interpreters information exchange

IN TOUCH

produced by and for nps people concerned with interpretive and visitor services

Number 11 *January, 1976*

IN TOUCH is again coming to you from a specific region. Interpreters in National Capital Parks, under the coordination of Mary Bradford, have provided most of the articles, and all the effort that goes into putting an issue together, to offer all of us an insight into interpretation in NCP. It's from them to you and it's an eye opener!

R.G.

I am pleased that National Capital Parks is sponsoring this issue of IN TOUCH. We're proud of the great variety of parks within our region and the dedication of our field interpreters. Their interests and concerns reflect a deep commitment to the goals of the National Park Service in its mission to serve the people. As an officially designated Bicentennial region, we are delighted to open the 1976 series of IN TOUCH.

Jack Fish
Director, NCP

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Traveling around the National Park System can be eye-opening and frustrating if you work at National Capital Parks. I am continually amazed at the number of otherwise delightful NPS employees who have a somewhat mixed-up idea of what we're all about. "Wouldn't you rather work in a **real** park?" they inquire.

Well, I was skeptical, too, when I moved here again from the Western Region in 1974. It's true, we have frequent political pressures and some programs which are only regionally significant, but I expect that these same conditions can be found throughout the Service these days.

But NCP is such a gold mine for interpretation! We have a great variety of areas within a small geographic radius. Did you know that, as well as scores of neighborhood parks, downtown parks and famous monuments, NCP also administers Harpers Ferry, Antietam and other outlying parks? In fact, we have over 30 **interpreted** parks and sites, bearing a full NPS regional load in addition to our local commitments in Washington, D.C.

Historic and natural, urban and rural, NCP is a microcosm of the NPS itself. We've got increasing visitation, a big recreational usage and strong community involvement. Our interpreters are generally underpaid, dedicated, hardworking, griping, frequently ignored (but always appreciated) all-purpose Rangers and Techs who can handle the challenging work. We hope that the following articles will allow you to peek through our looking glass . . .

Mary R. Bradford
Park Ranger
Interpretive Specialist
National Capital Parks

HISTORY IS MORE OR LESS BUNK* . . . .
Henry Ford

*BUNK: EMPTY TALK; NONSENSE

Henry Ford may not have been correct in his estimation of history, but if your historical walk or talk is taking a backseat to "Flight Patterns of the Canadian Goose", there may be some truth in his words. It is the "bunk" in our history programs that keeps the attendance low. At our ruins, mansions and monuments throughout the country we hear: "These ruins represent the last remains of . . ." or "Today I am going to tell you the story of the Civil War . . ." or "This monument is here because . . .". What we need to do is extract the "bunk" from our presentations, put the pedantic approrach aside, and add a multi-directional method to our historical interpretation. Keep the stories, keep the assorted facts, but modify the approach.

The public should be aware of why we are doing interpretation. Incorporate something about the legislation establishing your area, or speak briefly about the Antiquities Act. Let the public know that there are administrative policies for the management of historical areas. To the visitor, needless to say, a dissertation on any of the above would be as dull as explaining every book in Robert E. Lee's library. However, some information about these things can broaden a historical presentation.

Through our day-to-day experiences in National Park Service areas, we are able to develop intimate associations with our country's historical resources. These associations provide us with the information to find new and different ways of looking at the old and commonplace. It is our responsibility to the visitors to aid them in seeing and understanding the resources. It is our task to involve the visitor as an active participant in our presentations by turning the focus from ourselves and putting it onto our surroundings.

In our preparations we should become aware of the official historical lists of the nation. Lists like the National Register of Historical Places and the Historic American Buildings Survey can be useful in interpretation. These national catalogues of history further clarify the "why" of our interpretation.

Many times, in our field collections, interpretive artifacts remain locked in cabinets behind closed doors. It would be ridiculous to think that everyone who passes through an area could try on George Washington's 1776 hat, but there are many less fragile pieces in field collections that could be used in park presentations. In the past, on the pages of this magazine, there has been a large debate over the use of original articles. I do not care to enter that debate. I only suggest that there are representative items that are plentiful and are interesting to the visitor on a first hand basis. Many of these items can be used in interpretive presentations without damage.

It is the task of the interpreter to know the park collections and how they are stabilized, catalogued and stored. You may say that only a chosen few are able to attend the "Curatorial Methods Course", but there are volumes of information available on the subject, as well as specific questions that can be answered by curatorial professionals. Let the public in on the conservation of your collections. What should they do if they find an artifact in the park? How will it be stabilized? Where does it go? What methods of record keeping are used? Has the visitor ever seen your historical accessions catalogue?

Audio-visuals can also aid in the removal of "bunk" from your presentations. Your audio-visuals should be specifically designed for your presentation, not just a stock historical film that is used for everything. Let your audio-visuals cover the period you are dealing with, or have them provide the background that your visitor may need to understand your field presentation. If you are discussing a major battle of the Civil War, why not let the audio-visuals bring you up to that battle? If you are going to do a walk, let it be different from your audio-visual presentation. Your audio-visuals should support you, not replace you!

How many historical photographs of your area have you seen? Are the finest photographs in a file in your bottom desk drawer? Bring them out and reproduce them for people-use. An inexpensive self-help exhibit can be made from historical photos. Then, too, miniatures can be mounted and carried on the trail walk. How alive an old building becomes when it is seen as more than ruins! The

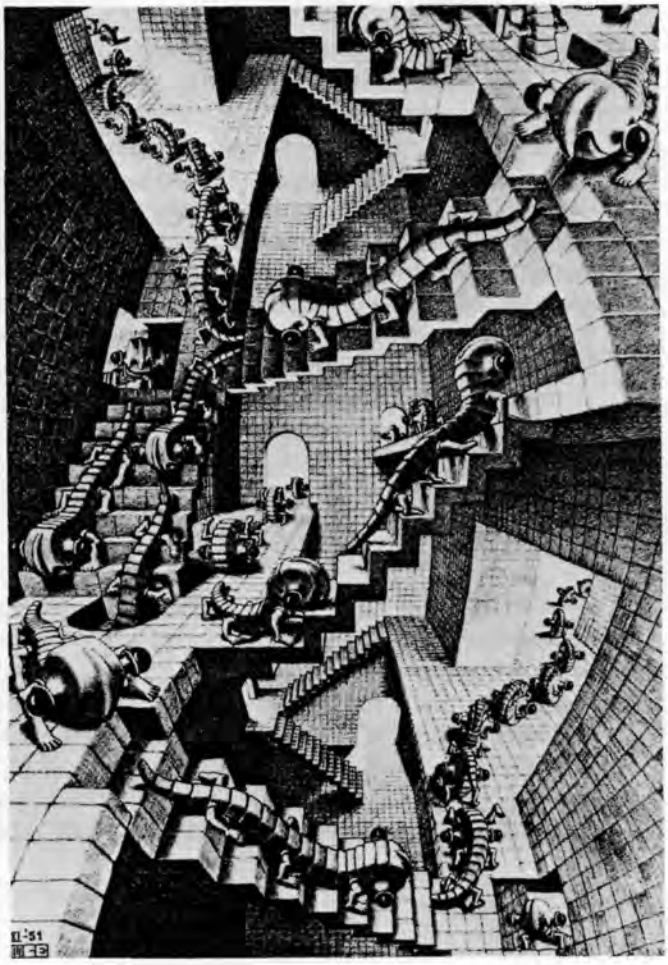
picture can create what may take ten minutes to describe. The focus again moves from you to the resource.

For years the naturalists and historians have bickered over whose interpretation is most appreciated. This article began with indications of that rivalry. Such rivalry is counter-productive and boils down to sheer nonsense. We all have our particular interests but the separation of natural and historical interpretation is unnecessary. Instead, we should examine the influence of the natural environment on man and the reverse. Why did man build a canal at Great Falls, Virginia? What effect did the rain have on a particular battle? The ability of nature to reclaim her own, despite man's paltry efforts, is also a worthy historical theme.

Are you using natural interpretation in your historical presentations? What do land features tell you of historical occurrences? If you can identify the trees and land features in an old photograph, they may aid in the understanding of the exact location of historical structures in the park. Also, how ridiculous it is to fend off a simple "naturalist question" with, "I am the historian and cannot answer that." Knowing the natural side of your historical area can remove some of the "bunk".

Take the "bunk" out of your history presentations by knowing your story and treating it to a bath of multidirectional approaches that will capture even the most bored patron's attention. If the public understands the processes surrounding our historical work, they will more fully understand the historical resources for which we are responsible. Let them in on what we are doing and at the same time remove the "bunk". You and the public will appreciate a diversified approach to historical interpretation and "Flight Patterns of the Canadian Goose" may have to change directions.

Charles Winfield Mayo
Park Technician
Great Falls Park, Virginia



WHAT IS IT?

A. The PAVE multi-media pit at the National Visitor Center
B. A regional office development plan
C. An urban naturalist's nightmare
D. All of the above
E. None of the above

CULTURAL PARKS: TELLING THE STORY OF THE PRESENT

Since Wolf Trap Farm Park is not a "traditional National Park", our interpretive program must be different and consistent with the unique purpose of Wolf Trap to preserve and promote the Performing Arts. Since our interpretive program not only must rely on the history of the theatre but also must depend on the present and the future, a "living historical present" program has been instituted at Wolf Trap through its Enrichment Program and live performances at the Filene Center.

The Enrichment Program is designed to enrich the lives of young people, families and senior citizens by giving them an intimate backstage, front stage and study experience focused on the theatre programming. The program studies at close range the stage, its physical equipment, staffing, lighting and audio for Wolf Trap productions of opera, dance, symphonies, pop and jazz. By using this innovative method, which is particularly suited to Wolf Trap, the visitor becomes a participant rather than a mere spectator.

Wolf Trap's exceptional value is its interpretive program, designed to preserve a nationally significant example of the country's cultural heritage - the culture of the Performing Arts.

S. Calvin Riley
Administrative Technician
Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts

★ ★ ★

Eastman Kodak is creating a 15-minute film about George Washington to be shown at a small new theatre facility on the Washington Monument grounds. This $1¼ million movie and building are Kodak's Bicentennial gift to the American people. The project is being donated at no cost to the National Park Service. The film will emphasize the human story of Washington and stars Lorne Greene (who, as it turns out, has nearly the same physical measurements as the Father of Our Country).

NEW AREA CELEBRATES FAMOUS WOMAN

Last April, the Friends of Clara Barton, Inc., donated the Clara Barton House in Glen Echo, Maryland, to the National Park Service. Clara Barton is largely recognized and remembered for her relief work done during the Civil War—gaining her the title of "Angel of the Battlefield"—and her establishment of the American Red Cross. She was also a teacher at the age of fifteen and was the first woman to be given an official government job. When the Civil War broke out, she went immediately to the aid of suffering and wounded soldiers. After the war, President Lincoln commissioned her to set up and operate a missing soldiers bureau. Later, she went to Europe and became actively involved with the International Red Cross during the Franco-Prussian War. She returned to the United States and convinced America of the need for establishment of an American Red Cross. She also established the National First Aid Society and was involved with the National Chautauqua Assembly's Glen Echo center (which is also administered by the National Park Service and adjoins the Clara Barton National Historic Site).

The uniquely designed house, built in the shape of a Mississippi steamboat and with many concealed closets for relief supplies, was to be the headquarters of the Red Cross. Barton lived there from 1897 until her death in 1912.

We are just starting to develop an interpretive program at Clara Barton NHS but are existing on a hope and a prayer since the Office of Management and Budget has refused to allow any funding requests to even be transmitted to the Congress. We have a limited staff (of one) but are fortunate to have resident volunteers that serve as both interpreters and resource consultants.

Lyn Gray
Park Technician
Clara Barton NHS

VISITORS TRAPPED BY THE PIONEER SPIRIT IN PRINCE WILLIAM FOREST PARK

For more than a year now a pioneer spirit has been rekindled and roams the woodlands of Prince William Forest Park. His name is Old Jeb, a rough, uncouth but wise trapper and woodsman of the mid-nineteenth century. When you approach his domain he comes on like a wounded grizzly, roaring trespass, but eventually warms up and shares many insights of his lifestyle and man's intimate relationship with natural resources.

Jeb still lives, hunts and traps as if time has been frozen since 1850 and is not adverse to showing visitors how to set a snare, find and track animals, build a shelter from non-living natural materials or share a recipe for mouthwatering opossum stew. They are invited to participate in these and other skills of the good old days. Jeb also knows a technique whereby four people can remain warm as toast in a two-man tent, and without social incident.

The program has become so popular that reservations are usually filled well in advance. In addition, it is adaptable to off-site presentations at schools and community agencies, sharing the environmental ethic and recruiting concern and appreciation for natural resources.

The character of Old Jeb was created and is projected through the efforts of Park Technician Pete Stolz of our Visitor Protection Office. At first glance this may sound like just another living history program. On paper it is a formal recognized program. For the visitor, it is a personalized link with the past, a stimulant to the senses, a discovery experience instilling a desire to preserve our natural heritage for future generations.

Al Sheaffer
Chief, IRRM

HARPERS FERRY: HERITAGE DAYS - THE BLACK PERSPECTIVE

If you have been to Mather Training Center at Harpers Ferry, W. Va., you may know that it is housed in one of the old structures of Storer College. This educational institution was founded in 1865 and was one of the first centers for higher learning established for Blacks in America following the Civil War.

Earlier, in October, 1859, John Brown had led the revolutionary raid upon the U.S. Armory here and Harpers Ferry suddenly had become a symbol for abolitionsists across the country. Many Americans who had never given a thought to slavery or its implications became caught up in the drama of this old man's struggle to "rid the land of this curse" and many of the events of the ensuing Civil War were played out in the streets of this little town. Today, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park preserves much of the original fabric of the historic 19th century town and occupies the original buildings of the Storer College campus.

In this Bicentennial year the staff of Harpers Ferry NHP is planning "Heritage Days—The Black Perspective" on the old campus on June 18-20, 1976. It is intended as a celebration of the contributions to our culture by the millions of Black Americans who gave their muscle, intellect and spirit to the building of a great nation. Black History in America has its origins in the Virginia of the early 1600's. A program of seminars will attempt to trace that history up to the present time with an eye to forecasting the course of Civil Rights in the future.

Help and participation will be sought actively from local individuals, educators, and Civil Rights groups throughout the country. Tentatively, the three day celebration will involve a series of seminars, musical programs, literature, art exhibits, films, and the dedication of a sculpture on the grounds of the Storer College campus.

S. Preston Smith
Public Information Officer
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

THE NATIONAL VISITOR CENTER

When the National Visitor Center opens its doors to the public on July 4, 1976, it will represent a new era in the great tradition of NPS visitor service. The Center will be the first comprehensive facility ever to involve so many historical, architectural, and cultural innovations in a major urban setting, while maintaining an important theme of the Service—preservation of the environment.

The renovation of historic Union Station into the National Visitor Center has been approved by the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts, and it is listed as an historical landmark. This assured the retention of the building's magnificent Romanesque splendor, while challenging planners of the interior design to create a format of activities and exhibitry which would assure an inspiring program of greeting, orientation, and visitor information.

Throughout the spacious chambers of the Center, designs harmonize exhibitry, audiovisual aids, films, and personal visitor services. Ample interior greenery and strategically placed kiosks and gathering locations are designed to allow the visitor time to make a transition from traveler to visitor; to unwind from his travel and immerse him or herself into the visitor experience.

An outstanding feature of the Center is the partnership with state tourist offices in the West Wing of the building, called the Discover America Hall of States, where visitors will be able to gain detailed information on touring any part of the United States, as well as detailed information and orientation on the Capital area. We believe this national role will become an important stimulant to travel throughout our Park System. Cooperative agreements with voluntary organizations such as International Visitors Service Council, Traveler's Aid and the USO anticipate many other special needs of visitors.

Arrangements are being concluded to have a foreign money exchange facility, shuttle bus services to the Mall and fringe parking areas, a restaurant, tour information, and even a bike rental service! The Presidential Reception Room has been restored and will serve as a location for many important events. The Parks and History Association will operate a large bookstore and there will be a supply of free literature available at the kiosks. Arrangements are being made for hotel-motel, restaurant and entertainment information. An audiovisual display in the main hall, using 80 synchronized rear view carousel projectors in a large sunken area (not unlike a Greek amphitheater), will tell the story of the capital and how visitors can best utilize their time. There will be two 175-seat minitheaters showing films continuously on Washington, the history of the Capitol and the Federal government.

NCP Director Jack Fish and General Manager Jim Gross are convinced the programs of the Center will significantly enhance the quality of local and national tourism. Unlike the more traditional role in other NPS locales, where interpretation is often the primary function, emphasis at the Center will be placed on the word **information.** The National Visitor Center represents a renaissance of hospitality for Washington. It is fitting that it should be in Union Station, traditionally the encounter point for visitors over the years. This venerable structure will continue its role as host to the nation and the nation's host to the world.

Robert P. Briggs
Coordinator of Student
and Group Activities
National Visitor Center

LIGHT MY FIRE: TORCHLIGHT TOURS AT FORT WASHINGTON

Our small band of VIPs and interpreters sat discussing ways of bringing history to life for visitors to Fort Washington, an imposing masonry structure which stands on a strategic position overlooking the Potomac River. One tentatively suggested asking visitors to tour the Fort by moonlight and torchlight such as nervous citizens of Washington might have done in the early days of the Civil War when the Fort was the only defensive structure guarding the Capital and Confederate flags were flying within sight of the White House. Others added ideas and suggestions and the Torchlight Tour of Fort Washington emerged in 1972. It is a program which was largely conceived and developed with full participation of VIPs and in which they play a very large part—a trend which several NPS areas are following.

Fort Interpreters Donald Steiner and Michael Thomas built a VIP program based largely upon interest in the recent Civil War Centennial. Many of the VIPs were Civil War buffs who supplied Civil War period uniforms and equipment which the Fort's budget could not afford. The men, in Union uniform, became guards either on duty or relaxing and amusing themselves with music or cards. Women in period dresses and carrying candle lanterns at first conducted tours on a set schedule over a pre-established route and later, when an "Open Tour" concept developed, also served as laundresses and officers ladies enjoying the evening air. Boys in uniform served as torchbearers and as drummer boys. Girls and boys in period dress become officers' children playing under the watchful eye of their mothers. As much as possible, modern objects were removed from sight or covered over. The safety of the visitor was considered and torch standards containing modern day "torches" were planted by the steep stairs and dark stretches of parapet.

An idea which was tried and retained is the "Open Tour". In place of a guided stop-by-stop tour, the visitors are greeted at a bonfire gathering area, given the history of the Fort up to 1861 and invited to participate by "becoming" mid-nineteenth century citizens of Washington, D.C. They are then escorted to the Fort and challenged

by the guard on the drawbridge who admits them after being given the proper password. Once inside the Fort, they are encouraged to explore and observe at will and talk with the Sergeant of the Guard, the Quartermaster, the Ordance Sergeant and other members of the garrison. Precautions are taken and guards posted to insure that they do not accidentally wander into modern or unlighted, dangerous areas. They are then free to spend as much time as their interest allows. A problem of too many visitors arriving to make the experience informative and enjoyable was dealt with by making the tour "Reservation Only". The tour is well received by the public and many visitors return from it with enthusiastic compliments.

One reason for success is that the VIPs have made this popular program their own and have taken a very active part in developing it. There is no denying their knowledge and enthusiasm. It is contagious! Constant evolution keeps the tour vital. Planning and preparation prior to the arrival of the visitors and a critiquing session following each tour are also important. These steps, together with visitor interest and participation, help prevent the tour from becoming mechanical. The impact of viewing the Fort with torches blazing under a full moon can be spellbinding!

Bill Wilcox
Park Ranger
Fort Washington/Piscataway Park
NCP-East

THE COMMON MAN IN THE COLONIAL ERA

Despite jets streaking overhead and the CIA lurking over the hill, Turkey Run Farm still elicits the kind of cultural shock historic interpreters revel in. Located on roughly 300 acres of land near the George Washington Memorial Parkway in McLean, Virginia, the farm depicts the 18th Century lifestyle of a segment of the farm population involved in marginal economic activities. It fills the historical/economic gap created by places like Williamsburg and Mount Vernon. A great deal of time and money has traditionally gone into chronicling the famous men of our country's past, especially those involved in the Revolution. Until Turkey Run Farm, very little had been done to take a realistic look at the common man of the Colonial period and give people a glimpse of how he lived.

Turkey Run Farm is not an historical site, nor is it really a re-creation. It is a real working farm of the 1770's where everything is done for a reason, and it is this all-encompassing colonial frame of mind which governs interpretive activities. Food is not prepared, animals are not slaughtered and crops are not grown just for demonstration purposes—these activities occur so the farm family can eat. It is difficult to document thoroughly the exact lifestyle of any one particular dirt farmer, so Turkey Run Farm typifies a lifestyle rather than the life of any one person.

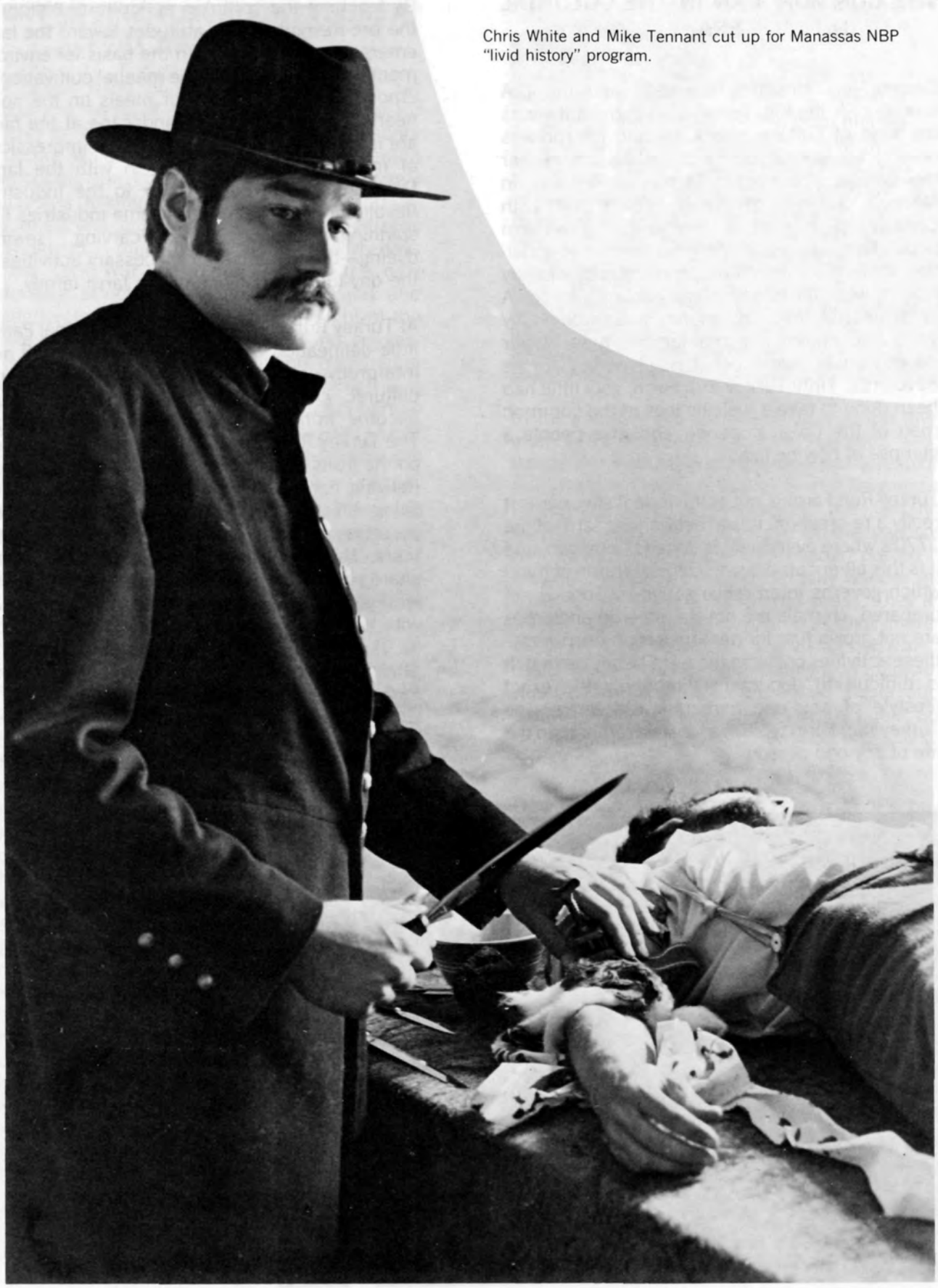
By teaching the common agricultural history of the pre-Revolution era, attitudes toward the land emerge naturally and form the basis for environmental education. From the manual cultivation of crops to the preparation of meals on the open hearth, the activities and landscape at the farm are intended to convey to the visitor impressions of man's traditional interaction with the land. Dealing with the period prior to the Industrial Revolution also means that home industries like spinning, weaving, wood carving, sewing, dyeing—the folk arts—are necessary activities in the day-to-day existence of the farm family.

At Turkey Run Farm, unlike many National Parks, little delineation between maintenance staff and interpretive staff is made. Personnel with horticultural, construction and wildlife knowledge become immense resources in interpretation. The Turkey Run Farm family tries to sustain itself on the fruits of its own colonially reenacted labor. Reliving early American history, when it means living off the land, instills a respect for the perserverance and resourcefulness of our forefathers. There's even more respect for those who share your interest and devotion to recreating the kind of history that comes when man communes with nature—and survives.

Shelly Keller
Park Technician, Turkey Run Farm
George Washington Memorial Parkway

Wayne Dobson (maintenance) and Larry Blake (interpreter) labor together to relive the past at this working colonial farm.

(photo by Linda Ford)



Chris White and Mike Tennant cut up for Manassas NBP "livid history" program.

MUSKETS AND MEDICINE: THE STONE HOUSE AT MANASSAS

There are many parks that have people in Confederate or Union uniform, give musket firings, and interpret the life of the soldier during the Civil War. Manassas NBP is no different. However, many times interpretation seems to shy away from the end result of the battles, and this is one area our living history program deals with: Civil War medicine. We have an excellent place for it in the Stone House.

The early morning quiet around Stone House on July 21, 1861, was blasted apart by the distant sound of cannon and musket fire. By early afternoon of that day, the advancing Union troops captured Stone House. They used it the rest of the afternoon as an ambulance depot; a place to collect and evacuate the wounded behind the lines to a field hospital. After the battle was over, the Union troops fled the field. The many wounded left in Stone House could not be moved, so several Union surgeons set up some operating tables and used it as a field hospital. Then for a little over a year the house lay silent and probably deserted.

In August of 1862, a second and much larger battle was fought in the area. Again, Stone House served as a place to treat the wounded. Then all was quiet again. The owners returned, repaired the house, and lived in peace. In 1949 the Park Service acquired the house and in 1971, the Stone House was opened as a restored Union field hospital with Stu Vogt (now at Fredericksburg NMP) assuming the role of Civil War surgeon. It was set up neat, clean and tidy to represent a field hospital before the patients arrived. This proved rather difficult to interpret. As First Manassas was the first battle of the Civil War, how can you talk about the horrors of surgery if you haven't done any operations? Something needed to be done.

When I started work at Manassas in 1974, the historian (Mike Tennent) had a suggestion. Why don't we mess up the house, and interpret it from the viewpoint of several days after the battle? So when Stone House reopened for the summer of '74, the interior looked very different.

The visitor climbs the stone steps and enters the central hallway. There he or she is met with a sight typical of what we feel a field hospital would have looked like after a battle. To the left is the tavern's taproom, converted by the soldiers to serve as a receiving area for the wounded. Blood-soaked straw and blankets litter the floor. Broken plates line the shelves, and the bar is littered with broken bottles and empty glasses. Used sponges and bandages lie tossed in the corner. Against the wall are propped several muskets. Across the hall from the receiving room are the two operating tables, each in a separate room. The furniture is shoved against the wall, and the tables are covered with the surgeon's tools. The operating tables are simply the doors torn off their hinges.

Lest any curatorial types question whether the above would damage any artifacts, let me reassure them that all of the above was done in strict accordance with Service guidelines and no original artifacts were damaged. Where necessary for effect, we messed up a reproduction.

To interpret this scene to the visitor is my job. Working with me are several seasonals and two VIP's. My male VIP's interpret the role of what today we would call orderlies (although at the time, they usually came from the ranks of the deserters and wounded) or surgeons. Our female seasonals and VIP's interpret the role of an officer's wife who came through the battle lines to care for him after he was wounded (modeled after a woman who did this, and kept a very detailed diary). On the slower weekdays, we set up a Confederate guard post in the back yard. After the customary musket firing, the visitor is invited to go into the house and learn what happened to the soldier after he was shot. This is especially good with the children who take great delight in seeing and hearing the musket fired, but don't stop to consider the results of that action.

We don't try to sicken the visitor to Stone House (although several **men** have fainted). No severed arms or legs, no dripping blood; just a calm explanation of how amputations (75% of all CW operations) were performed and the chance of survival in those days before germ theory was understood.

Too many times the Civil War gets romanticized

in the visitors' minds. Talk of "gallant deeds", charges across "clover-strewn fields", and the like occupy our thoughts. Stone House is one small attempt to balance the visitor's view of the Civil War.

(I would be interested in exchanging ideas and information concerning CW era medical practices with any other parks having a LH program that deals with it or wants to. The only other places I know of now are Petersburg and Harpers Ferry.)

Christopher White
Manassas National Battlefield Park

MUSIC . . . THE SPIRIT OF '76

LISTEN . . . can you hear the sound of music? If we listen we can hear the sounds of our environment wherever we may be . . . at work . . . at home . . . in church . . . in the fields and forests . . . on the mountain . . . the sounds of our environment make music. I'm very privileged to work at the Rock Creek nature Center in Washington, D.C. We are unique as the only National Park site with planetarium facilities in addition to our interpretive walks, talks, movies, and slide shows. It's my job not just to interpret these functions verbally but in what I feel is a very special way . . . musically. For over twenty years of my fifty I have been programming music and collecting it, too (my personal collection contains over 2,000 LP's and 400 tapes), everything from country western to opera, music from the movies and electronic music.

Hearing and communications are composed not only of words, but of sounds as well. Those sounds, when programmed, are an added impetus for the people to listen. My job is giving everything color, emotion and impact through music, opening up the listener to the message coming across, singing a song of knowledge and making the audience feel the vibrations. We should try to make the public as comfortable as possible while interpreting our given set of facts, creating a program that is as pleasurable to hear as it is to see, as it is to feel, as it is to touch, as it is to sense, as it is to know.

Music is a common language of communication, but there are various nuances to speaking it. The many different aspects of American society and, here in the capital of the nation, Washington, D.C., the international aspect of different cultures and languages gives a real challenge to me. Music is not an abstract—it is very personal and intimate if it is presented with appropriate cultural overtones to the given group listening to the program. Minds that couldn't comprehend or become restless and bored with long, involved explanations of facts, could be gently led and stimulated into listening and understanding with music. Familiar and popular songs and melodies, rhythms and tempos, create a friendly and warm atmosphere in which to be receptive to knowledge, whether it be scenic, scientific or historical.

Music speaks to everyone without lecturing. It is a recreational teacher. It makes people listen, and recreates new ideas and feelings in them about what they've heard. Learning becomes pleasurable and remembering becomes natural. Interpretation becomes a whole instrument of communication. Most importantly, the audience comes away happier with this knowledge by the mode of music programming. "Hinder not the music!"

We, as interpreters, must be a part of all this to communicate meaningfully to the public. Perhaps it may only be to convey that we in the Park Service not only care about but also enjoy our work with the public because we add that extra individual touch that says we do.

Bill Donahue
Park Technician-Interpretive Specialist
Rock Creek Nature Center

INTERPRETATION OR "CONCESSION" MANAGEMENT ON THE C&O CANAL?

With images of cozy campfires, inquisitive audiences, lively walks and nostalgic moments, the seasonal historian comes to the C&O Canal to interpret history. Could there be a better place to talk history then in the nation's largest National Historical Park? From afar the answer appears to be **no better place.** But beware: the truth may be hidden. Our interpreter may soon discover more to manage then simply information.

Perhaps the first obvious dilemma is that most of those visiting the C&O Canal are not interested in history. This is a simple, but real and somewhat degrading commentary on the nation's largest National Historical Park. If an interpreter is going to spend his or her time economically (which is oh so important to the feds nowadays), a practical weighing of priorities usually leads to interpreting:

1. Recreational activities (high attraction)
2. Natural history of the park (high attraction)
3. The story of the C&O Canal (low attraction)

Indeed, if an interpreter is bent on telling the canal history, s/he had better make some concessions and draw people to programs by letting them assume other major themes.

How does an interpreter behave in a "National Park" that is really a "community park"? The C&O Canal is by all means and all criteria a National Park. Where 12 adjacent communities provide 80 percent of the visitation and 90 percent of the interpretive audience, can the interpreter use a national visitor approach to telling the park story and get away with it? Absolutely not! **Instead, the interpreter becomes an instigator, employing the communities to tell their own park-related story to each other.** The interpreter humbles himself, steps down and manages a huge cadre of volunteers, giving them the honorary title of "interpreter". Surprisingly, the local visitor, the incidental national visitor and the park are far better off as a result!

What about room for "professional" interpretation? Who decides whether or not to erect wayside

exhibits? Which program topics are park related? When the interpretive prospectus is complete? Working with the C&O Canal is a 19 member Citizens Advisory Commission that contributes to policy building and management. It represents a local constituency with a non-bureaucratic idealism. For the stout-hearted interpreter, a hard pill to swallow may be that such decisions are effected by popular consensus rather than scientific rationale. More unpalatable, those decisions must be made by the interpreter. **Popularity may be more appropriate than professionalism - the ability to deal with popularity management is a real requirement for professional interpretation on the C&O Canal.**

This picture is, undoubtedly, mirrored all over the system. As an interpreter it is interesting to investigate the concessions we make to get our message across. The C&O Canal gives ample challenge to the professional mind, especially if it lies in the head of an interpreter. Without question, at the C&O Canal, interpretation implies "concession" management.

Rex E. Derr
Interpretive Specialist
C&O Canal National Historical Park

THE CHILDREN'S EXPERIMENTAL WORKSHOP:

on accessability of the arts in the parks to the handicapped and disadvantaged

The Children's Experimental Workshop of Glen Echo Park, Md., started as a performing and visual arts day camp in the summer of 1972. Composed of a series of workshops in dance, theatre arts, pottery, and design, it has provided quality instruction to over 2000 children between the ages of 8-14 drawn from all over the inner city and suburban metropolitan areas. It has trained around 50 high school students in its Apprenticeship Teaching program. The staff of professional artists, selected from diverse ethnic communities, collaborates in the planning of themes to integrate the four workshop disciplines. For example, our first year's theme was "The Creation of the World: the nature of earth, air, fire, and water". Each workshop process was tied to the other through translating basic environmental systems into art experiences. We used the NESA-NEED material as a good source.

For the second year, the theme was "The American Indian Heritage: the origins of myth and symbol." The art workshops explored North American Indian approaches to pottery, basket-making, sandpainting and weaving. In the dance and drama workshops, children acted out the significance of planting, harvesting crops, sacred hunts, as well as American Indian ceremonials. Another theme, "The life, character, and imagery of African Culture", used dance, drama and batik design.

The workshop sessions culminate in a Children's International Festival with exhibits and performances by the children and a food feast prepared by the parents.

In 1973, we expanded to include a series of intensive 10-week workshops at the park for multiple handicapped children during the school year. The workshop facility was adapted to accommodate children in wheelchairs. Schools which offered little or no exposure to the arts in their curriculum were asked to participate. In our first season, the handicapped program was developed in conjunction with teachers and students from Jackson Elementary, a school for the blind in Washington, D.C. (see September 1975 issue of Parks and Recreation magazine of NRPA). In 1974-75, the Workshop offered a combined program in Pottery and Puppetry to mentally retarded children from Rock Terrace School in Montgomery County, Md. This past fall, with a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Children's Experimental Workshop has been able to continue its work with two other schools for the physically handicapped. The grant has enabled us to work with a resident puppet company of the Smithsonian and a troupe of actors from Arena Stage's Living Theatre, a superb children's theatre company.

Glen Echo had been a National Chatauqua Assembly Center in the 1890's. The Chatauqua idea, which emphasized bringing cultural and educational opportunities within reach of the populace, is interpreted through this, other programs and special events. Without a doubt,

the Children's Experimental Workshop here is **experimental** and very much alive. It is an exciting concept using minimal resources that can be adapted and applied in any park. It opts for the artist as resident interpreter of park values. It is demanding work which takes energy and committment but new insights are gained from each experience and the rewards are limitless!

Wendy Ross
Founder/Director, Children's
Experimental Workshop
Glen Echo Park

THE CASE FOR EMPATHY

How do you as an interpreter handle the motley crowds that flood your site? (My site is an 19th century, water-powered grist mill.) They can vary from the untoilet-trained toddlers of a nursery school, to Park Service engineers, through tourists looking for Arlington Cemetery (which happens to be in a different state). It certainly isn't possible to approach these diverse visitors with the same canned speech or even the same thought processes in mind.

What is the answer? Or, how does one come up with an approach which will be suited to each visitor or grouping of visitors? Well, empathy is the answer! At least, it seems to work for me in my situation. By having empathy, an intellectual or emotional identification with another, one is able to place oneself in the position of the visitor.

For example, if a junior high school group comes in close to lunch time, one is able to correctly think that lunch is one thought foremost in these visitors' minds. Thus, one is able to grab the group's attention instantly with a statement about the uses of the mill's products, such as cornbread drenched with butter, cornmeal pancakes, or cornmeal mush fried with maple syrup on top. The interpreter who has empathy is able to grab the attention of this group, normally difficult to reach because they are at an awkward age—between child and adult.

How would empathy help when dealing with a group of preschoolers whose ability to deal with abstract concepts has not been developed? In attempting to explain the concept of a two thousand pound mill stone grinding corn, for example, one can put oneself in the position of the child and say, while pointing at the obviously very heavy stone, "What would happen to you if that stone were on top of you? Would you be as big as you are now?", followed by, "What happens to these little pieces of corn underneath that big stone?" The answer is invariably that the corn is "smushed, mushed, smashed, or ground". The results certainly show that these preschoolers have been reached.

What about the elderly retired farmer from Kentucky or Tennessee? There are probably a couple of generations separating his childhood from one's own. However, by using one's empathy and putting oneself in his younger years the gap can be bridged. Here a reference to the corn liquor that the miller produced or sold on the side does wonders. Once a rapport has been built, the rest comes easily. Although he may have been looking for Arlington Cemetery, he will probably leave here with a smile on his face due to recalling past years, and the interpreter may even have learned something about the past not known before.

Another situation often encountered is that of adults and youths together such as a group of cub scouts and their fathers. Now to whom does the interpreter address himself? Which age group would one choose to leave out? Neither. The interpreter with empathy will speak to the cub scouts, realizing that the adults have a greater maturity and a longer attention span. Therefore, the cub scouts are reached and the adults, too. If the adults aren't satisfied by the lower level explanation, they will ask questions with the end result being complete satisfaction of the entire group of visitors.

If one wishes to further develop his or her empathy, there is one method which has worked well for me. It is by ascertaining the entering behavior of the groups. Find out the age and grade level of school groups. Watch the approaching group. It may be a tightly controlled group, a relaxed group, or an unruly group. Questions asked of the group will glean more information about whether they have had any presite information presented to them. For example, questions appropriate for my site are

"Why do we supply our power with a water wheel and not a gas engine, steam engine, or electric motor?" or "Can anybody tell me what this building is, or what it does?" Once this entering behavior is evaluated, one can begin to better use his or her empathy in dealing with the group or visitor.

This is my case for empathy. The best part of this approach is that I am seldom bored by any visitor or group of visitors. I am able to adjust any interaction with the visitors until it is suited to them and not a script. It is this constant juggling of thoughts, input, and evaluations which prevents boredom. Of course, if I can interject some humor here and there to put a smile on the visitors' faces, I will.

Brian T. Gregorie
Mill Worker
Rock Creek Division
Pierce Mill

SHARE A TALENT

You say your interests run from ant farms to embroidery techniques of the 15th century? Well, that's a big chasm, but I suppose all of us have a variety of interests which run in different directions. As a matter of fact, mine do, too. Would you believe I'm interested in the ecological balance in Kenya and also how to make the perfect Christmas wreath—complete with bow and holly berries? I think our individual interests are best fulfilled by sharing them with others. Most National Park Service areas have perfect settings in which to share unusual talents and hobbies. With the present budget projections reading like the Dow Jones in October 1929, it is time to call upon our inner resources and explore the horizons of individual talents.

Allow me to reminisce a bit with you. It was nearing Christmas in 1971, when I decided to do something special for the season. I planned a Christmas Greens Workshop which would focus on the use of natural greens in the design and construction of Christmas creations. It all began in a small way, first setting aside a date for the event, second asking local garden clubs to prepare refreshments, and lastly, advertising the workshop as widely as possible. It was a great success, and now the park has just completed its fifth year in presenting the Christmas Greens Workshop. It's now a tradition at Great Falls and the whole staff becomes involved in the details of the program.

It's a fast moving four hours and the visitors go away with real know-how for their own homes and a warm feeling of appreciation towards the NPS for helping them obtain a skill in the creative arts. It's also a good time to communicate environmental concerns. This year we stressed the reasons for **not** using running pine as a decorative green. (Running pine was nearly eradicated from this area, and is now a protected plant due to its delicate growing habitat.) The workshop features something new each year. This year we demonstrated the Betsy Ross 5-point star using paper folds, and then constructed a special Bicentennial wreath with this theme.

Though your interests may be totally different from mine, I believe they can be that undiscovered resource not yet tapped. Why not rethink your site's potential and, when you're considering resources, why not think about using your OWN talents? Try it, you'll be surprised what you find. Happy sharing!

Colleen A. Spicka
Park Technician
Great Falls Park, Virginia

MUSEUM STORAGE OR HOW TO MAKE A SILK PURSE FROM A SOW'S EAR

Park museum storage, as any Regional Curator can attest, has often been relegated to the basement or attic of whatever building was available and not being used for something considered more important. This is as true in the National Capital Parks as in any other region. After visiting the various sites in NCP I discovered that good storage was one of the most critical needs. With the help of Art Allen, Chief, Division of Museum Services, Harpers Ferry Center, I scoured the Washington area for space that could be used for regional museum storage. At Art's suggestion we went to the National Visitor Center, Washington's old Union Station. Without a guide, one could get lost for months in that building. We felt that there was one space that could be

adapted to good museum storage. Thanks to the generosity of Jim Gross, General Manager of the National Visitor Center, approximately 5,000 square feet of space was committed to regional museum storage. The space decided upon had been used for several years as a dump. Trash of every description, including broken desks and chairs, was everywhere. Clearly, the first job was to get rid of the trash and clean up the area. Having arrived on the scene at a time of very tight budgets, I found that money and people were difficult to obtain. Therefore, a motley clean-up crew of curators, clerk-typists, technicians and Harpers Ferry types was organized for a big party. I would like here to mention and thank profusely everyone who helped clean up on that hot summer day.

Pam West—NCP
Lyn Gray—Clara Barton House
Joe Geary—NCP
John Tiff—Ford's Theatre
Nick Veloz—Geo. Wash. Memorial Parkway
Herb Martin—HFC
Bob Olsen—HFC
Mike Wiltshire—HFC

That was one of the dirtiest jobs I have ever been involved in. Real dedication was shown that day by a great group of museum people. A lot of work remains to be done: painting, building storage shelves and much, much more. Thanks to many people, however, we have begun.

Gordon V. Gay
Regional Curator
NCP

INTERPRETERS AT OXON HILL FARM: A DIFFERENT BREED

Visitors coming to the Oxon Hill Farm often get a much different view of the National Park Service then they get at the Grand Canyon or the Great Smokies. Instead of being greeted by a neatly uniformed Ranger, the farm visitor will probably be met by a dirty farmer garbed in overalls or denim skirts. More than likely, this Park Service representative will involve the visitors in what he is doing, whether it be corn harvesting or chicken feeding, rather than just describing the activity. This informal approach to interpretation at Oxon Hill Farm has evolved into a very relaxed but productive program in which visitors can see and participate in turn of the century farm life.

The informality of interpretation is largely due to necessity. Since it is a working farm, and not a museum, many demonstrations must be done at the animal's convenience and not the public's. For example, wagon rides are very informal and are usually given on an unscheduled basis since the weather and farm work load dictates when both the farmers and horses are available. Horse teams are used to cultivate major portions of the fields instead of tractors and modern equipment. Other demonstrations cannot be planned too far in advance but must be scheduled after "Mother Nature" has given her approval. You cannot have a corn harvest until the corn is ripe.

Necessity has forced interpretation to be a cooperative venture between the maintenance division (in our case, the farmers), and the interpretative staff. This need for cooperation rose early and is now so acute that many duties overlap between the divisions. In the spring, far too many classes arrive for the small staff of interpreters to handle alone. That's when the farmers stop plowing the fields and pitch in to help give tours. As the school groups dwindle, and silence again appears on the farm in afternoon hours, the interpreters help the farmers complete their farm work. For whether performed by an interpreter or a farmer, doing casual farm chores is the best way of relating farm life to the visitor.

Linda Thornton
Crafts Demonstrator
Oxon Hill Farm

FORUM

Dear Editor:

In my present job as an exhibit planner, I have the opportunity to travel to many Park Service areas in the course of my work. In many areas we are called to come in because exhibits are old, outmoded or non-existent. In some parks, I have been aghast, not at the shabbiness of the exhibits, but rather at the complete resignation of the interpretive staffs that have to live with them. The cry is the same . . . "no money, no men, the park has interpretation on the lowest priorities" . . . etc. In some ways this resignation makes the job of the planner and the designer easier, for the field looks to us as messiahs. For the visitor, however, this resignation is sad, for often it is years before we are budgeted and programmed to revamp the exhibit room in Park X.

A refreshing contrast for me was a recent visit to Great Falls Park, Virginia. There the staff had a new twist to an old problem—a brand new visitor center and no money left or budgeted to put in exhibits. A dynamic young interpreter, Corky Mayo, with little to work with but initiative and support from his supervisors and colleagues, almost singlehandedly put together an exhibit that introduces the history of the river and the park in the lobby and filled the exhibit room with a photo gallery that any park would be proud of. The first exhibit cost less than $75; the gallery photos cost around $500; total cost for the entire package was less than $600 and a lot of time and leg work for someone who is naive enough not to know that it couldn't be done.

Corky sought the help of Harpers Ferry Center for advice on object conservation, contacts for photo work, and design direction. We, in turn, while we couldn't do the work for him, were only too happy to show him the way that he could do it himself. He did it! The exhibit is tastefully done, the copy is sensitive and beautiful, and the photo gallery is superb.

Corky, incidentally, is a 37-hour-a-week appointee who is trying desperately to get on permanent. Ironically, how many permanent and higher-graded employees with a world of experience to draw from are sitting back and bewailing the fact that they have to live with archaic facilities because they don't have the money? Surely they can do something on an interim basis.

I am not implying that the field should take it upon themselves to alter or redesign existing and recently installed exhibits (in some cases recently we have seen new exhibits that have been altered which violated the design integrity and improved them not at all). What I am saying is that if a vacuum exists and you can get nothing programmed to fill it, do what Corky did. Come up with an inexpensive plan; seek our help and advice. Believe me, you will get our approval and help . . .

Saul Schiffman
Staff Curator
Harpers Ferry Center
Harpers Ferry, W. Va.

Dear Editor:

I would like to address a few comments in reference to Mr. Cahill's letter in the September issue of In Touch.

I have been a permanent interpreter for more than three years, and I believe Mr. Cahill may be somewhat unaware of a "new" interpreter who is making his/her presence more aware to the NPS staff, from the seasonal in the field to the staff at Washington.

I believe the vast majority of interpreters have fun at their jobs. There are, of course, serious moments (e.g., lapses of permanent positions, reductions of season staffing, reduction or complete removal of interpretive programs), but we have the initiative to keep on going and working with what we are given.

As to Mr. Cahill's remarks about moving into "management" positions to make a difference, I, for one, believe the "difference" is going to be made in the **FIELD** by field interpreters.

I take particular exception to Mr. Cahill's remarks re: "Those of you who spend your time trying to professionalize interpretation are going to be left standing at the gate." I hope that is a big gate, because there are many interpreters trying to "professionalize" interpretation. This professionalization is for the betterment of the interpreter and for the park visitor.

Sincerely yours,

Steven K. Sandell
District Naturalist
Everglades National Park

Dear Editor:

I'd like to comment on the letter from Tony Sisto entitled "Meditations on An Ice Cream Cone" in the September issue of **In Touch.**

Tony draws an analogy between being told how to eat an ice cream cone and being told how to enjoy a national park. There is a basic flaw in this analogy. Eating an ice cream cone is a personal action that affects only yourself. However, "enjoying" a national park—especially one with real wilderness atmosphere—by participating in loud and boisterous activities, may detract from the experience of other visitors.

Last summer my family and I spent a night in a housekeeping cabin in Yosemite Valley. As the sun sank, the noise level rose. Finally, darkness left us with sounds of rock music, portable televisions, and whoops and hollers. I'm sure those people were enjoying themselves, but I wasn't. They could have congregated and done the same thing practically anywhere. But Yosemite Valley is the only place they might hear Bridalveil Falls cascading down a granite cliff or see the moonlight on Half Dome.

One of the greatest sounds in the world is that of children laughing and playing. But national parks are few and playgrounds are many. A person may get a warm feeling inside while listening to children sing, but to hear the cry of a loon or the howl of a wolf may fill him with an emotion he has never felt before. We should provide him with every opportunity to achieve that experience.

I agree with Tony that interpreters should not be "criticizing teachers of technique." However, most of our visitors have not lived and worked in a national park as Tony has. Many of these people are ignorant of what they might see, hear, or feel in a national park. Interpreters should be there, **if necessary,** to reassure, to guide, and to assist the visitor in **discovering** the uniqueness of the area and (perhaps more important) his uniqueness as an **individual.**

Again, I agree with Tony that there should be a place for each of these "incompatible" activities. It seems we disagree as to what should separate these activities, though. It is possible that they might successfully be separated in many of our national parks. But at those parks set aside primarily for their wilderness values, such as Isle Royale and some of the Alaskan areas, the separation should be at the park boundary.

National parks cannot be all things to all people.

Frank J. Deckert
Chief Park Naturalist
Big Bend National Park

COOPERATING ASSOCIATIONS

DON'T JUDGE A KID BY HIS COVER

(While a more full report on the Children's Media Workshop is being prepared for distribution, and plans for follow-through are being made, here is an interim statement, a portion of an evaluation written by Berne Teeple, Park Technician, Environmental Education Coordinator, NCP.)

The best workshop I have ever attended was the Children's Media Workshop in New York City on October 28-29-30, 1975. There were five objectives: 1) familiarization with current children's material; 2) what children are like today; 3) approaches to publications about the parks for children; 4) opening channels of communication with the children's publishing field and the American Library Association; and 5) directions for the future. I highly recommend the film **The Identity Society,** narrated by Dr. William Glasser, about children's goals versus their roles in life.

After the discussion of what children are like today, six students from Walden School were brought into the workshop to give us a critique of the National Park Service publications that they had reviewed two weeks prior. This session proved to be quite valuable. The general opinion of the panel was that they weren't satisfied with what was being published for the National Park Service. Many ideas and suggestions were brought out by the kids:

1. Coloring books were too detailed
2. Many books had very convincing covers, but content was of very poor quality
3. Color photographs of animals in nature books instead of drawings.
4. Get Park Service information into their hands before their visit to the park site.
5. Much lower prices!

Something that impressed me very much was a poem that Yevgeny Yevtushenko wrote:

Telling lies to the young is wrong.
Proving to them that lies are true is wrong.
Telling them that God's in his heaven
and all's well with the world is wrong.
The young know what you mean. The young are people.
Tell them the difficulties can't be counted,
and let them see not only what will be
but see with clarity these present times.
Say obstacles exist they must encounter
sorrow happens, hardship happens.
The hell with it, Who never knew
the price of happiness will not be happy.
Forgive no error you recognize,
it will repeat itself, increase,
and afterwards our pupils
will not forgive in us what we forgave.

A very interesting comment was thrown out to the participants during a discussion of NPS publicatiosn for children. It was casually mentioned that the people in the National Park Service really are not committed to their job. There was a very subtle stir in the room and then immediate defense of each park site. I agreed with the fact that Park Service people are really into themselves. Me first, Park second! Sure, I believe we must look out for ourselves, but what about the kid who is a visitor in our park? It seemed as though everyone attending the workshop was only concerned with his own area, rather than concerned about the child visitor servicewide. We sometimes limit ourselves without realizing it. I hope someday somebody in the National Park Service will say, "Hey! Did you know over 75% of our visitors are kids and we really should be doing something creative and stimulating for them?"

The greatest part of the workshop, I thought, was having the kids evaluating the books and answering the questions. The audience really had a difficult time relating to these kids. Here we all were getting paid to be in a position to be so-called qualified "know-hows" on what children like and dislike. If people are writing publications or even an interpretive program for children, they must never forget the child within themselves. When dealing with children we must consider several important facts. Most children have more limited experiences than adults, so don't go beyond the child's experiences. There is also a limited range of language experience and, often, a short attention span. These are barriers many adults seem to fall over. Maybe with a little more patience and dusting off our own childhood past, we will sell better quality material in our bookstores. I really enjoyed Mr. Don Reynolds explanation of his love for children. "I'm not a kid at heart! I'm just an unfinished adult!"

No matter if you are writing for children or talking to children, please handle them one by one. Remember the identity problem that they are facing now more than ever. Involving the child with the rest of the world is going to make him feel that without him, there would be a difference. People need to be needed and children are people too! Let me finish by adding a few short writings from the **Geranium on The Windowsill Just Died But Teacher You Went Right On,** by Albert Cullum:

Your're so proud of your shining new car.
Your're so proud of your new color hair,
Your vacation tan,
and your nice clean blackboards.
I sit in the third row, last seat
Teacher, are you ever proud of me?

****

I was good at everything
—honest everything!—
until I started being here with you.
I was good at laughing,
playing dead,
being king!
Yeah, I was good at everything!
But now I'm only good at everything
on Saturdays and Sundays . . . . . .

Annual Reports

The annual report deadline was January 1st. We will be expecting to hear from you this month. If you have reason for a delay, please let us know. It is extremely important that this office complete the consolidated report early this year.

Membership Discounts

So far as this office can determine, nearly all cooperating associations offer discounts to their membership. The question is repeatedly raised, why do associations not honor memberships in other associations? Some do, as long as proof of membership is presented, of course, but for the most part, this is not a general practice. Obviously there are no guidelines on this subject, because it is a matter of individual association policy.

This is in no way an attempt to standardize policy matters among associations, but this office recommends consideration of association-wide discounts. Not only is it a courtesy to members, particularly NPS personnel who are members and who travel a great deal, but it would go far in establishing better relationships between associations.

Your thoughts on this matter would be welcomed. Consideration at your next board meeting is encouraged.

1976 Cooperating Associations Publications Competition

1976 will be the year for the Cooperating Associations Publications Competition. The first competition is still being discussed and has been termed an immense success. The object, of course, was to encourage an improvement in association design and printing. The view from this office is that it has been working. In the year since the last awards were announced, there have been some exciting things done, and from some of the plans revealed, there are some equally nice things on the drawing boards.

September 30, 1976 is the deadline. This is just a reminder that you have nine months in your program schedule to submit entries. There will be some slight alterations in categories this year

and, based on experience, a few changes in judging procedure. For example, this year we plan to have children judge the children's category. But all of these details will be spelled out later.

Mark it down on your calendar. We had over 60 entries last year. This year promises to be a special one.

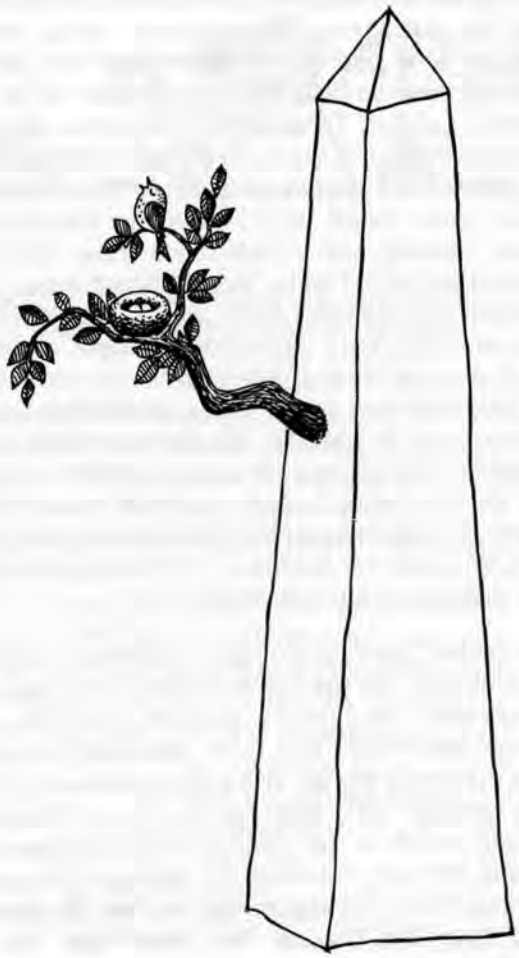
Remainders

Many associations purchase books from remainder houses—A&S, Outlet, Walden, Book Sales, etc. Last year we sent catalogs to all main offices and agencies. Much to our surprise, however, we are finding that many of the people who should have received those catalogs know nothing about them. We are going to try once more. New catalogs will be ready in January. We have requested 250 copies of each and will do a mailing to you immediately.

This brings up an interesting point about association mail. This office does not have the authority to contact the parks by mail without going through official channels. We do have the authority to communicate directly to association offices—executive secretaries, business managers, agents—with such items as pertains to association business. More often than not, however, this kind of mail is not getting through to the proper people. This even includes such things as the new Activity Standards and the new annual report forms. Some of the trainees in our management seminars had never seen a copy of the Activity Standards memo. You should look into this. Make certain that association mail is reaching your desk.

New Association

Congratulations to Art Sullivan and Virgil Olson at Bighorn Canyon NRA on the organization of the newest cooperating association, the Bighorn Canyon Natural History Association. Officially chartered on December 2, 1975, this latest addition to our list will operate at the visitor center at Yellowtail Dam, Hardin, Montana, and at a new building now under construction at Lovell, Wyoming. Virgil Olson is the Executive Secretary and a more energetic one you'll not find. He is looking for your support and cooperation. Any assistance or ideas you can pass along will be appreciated.



There are three cooperating associations operating within NCP. **Eastern National Park and Monument Association** has a bookstore at Manassas NBP and **Harpers Ferry** has its own association store. **Park and History Association** operates book sales facilities at Arlington House (home of Robert E. Lee), Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, Ford's Theatre, Antietam Battlefield, Glen Echo Park, Catoctin Mountain Park, Pierce Mill, Rock Creek Nature Center, C&O Canal, Great Falls Park, Prince William Forest Park, Greenbelt, Fort Washington and the National Aquarium. They will soon open their largest bookstore at the National Visitor Center. (P&HA Executive Secretary is Rock L. Comstock, Jr., Regional Chief of Interpretation.)

RAP UP

Looking back over a copy of **In Touch,** I discovered a request for book reviews on books suitable for interpreters' use.

Although I don't intend to write a book review, I would like to list some publications which many interpreters could readily find and use.

First are the books of Eric Sloane:

A Museum of Early American Tools
A Reverence for Wood
Our Vanishing Landscape
Diary of an Early American Boy

These books are all low-cost paperbacks, available universally and printed by Ballantine books.

Another publication which is of great value to historical interpreters and anyone with an interest in water powered mills is **Old Mill News.** It is published quarterly, has about 20 pages and is filled with articles and photographs of water powered mills and wind powered mills. The cost is $5.00 a year in the U.S.A. It may be obtained by sending a check to the Society for the Preservation of Old Mills, P.O. Box 435, Wiscasset, Maine 04578.

Brian T. Gregorie
Mill Worker
NCP-Rock Creek Division
Pierce Mill

★ ★ ★ ★

Julia Holmaas and Nancy Strader have given six hour miniworkshops in Acclimatization to youth group leaders at Prince William Forest Park and Rock Creek Park. These workshops, which acquaint participants with Steve Van Matre's Acclimatization techniques, are designed for anyone interested in helping others to experience the natural world. Scout leaders and other non-school educators, as well as teachers, pass on these techniques to their charges and provide a vast resource of "free" interpreters able to share their environmental awareness with others.

★ ★ ★ ★

The Frederick Douglass Home, a memorial to the fearless abolitionist and distinguished Black statesman, has put on a new face for the Bicentennial. Recently repainted, it is also being landscaped and its interior furnishings are receiving renewed curatorial attention. A new book, **Frederick Douglass: The Clarion Voice,** by Dr. John Blassingame of Yale University, is due to be published by the National Park Service this year.

★ ★ ★ ★

Having a language problem? Need a multilingual staff but can't afford it? Try a professional volunteer organization in the foreign visitor service field. We used IVIS (International Visitor Service Council) volunteers in our information booths downtown and signed them on as VIP's. To find out about affiliated organizations in your area, contact Executive Director, COSERV, 1630 Crescent Place, NW., Washington, D.C. 20009, 202-332-1028.

★ ★ ★ ★

NCP
RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!! IT'S CAPTAIN DAN THE 'COPTER PILOT.
HE SEES ALL, KNOWS ALL!
hoofnagle HAVO
ERUPTIONS OF MAUNA LOA & KILAUEA, A 2,600 ACRE FOREST FIRE, A MAJOR EARTHQUAKE AND A TIDAL WAVE! ALL IN SIX MONTHS! I THINK I'LL MOVE TO A NICE CALM PARK LIKE YOSEMITE!
DADDY, WHY DOES THE ELEVATOR MAN HAVE RANGER CLOTHES ON?
UP
DOWN
WASHINGTON MONUMENT Elevator
THIS PLACE IS LISTED IN "VISIT A LESSER-USED PARK", BUT I DIDN'T THINK THAT THE ONLY OTHER PERSON I'D SEE WOULD BE A RANGER WITH A BULL-HORN!
THEODORE ROOSEVELT ISLAND
WHITE HOUSE TOUR ?? I THOUGHT I WAS STANDING IN LINE TO SEE "JAWS"!
WHITE HOUSE TOUR
I'M REALLY WORRIED ABOUT LARRY... I THINK HE MAY HAVE LATENT INTERPRETIVE TENDENCIES!
C AND O CANAL