go and what to do. Experiences such as sitting in a movie theater require people to remain in the same seat throughout the movie, while visitors at interpretive centers must navigate from one place to another in order to engage with exhibitions and programs. Since most interpretive centers do not have one simple pathway through the facility, visitors have to make pathway choices based on what they see and strategies of movement they may have developed over the years. The extra work of navigation complicates the task, especially if museum navigation systems are poorly designed.

Why are patterns of movement through museum space a critical aspect of the visitor experience in exhibitions? In addition to the extra workload of navigational decisions of where to go, movement patterns determine what visitors see and do, as well as whether or not they engage with specific exhibits. Consequently, a thoughtful analysis of how visitors move through museums is critical in order to provide visitors the maximum value to their experience.

**The Dimensions of Pedestrian Movement**

Pedestrian movement can be conceptualized as a combination of five interrelated dimensions. Table 1 provides an overview of each dimension, the variables that influence it, and why the dimension is important to understand.

**Table 1: Dimensions of Pedestrian Movement**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Examples of Variables That Influence</b>	<b>Why Important</b>
Location on pathway (right side, left side, or in the middle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Cultural norm (“Walk on the right side”)</li> <li>* Handedness</li> <li>* Pull of attractive object</li> </ul>	Influences what a visitor sees and engages attention
Pathway choice at intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Effort required (e.g., number of steps)</li> <li>* Location on pathway</li> </ul>	Determines what content is viewed and amount of engagement with objects
Pattern of Search- Approach-Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Perceived attractiveness</li> <li>* Proximity to object</li> <li>* Visual access</li> <li>* Fatigue and satiation</li> </ul>	Influences what is viewed and what is not viewed
Patrol Pattern (zig-zag, clockwise, counterclockwise, straight-line)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Location on pathway</li> <li>* Layout of exhibit space</li> <li>* Learned response to situation</li> <li>* Cost (number of steps, effort)</li> </ul>	Correlated with how much of the space is viewed
Speed/pace of movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of stops made</li> <li>* Attractiveness of objects along the way</li> </ul>	May indicate frequency of engagement with exhibits
Engagement (deep processing of museum content)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Interest level of content</li> <li>* Choice of pathways</li> <li>* Design of exhibits</li> <li>* Visual access</li> </ul>	Closely associated with meaningfulness of the visit

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- *Location on a pathway* (right side, left side, middle, or no consistent pattern of location). Walking on the right side of pathways has been occasionally reported, but there are also examples of a strong tendency to walk on the left under some conditions (e.g., Bitgood, 2006; Bitgood, Davey, Huang, & Fung, 2013; Bitgood & Dukes, 2006). To illustrate the importance of pathway location, Bitgood & Dukes found that: (1) if pedestrians were walking on the right side of a pathway, they almost always turned right or moved straight ahead at the intersection; and (2) pedestrians who did turn left were often observed moving from the right side of a pathway to the left side before reaching the intersection. Before the Bitgood & Dukes study, no one had reported pedestrian location on a pathway and how it relates to pathway choice. The Bitgood-Duke study has been replicated in the U. S., China, and Eastern Europe (Bitgood, Davey, Huang, 2013; Jazwinski & Walcheski, 2011; Silkova & Hochel, 2009). Whether this pathway location pattern of walking is a cultural norm (“walk on the right side” or “walk on the left side”) or due to some other factor such as handedness (“right-handers walk on the right side”) is still being debated in the literature, but, to some extent, the pattern seems to be based on minimizing the number of steps and avoiding oncoming traffic.

In open spaces such as an exhibit gallery, pathways are not usually well-defined and visitors have to make their own path. The path may involve simply walking in a straight line from entrance to exit (e.g., Melton, 1935), or, under crowded with well-defined pathways, crowds become self-organized (Helbing, et al, 2001) in that people move in consistent patterns to avoid physical conflict and confusion. Visitor groups consistently walking on the right side of a pathway as the pathways become more crowded is an example of such self-organization.

- *Choice of pathway* (right, left, center). To understand pathway choice patterns, two setting conditions must be examined within public settings such as museums: (1) entering a well-defined area such as an exhibition hall; and (2) navigating an intersection where pathways come together (typically, a three-option choice (right, left, center), or a two-option choice as in a T-intersection (right or left). Of course the clarity of the pathway is more obvious when navigating an intersection than it is entering an exhibition hall. While there is considerable reference to a “right-turn bias” in the literature (e.g., Mclean, 1993; Underhill, 1999), careful examination of actual studies demonstrates that visitors do not always turn right when confronted with pathway choices. The choice depends upon several factors (e.g., number of steps required, intended destination, direction signs). In a number of studies, visitors had a stronger tendency to move left than right (e.g., Bitgood, et al, 1992; Bitgood & Davey, 2015; Parsons & Loomis, 1972; Yoshioka, 1942; Zucker & Clarke, 1993).
- *Patterns of search-approach-and-stop*. In exhibition halls, visitors are constantly searching for exhibits with high interest or provocative content, and when found, approaching and stopping to engage. Similarly, in a retail store, shoppers may be searching for a retail store of interest (perhaps a familiar store name or something in the window that captures attention) to approach and enter. In other settings, pedestrians may be simply navigating toward a specific destination or approaching an attractive object. Place a large attractive object in the middle of an exhibit hall and a high percentage of visitors will approach it rather than turn along the right or left wall.

To some extent, tracking studies document this search-approach-stop patterns. For example, Serrell (1997) published a collection of visitor tracking studies in museums, reporting the frequency of stops and setting factors such as number of exhibit elements and size of exhibition space [e.g., Bitgood & Davey, in preparation]

- *Patrol of an area* (e.g., exhibition hall). Once a pathway choice is made, a patrol strategy is applied to navigate through an area (e.g., Benne, 1999). Patrol strategies are indicated by the pattern of movement through a defined space or area. Patrolling can be visualized as navigating within a local area of the setting. Visitors often use counter-clockwise movement around a perimeter if they turn right or clockwise movement if they turn left. In a hallway-shaped area with exhibits on either side, visitors may zig-zag from one side to another. Or, if there is a central area, pedestrians may loop around a smaller area and return to the central area or main path. Frequently, museum visitors simply move in a straight line from the entrance to the exit (e.g., Melton, 1935). Bitgood, et al (1992) reported on patrol patterns of visitors within a changing exhibition hall for five different exhibitions, each with a different layout pattern of objects. The layout of exhibits within the exhibition hall had a strong influence on the patrol pattern as well as the choice of turning left or right.
  
- *Speed or pace of movement*. The pedestrian pace or speed is also an important aspect of pedestrian movement. People tend to walk at a comfortable rate, suggesting evidence of the importance of amount of effort expended. However, a distinction must be made between local and global speed. In an exhibition, we expect to observe a slower overall, global pace if visitors are deeply engaged with exhibits. Frequent and long viewing durations slow the overall rate of movement. In a hallway that connects one exhibition with another, we would expect a faster pace with no stops. Beverly Serrell (1998) suggested that the *sweep rate index* through an exhibition is a good measure of thoroughness of visitor engagement to exhibits. However, it should be noted that sweep rate is a global measure and does not provide diagnostic value at a local level. One exhibit that elicits extremely long view times would strongly bias the meaning of “sweep rate.”
  
- *Engagement*. The level of engagement is often roughly measured by the duration of a stop. However, a long stop is not always associated with deeply focused attention on exhibits; the visitor may stop to rest or talk on his/her cell phone, etc. Reading text associated with an exhibit may be a more valid measure of engagement, but, even then, it is possible to be deeply engaged in conversation about an exhibit without reading the text. A comparison of multiple measures may be the best way to indirectly assess engagement since no single measure tells the story by itself.

### **Final Word**

The movement dimensions described above are all important and do not operate in isolation; they are intertwined into an overall pattern of movement in space. Thus, each element cannot be examined in isolation of the others. For example, location on pathway (right or left side) influences pathway choice in terms of total number of steps required to navigate one path or another. Attraction to and engagement with exhibits may be highly dependent upon which pathways visitors choose to move through an exhibition. Pathway choice is also highly correlated with patrol pattern: choosing to turn left entering an exhibition hall is more likely to be associated with a clockwise patrol pattern and turning right with a counter-clockwise pattern.

Applying the knowledge of how visitors move through interpretive center spaces to the design of interpretive media will improve the visitor experience as well as facilitate the goals of the facility. A few suggestions:

- Do not assume that people follow simple rules such as “always walk on the right and turn right at intersections.” Consider all the factors that influence how people move including the many variables that influence visitor movement.
- Minimize competing cues for visitor movement. An attractive object to the left of the entrance to an exhibit hall will strongly compete with a direction sign to turn to the right. Or, attractive objects in both directions are likely to cause a confused traffic pattern.
- Do not provide an excessive number of pathway choices for visitors. If visitors are focusing a lot of attention on selecting which way to go, they are less likely to focus on engaging with exhibits. In addition, as in the case of Robert Frost’s poem, *The Road Not Taken*, visitors will not engage with exhibits on the path not taken.
- Make the intended pathway through an exhibition clear to visitors. “Island” displays spread throughout an exhibit hall usually result in chaotic traffic flow because it is not clear to the visitor how to view all the exhibits without backtracking – something visitors often avoid.
- Review the literature before attempting to design or evaluate a navigation system. Navigation is a complicated process and poor design of spaces should not be allowed to place the burden of navigation on visitors. Good navigation systems creates smooth pedestrian flow without much thought on the part of the visitor.

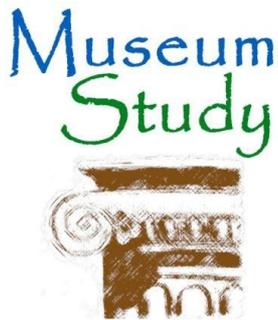
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**Lithuania UNESCO** conference, Sep 2015 (workshop session on interpretation - left photo), **Budapest Hungry** workshop on developing visitor survey research for the Budapest World Heritage Site (center), Interpretive training in interpretive exhibit planning design, **Ellanor C. Lawrence Park** (Fairfax County Park Authority, Virginia). Right.



**8th Annual Seminar of Latin American Museology, Mexico City** (left), **US Army Corps of Engineers Interpretive Services Courses** (center), and **MetroParks of the Toledo Area - Interpretive Planning Training** (right).



## Rich Pawling's History Alive! to join the Heritage Interpretation Training Center Team



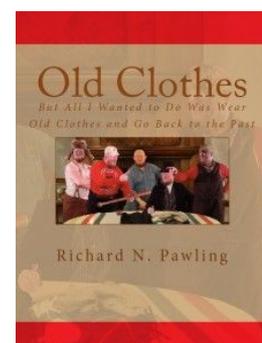
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  - \* Where to start? Choosing the character to portray
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  - \* Methods of Interpretation - 1st person, 3rd person, spirit past
- **Unit Four – Designing the Character**
- **Unit Five – Making the Character Come Alive!**
- **Unit Six – Continually Adapting Your Character to Your Audience**
- **Unit Seven – Preparation Builds Confidence**
- **Unit Eight – Controversy Builds Interest**
- **Unit Nine – Safety is #1**
- **Unit Ten – The Total Package = Success!**



#### About the Instructor: Professor Richard Pawling

**Rich Pawling** has over thirty-five years of experience interpreting the natural and cultural heritage of the United States. Beginning his interpretive career as an environmental educator and later historian-naturalist at local and state parks, his evolution into living history began while employed as a National Park Service ranger at Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site. To help visitors there understand that this now pristine site was actually a dirty, smoky iron furnace in the 1830s, he chose to portray the charcoal dust-covered, tobacco-chewing filler of the furnace in first person. He was honored with the **Freeman Tilden Award** for the Mid-Atlantic Region of the NPS for his efforts in designing and presenting this program about the "forgotten heroes" of the past - the common laborers. In 1991, he launched **Rich Pawling's History Alive!** - his own entrepreneurial venture. His unique teaching style twice won him the **Outstanding Adjunct Professor of the Year** award at Penn State Berks. Most recently, he was a full-time instructor of natural and cultural interpretation at Hocking College (Ohio)--inspiring the next generation of interpreters and retiring from in-class teaching in 2010.

**For course content details and registration information** you're invited to visit the course webpage at: [www.richpawling.com](http://www.richpawling.com) (clicking on "e-LIVE Course" under the "Workshops" tab) or contact Rich at:

[richpawling@yahoo.com](mailto:richpawling@yahoo.com). **The course fee includes pdf segments of Rich's book: *Old Clothes: But All I Wanted to Do Was Wear Old Clothes and Go Back to the Past*.**

*JVA InterpNews*

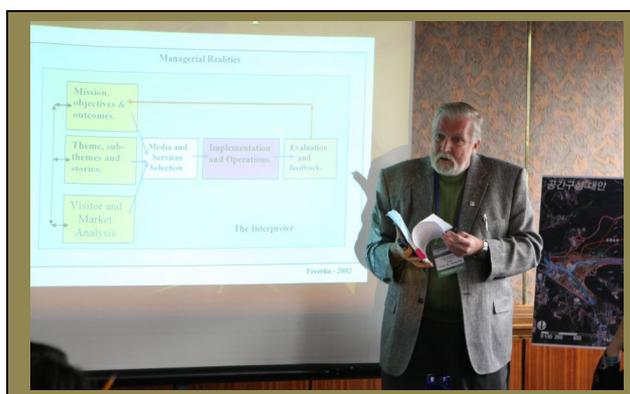
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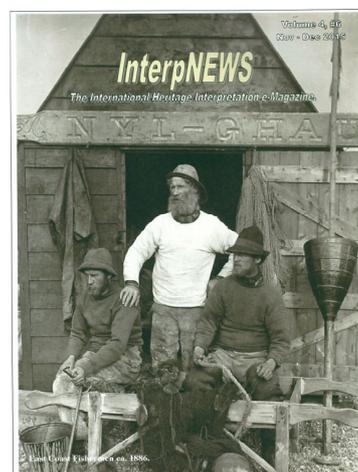
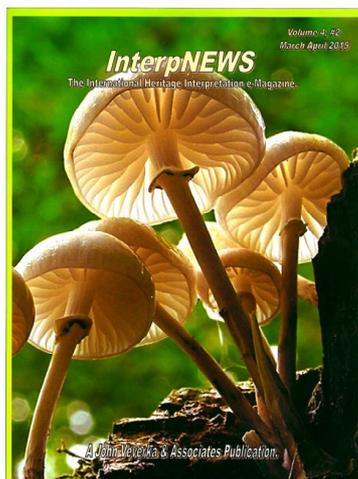
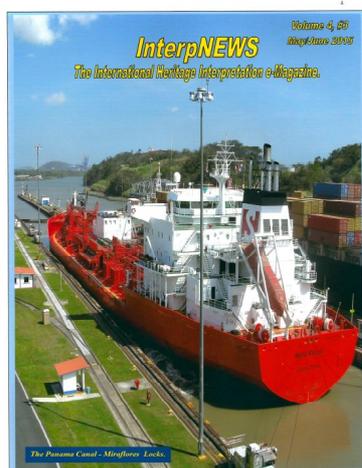
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