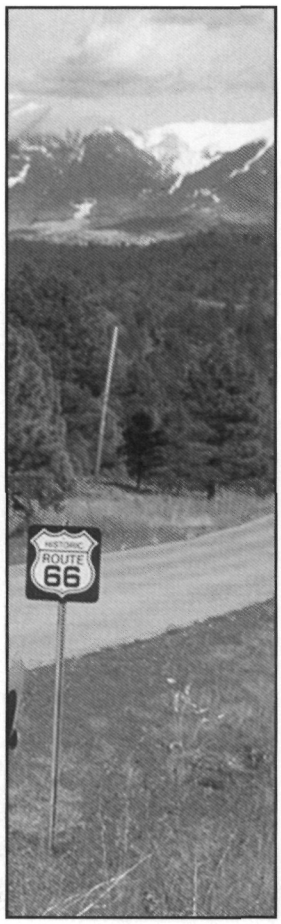
NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN

Technical information on the National Register of Historic Places: survey, evaluation, registration, and preservation of cultural resources

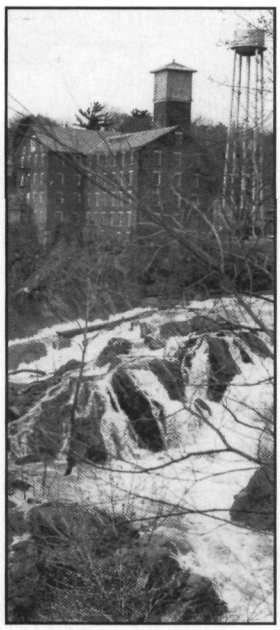
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National Park Service
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TELLING THE STORIES:

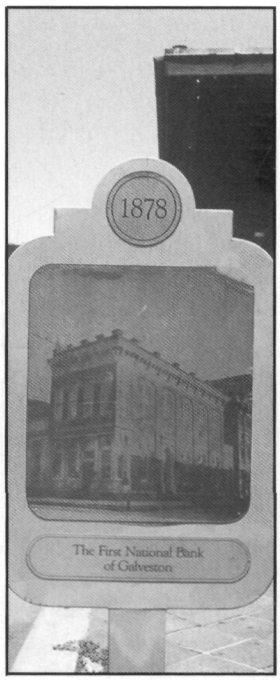
Planning Effective Interpretive Programs for Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places



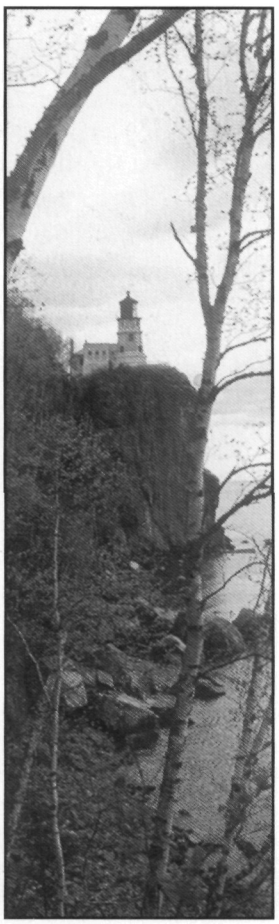












The mission of the Department of Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibility to tribes.

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

This material is partially based on work conducted under a cooperative agreement with the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and the U.S. Department of the Interior.

NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN

TELLING THE STORIES:

Planning Effective Interpretive Programs for Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

BY
RON THOMSON
Interpretive Consultant, Oneonta, New York
and
MARILYN HARPER
Historian, National Park Service

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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This publication has been prepared pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, which directs the Secretary of the Interior to develop and make available information concerning historic properties. This National Register Bulletin was developed under the general editorship of Carol D. Shull, Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places. Beth L. Savage, architectural historian, National Register of Historic Places, is responsible for publications coordination. Sarah Dillard Pope provided editorial and technical support. Comments on this publication should be directed to the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places, National Register, History and Education, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW, Suite NC400, Washington, DC 20240.

I. INTRODUCTION

Our nation's history lives on in its historic places. Places where history happened are powerful witnesses to the reality of past events, individual achievements, dramatic change, and past lifeways. Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, or the USS Arizona Memorial, in Honolulu, Hawaii, link us to great moments in our common past. The mysterious cliff dwellings of the Southwest awe us with their haunting images of the remote past. Restored historic houses and gardens and tree-lined, turn-of-the-century neighborhoods seem to represent the beauty of America at its best. Other places teach us about past contradictions and struggles that we dare not forget. The Civil War battlefield at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, now green and peaceful, reminds us that our society has often been divided by conflict, and that those who lived in the past faced decisions no less difficult than the ones we face today. Historic Central High School (now Little Rock High School) in Little Rock, Arkansas, which became a national symbol of the controversy over school desegregation in the 1950s, remains a pivotal landmark in the story of the Civil Rights Movement.

Most historic places represent the everyday lives of ordinary people. Small country schools in Washington state recall the homesteaders of the late 19th century, who uprooted their families to settle in remote and isolated areas. Factories in eastern cities testify to generations of new Americans laboring long hours to make lives for themselves and their families. Both lovingly restored train stations and abandoned rail yards document the railroads that played a central role in American life in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Places related by location reveal the histories and collective aspirations of whole communities. How communities interacted with one another through cooperation or conflict can tell us much about regional, or even national, values. We need to know that they exist and will continue to exist for future generations.

The stories of tens of thousands of these places are documented in the National Register of Historic Places —stories about people, the places they came from, the reasons they came, the lives they led, their work, their families, and their connections with other members of the community and with the outside world. In many cases, these stories were unknown until research undertaken in preparation for nominating the places for listing in the National Register revealed them.

Most of these places do not speak to us directly. Their stories need to be "interpreted" before people can understand them. The language they speak needs to be translated in order to communicate clearly. Many historic places are already seeking ways to share their stories with the public. Others have not yet gone beyond the first step—preparation of a National Register nomination form. If the stories discovered in the course of obtaining National Register listing go no further than the National Register archives, they are fulfilling only part of their potential. We have an obligation to communicate the powerful stories these places have to tell to the public. Only in this way can we inspire the passion, commitment, and action that is necessary to ensure that the places we care about will survive to educate future generations. Historic places that are valued will be preserved.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BULLETIN

This bulletin is intended to help individuals and organizations develop effective programs to convey the meaning of historic places to the public using the information in National Register registration documentation and other sources. Groups which might find it useful include not only museums and historic sites, but also local historical societies, schools, historic property owners (including non-profit organizations), chambers of commerce, local civic or improvement organizations, planning or preservation commissions, architectural review boards, Main Street programs, private developers taking advantage of the investment tax credit, downtown revitalization groups, and local or state tourism offices.

Telling the stories of historic places to the public can expand understanding of the mission of federal, state, local, and tribal governments striving to protect historic properties, create support for historic preservation efforts, make private preservation projects more profitable, encourage individual initiative in protecting aspects of a community's heritage, and, in the process, improve the quality of life in and even the chances of survival of communities nationwide. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the past lives on as a vital and living part of American communities. Listing in

the National Register plays an important role in achieving that goal. Using the information in National Register documentation to convey the meaning of historic places to the public can continue that contribution after the property is listed. Without the understanding and commitment of the general public, none of these efforts ultimately can hope to succeed.

The bulletin is organized in six major sections. The first addresses the long-standing relationship between historic preservation and education. The second section discusses the role of the National Register. The third section defines interpretation for the purpose of this bulletin. The fourth outlines a simple planning process for developing effective interpretation programs. This will provide a framework for selecting the most appropriate interpretive media from the examples identified in the fifth section. Each topic discussed here has been studied by specialists within the growing field of interpretation and interpretive planning. The final section provides a list of places to go for further information. Examples of exciting and innovative interpretive programs are given throughout the bulletin.

II. HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND EDUCATION

Education is and always has been central to historic preservation in the United States, both as a means and as an end. From the beginning of the historic preservation movement in the mid-19th century to the present, we have cared about preserving historic places because they teach us and our descendants about who we are and where we came from. But we also have had to teach those responsible for management decisions to value these places. Although our definition of historic places has changed over the years and the lessons we think we can learn from them have changed as well, we still must provide opportunities for the public to gain an appreciation of historic places. This appreciation is the key to their preservation.

The earliest of America's historic places to be preserved, such as Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Mt. Vernon in Virginia, and the Hermitage in Tennessee, were valued for their association with the great men of the American past and as shrines that could teach patriotism at times when the country seemed threatened by sectional divisions or disruptive change. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the definition began to expand. The great battlefields of the Civil War were set aside to preserve the memories of the men who fought and died there. Architects of the Colonial Revival learned to appreciate America's earliest buildings for the beauty of their design. Archeologists and travelers to the western states became fascinated with the spectacular ruins that testified to the history of the earliest inhabitants of North America. In the 1920s, residents in some of America's oldest cities, such as Charleston, San Antonio, and New Orleans, learned to see their old city centers as historic and architectural urban environments that deserved to be protected.

During the New Deal years, the new activism in Washington, reinforced by a sense that much of America's past was rapidly vanishing, encouraged the Federal Government to take a central role in preservation. The National Park Service (NPS), whose mission included historic places when it was created in 1916, took the lead in this movement. In the 1930s, it acquired numerous historical parks in the East to complement the great national parks in the West.

Congress ratified this new leadership role in the Historic Sites Act of 1935. This legislation assigned the NPS responsibility for surveying historic and archeological sites, buildings, and properties of national significance associated with major themes of American history and for developing educational programs to provide the public with information about these places. This survey has evolved into the present National Historic Landmarks Survey, which recognizes properties significant to the American nation as a whole. For Verne Chatelain, NPS chief historian at the time of the passage of the Historic Sites Act, historic places were most valuable for teaching the public about "stirring and significant events":

> The conception which underlies the whole policy of the National Park Service in connection with [historical and archeological] sites is that of using the uniquely graphic qualities which inhere in any area where stirring and significant events have taken place to drive home to the visitor the meaning of those events showing not only their importance in themselves but their integral relationship to the whole history of American development. In other words, the task is to breathe the breath of life into American history for those to whom it has been a dull recital of meaningless facts – to recreate for the average citizen something of the color, the pageantry, and the dignity of our national past.[1]

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, a key element in the present framework for historic preservation in this country, expanded the definition of what constituted a historic place still further, while reaffirming the importance of education. It also assigned responsibility for protecting the nation's heritage to a new partnership, which included all levels of government and the private sector, with the National Park Service retaining its central role in that partnership. The National Register of Historic Places, established by the 1966 Act and administered by the NPS, extended federal recognition beyond nationally significant properties to those that were important to states or communities. This



Listing of the Greenwich Village Historic District in the National Register in 1979 helped ensure the survival and continued vitality of this historic urban neighborhood. Interpretation and education programs are key elements in preserving places like Greenwich Village as living parts of their communities. (Walter Smalling, Jr)

broadened scope encouraged the research in state and local history that was necessary to identify and evaluate properties significant in community history.

More than 30 years after the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act, more than 71,000 properties, including approximately a million individual buildings, sites, structures, and objects, are listed in the National Register; more than 1,000 additional places are listed annually. National Register listing provides official recognition and access to benefits at all levels of government and the private sector. Places listed in the National Register help market real estate, develop heritage tourism programs, and attract retirees, telecommuters, and other individuals who have flexibility in where they live. These benefits have served to revitalize and transform cities, towns, and rural areas and helped improve the quality of life for citizens across the nation.

No longer thought of as rare and exceptional shrines to transcendently important people and events in the American past, historic places are now seen as integral parts of communities all over the nation, catalysts for economic development and revitalization, desirable places for people to live and work, and anchors of stability in a fast-changing nation. In many cases, restored and preserved historic places provide housing for the elderly or for those of low or moderate income, employ restoration and construction craftsmen, and serve as keystones of sensitively managed change within cities, towns, and rural areas. As the preamble of the National Historic Preservation Act foresaw, these historic places are being preserved as living parts of communities nationwide in order that they can continue to teach all Americans about their past and help them better understand the present that has grown out of that past.

While the ability of places to teach is a key rationale for preservation, education is also necessary before preservation can take place. Americans needed to be engaged in the history of their early leaders and educated about the threats to the places associated with them before Mount Vernon and Independence Hall could be saved. It was public concern about vandalism threatening the great archeological monuments of the West that led Congress to approve the Antiquities Act of 1906, which authorized presidents to designate as national monuments sites on public lands that were of great prehistoric, historic, or natural value. Those who appreciated the architectural landmarks of America's Colonial past and hoped to save the historic neighborhoods of its cities had to help political leaders in their communities and states see the beauty and importance of the historic places around them, in spite of neglect and decay.

Education continues to be an important tool in the historic preservation process. Preservation is frequently the result of community-based, grassroots efforts to recognize and protect important places. A group of interested people, concerned about potential threats to a place they value, studies its historical development, identifies all properties that are associated either with the place itself or with a related historical theme, prepares nomination forms for local designation or National Register listing, and sponsors educational programs for community residents and others. These activities prior to National Register listing are important to gaining support for designation or registration and for establishing a framework for long-term protection.

Educational activities after listing are equally important. The information in National Register nominations can and should be used in long-term, continuing programs to make the general public aware of the value of the historic places in their communities. Current and future residents need to be kept aware that places in their communities are listed in the National Register and that, because of this, both honorary and financial benefits are available to them and to their communities.

ENDNOTE

1. Verne E. Chatelain, "History and Our National Parks," paper prepared for delivery to the American Planning and Civic Association, 1935; cited in Barry Mackintosh, "Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective" (Washington, DC: History Division, NPS, 1986), p. 22.

III. THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register is the nation's official list of historic places important to our history and worthy of preservation, but it is also a unique and unprecedented archive of national, state, and local history. During the early years of the program, properties were nominated "either as stage sets for past events and people or as illustrations of works of art set in chronologically ordered style periods."[2] By the late 1970s, National Register guidance began to respond to changing ideas of what constituted historic places and to the need to tie registration to comprehensive preservation planning programs. Historic properties are now studied within an appropriate context—most often at the local level—and that context serves as the framework for evaluating the significance of both individual properties and groups of properties related by location or theme. Historic contexts cover topics ranging from local civic buildings—such as county courthouses, public libraries, and schools—to ethnic settlements, historic farmsteads, the architecture of the post-World War II period, railroad depots, prehistoric archeological sites, and hydroelectric plants. Even national events have now been reinterpreted to understand their local impact, such as the influence of World War II on the growth and development of defense housing in a community. Multiply this potential by tens of thousands of listings and it is easy to appreciate the importance of the National Register archives. Neither professional historians nor the general public has fully tapped the history contained in the files of the National Register.

The creation of the National Register coincided with the dawning of what was then called the "new social history." Where once historians pored over the papers of the political leaders of the nation's past, today they study building permits, census records, wills, diaries, deeds, and newspapers as well. They also pursue information not found in written records, such as oral histories and the material culture of everyday life. This new direction for historical research transformed the study of history in the academic community, historical societies and museums, and among historic preservationists. The National Register's commitment to identifying the historic places that are important to local communities, as well as those of national significance, that represent both everyday life and exceptional events, reflects these changes.

This broad history can appeal to a large constituency beyond academic boundaries. The stories contained in National Register nominations can help the nation see history not only as great national events in which only a few participated, but as a cavalcade of events, trends, and patterns that still affect our lives today, including many ethnic and cultural groups as participants. The public is drawn to history that relates to their everyday lives, and that can give their own lives meaning.

ENDNOTE

2. Bernard L. Herman, "The 'New' Social History," *CRM*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1994), p. 6.

IV. WHAT IS INTERPRETATION?

Historic places have powerful stories to tell, but they cannot speak for themselves. They do not communicate in a language that most of us are trained to understand. It is sometimes difficult to appreciate the images of wealth and sophistication that owners sought to project using architectural styles that are no longer fashionable. We cannot retrieve the excitement of going "downtown" in the 1920s and 30s, complete with hat and gloves. We don't remember when train stations had separate waiting rooms, toilets, and even drinking fountains for black and white passengers. If we are to remember the stories of our past, we need to tell them in ways that everyone can understand. We need to help people gain an "empathetic understanding of the past." That is the goal of all good teaching about history. Because it seems to parallel the process of translating from one language to another, telling the story of a place is often called "interpretation." This is the term that we will use throughout this bulletin.

While there are many definitions of interpretation, they all center around the concepts of *meaning* and *relationships*. William Alderson and Shirley Payne Low, authors of *Interpretation of Historic Sites*, define interpretation as the communication of the "essential meaning of the site and of the people and events associated with it" and see it as an obligation on those who preserve historic places as trustees for present and future generations.[3]

Paul H. Risk, of Yale University, defines interpretation as "the translation of the technical or unfamiliar language of the environment into lay language, with no loss in accuracy, in order to create and enhance sensitivity, awareness, understanding, appreciation, and commitment." For Risk, "the goal of interpretation is a change in behavior of those for whom we interpret."[4]

Interpretation in the National Park Service is based on three tenets, or general principals, that together constitute still another definition:

"Tenet 1 – [Historic] resources possess meanings and have significance.

Tenet 2 – The visitor is seeking something of value for themselves.

Tenet 3 – Interpretation, then, facilitates a connection between the interests of the visitor and the meanings of the resource."[5]

In his early and influential study, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, Freeman Tilden defined interpretation as "an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first-hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information."[6]

Tilden explains that interpretation begins with facts and information, but then goes on to explore what those facts mean and how they relate to our everyday world. It uses spoken, written, and visual language to help the public see more clearly. Interpretation clarifies, explains, and even decodes and deciphers so the observer can begin to understand another time or generation. For Tilden, the goal of interpretation is "provocation." Good interpretation raises questions and encourages visitors to seek for themselves the information they need to understand what they are seeing. He emphasizes that understanding leads to appreciation, which, in turn, leads to protection.[7]

For purposes of this bulletin, we will assume that interpretation is a form of education that seeks to make connections between historic places and history, between the lives we lead today and the lives that once filled these spaces. While the ultimate goal is to encourage an appreciation of the importance of historic places and a commitment to preserving them for future generations, there probably will be as many intermediate goals as there are readers of this bulletin.

ENDNOTES

3. William T. Alderson and Shirley Payne Low, *Interpretation of Historic Sites* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1976), p. 6.
4. Paul H. Risk, "Interpretation: A Road to Creative Enlightenment," *CRM* Vol. 17, No. 2 (1994), pp. 37, 40.
5. National Park Service, "Fulfilling the NPS Mission: The Process of Interpretation," Module 101, Interpretive Development Curriculum, from Interpretive Development Program Web site <www.nps.gov/idp/interp>.
6. Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 3rd ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), p. 8.
7. Tilden, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 38.

Case Study 1.
Noble Hill School, Bartow County, GA
(listed in the National Register July 2, 1987)

In the early 1980s, the Noble Hill School, in the small community of Cassville, Georgia, was a near ruin. Windows were missing, siding was warped and falling off, floorboards were rotted. But members of Cassville's African American community who had gone to school here treasured the small building, built under the sponsorship of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, which helped construct almost 5,000 schools for black children in the South between 1914 and 1932. In 1983, these former students and their supporters created a foundation dedicated to saving the building so that it could be used as a history museum and cultural center.



The Noble Hill School when it was first listed in the National Register, before its restoration. (James R. Lockhart)



In the restored Noble Hill-Wheeler Memorial Center, visiting school groups attend simulated classes in one of the historic classrooms and learn about the history of the school and the neighboring Cassville community. (Richard Cloues)

Working with the Georgia state historic preservation office, the trustees of the Noble Hill-Wheeler Memorial Center listed the school in the National Register in 1987. They then used that listing to apply successfully for a series of grants which were used to restore the building and open it to the public in 1989 as a museum. Visiting school groups learn about the school's history and restoration and study historic artifacts and photographs documenting the school and the Cassville community from 1923 to 1955. They then move into one of the two classrooms for a simulated classroom experience, sitting at period desks and writing on the original blackboards, which still survive.

The Center also holds an annual Labor Day homecoming event. Each year 80 to 100 people get together for a picnic. Some only come for brief visits, but others sit and chat. The oral histories provided by former students and teachers at the school, who are specially invited to the picnic, have provided much of the information on the school's historical importance. Just as contributions of money and labor from the local community helped build the school, local commitment saved it so it could tell its story to today's young people.

V. PLANNING FOR INTERPRETATION

Anyone can start the process. Maybe an owner who has just restored a house is hoping to find others interested in saving his neighborhood. Perhaps a Main Street manager is seeking ways to attract new businesses. A federal agency wants to use one of its historic installations to call attention to the importance of its mission, both historically and today. Representatives of an African American church want to ensure that their contributions to the life of their city are remembered and valued. Owners of a building restored with the Federal Investment Tax Credit are looking for ways to attract tenants and to call attention to a project in which they take great pride. A volunteer historian simply wants to share with other members of the community the fascinating stories uncovered in doing the research necessary for nominating a neighborhood to the National Register of Historic Places.

Interpretation can help any of these individuals or groups achieve their goals. The first step is planning. Effective interpretation requires thought and study. Whether decisions are made in an office, a board room, or around a kitchen table, it is important to take the time to ask a few questions and record the answers. Consider the nature of the story you have to tell and the audience or audiences you hope to serve. Determine what you can afford, in dollars, in people, and in time. Think about the strengths and weaknesses of each type of interpretation before selecting the one or ones you want to use. Interpretive planning leads to effective programs.

The following questions all need to be addressed:

1. What is the property you want to interpret? What stories does it have to tell? Is it the story of one specific place, or is it inextricably linked to a wider area? What is its history? Research has already documented the history of some places. In other cases oral tradition records only the name of the person who may have built a house and the date it was constructed. Before deciding on how to interpret a story, you must know what story you are interpreting.

Who are the people who contributed to that history? Whose history are you trying to tell? People are always at the center of the stories of historic places. It is particularly important that **all** the people whose lives are intertwined around a historic place be included, not just the social elite that has so often been the focus of traditional history. Diversity is not new. Interpretive programs that confine the cast of characters to white males fail to reveal the rich textures of history. As with any happening in the news today, different eyes witnessed different pasts and multiple viewpoints come closer to telling the whole truth than any one individual's story could do. The answer is to find out as much as possible about all the participants in the history of the



The Plantation Community Tours run April through October and take visitors down Mulberry Row, the plantation "street" along which many Monticello slaves lived and labored. Over 40,000 people a year take advantage of this opportunity to explore the African American community at Monticello in depth. (courtesy: Monticello/Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation)

property. Allow historical characters to speak for themselves through letters, diaries, and oral histories.

Do not be afraid to deal with controversial issues. Controversy has always been a part of life. Interpretation that avoids difficult subjects presents an unrealistic and ultimately uninteresting view of the past. Because controversial topics like slavery are sensitive and even painful for many people, interpretation of the places associated with these themes must be planned carefully to ensure that the lessons they impart are not drowned out by their emotional impact. At Colonial Williamsburg, Monticello, and other historic places in the South, interpreters openly address both the impact of enslavement on blacks and whites and the strength of the communities that slaves created for themselves within the confines of plantation culture. These programs and, more importantly, the interpreters who created them, can offer guidance to others who plan to address difficult subjects.

Case Study 2.
Stratford Hall, Westmoreland County, VA
(designated a National Historic Landmark on October 7, 1960)

In 1995, the Robert E. Lee Memorial Association sponsored the first Stratford Hall Plantation Seminar on Slavery, designed to help secondary school teachers incorporate the history of African American slavery into their classrooms. Funded through a variety of sources, the seminars bring 30 teachers to live for two weeks at Stratford Hall. Participants work with historians in the field of slavery through lectures, discussions, readings and research projects. The reconstructed slave quarters, the outbuildings and work areas, even the plan and design of the main house at Stratford, help seminarians appreciate the conditions under which slaves lived and worked. As the announcement for the 1999 seminar stated "the emotional . . . nature of the subject matter will challenge the participants to confront both themselves and one another, so that the history of slavery can be presented with honesty, fairness, and sensitivity in their classrooms."

As one of the field trips included in the 1999 seminar, participants visited Colonial Williamsburg to attend "The Other Half" program, which tells the story of African Americans in the former Colonial capital of Virginia. An opportunity to tend tobacco in a plot next to the reconstructed slave quarters at Carter's Grove Plantation was a powerful experience for one of the attendees: "Although the exercise was brief, the 95-degree day with the humidity of Virginia gave seminarians a far greater taste of the brutal physical labor of slavery than they could have gained in the library."

It is in the research phase of planning that National Register documentation can make perhaps its most useful contribution. Individuals preparing National Register nominations document the entire history of a property. They then must place that history within a broader context in order to evaluate the property's importance. This context can help determine whether the story to be interpreted should be that of one building, a neighborhood, a community, a state, or a region linked by a historic roadway, river, or other transportation corridor. The people who prepared the nominations may be happy to assist in planning interpretive programs, and may even be willing to do additional research to ensure that interpretation tells the whole story. Maps and photographs, particularly historic photographs, which sometimes are included with nominations, can be helpful. The bibliography included in every nomination can lead to additional sources of information.

Other parts of the National Register archives also can help enrich the stories interpreted to the public. The National Register Information System (NRIS), the nation's largest database of significant historic properties, can search listings by geography, resource type, ownership, architectural style, significant person, architect, historic and current function, construction materials, and areas or periods of significance. The NRIS can identify like properties within the same county or state and can locate properties in other parts of the country that are related to the same historical theme or period. A mill village in New England might be compared with a cotton textile factory and its related housing in Tennessee. Nominations for

18th-century German traditional houses in Pennsylvania might provide background for a late 19th-century German farmstead in Wisconsin.

Multiple Property Submissions (MPS), which nominate groups of properties tied together by a single theme, can also be invaluable in providing a broad context for an individual property. That information is found in the multiple property form's "statement of historic contexts" narrative. For example, the background documentation for an MPS from Pennsylvania contains a comprehensive history of changes in technology, management, and labor practices in the state's iron and steel industry.[8] While some material is specific to Pennsylvania, much of this rich documentation can be adapted to related properties anywhere in the United States. The multiple property form's extensive bibliography provides a good starting place for additional research. This particular form also reproduces many historic views of factories and processes, which could be easily adapted to interpretation of iron and steel-related properties anywhere.

Although National Register nominations often can provide much of the information necessary for interpretation, this will not always be the case. Check the date of the nomination, look over the bibliography, and explore any recent research. Consult scholars to identify the latest published works on related topics. Ask whether social historians have suggested alternative ways to approach the traditional stories. Sometimes the need to ensure that interpretation tells a more complete story will require additional research. Volunteers working with someone who is experienced in historical research often can do the necessary work. Students at local colleges, high schools, or even primary schools might enjoy working on the history of a place as part of a class project. Even if it is necessary to pay professional historical consultants, the better interpretation that results will be well worth the investment.

2. Which of these stories should be the focus of interpretation? What are the interpretive themes?

After all the details are forgotten, what do you hope will be remembered? What ideas do you want visitors to take away with them? The research you have conducted in order to answer Question 1 has probably uncovered many stories. Some of the people associated with the place were significant in a broader context and some were not. Some of the stories are supported by reliable evidence and some are not. Some illustrate important historic topics and themes and some do not. Condense the history you have discovered into one or two short sentences. These will form the themes on which effective interpretation will focus. Never forget that information and facts, construction dates and architects are the raw materials. Patterns and themes, connections and meaning are the interpretation. Make sure that the message looks behind the data. Always ask, "So what?" and "Why is it important that people know that?"

As you seek to identify the meaning of your property, move beyond what makes your place "unique." Identify ties with other sites. Avoid being satisfied with easy answers provided by chronology. Is it enough to simply describe a site as a Civil War battlefield, even as the bloodiest or longest battle? Think about the meaning of the Civil War itself—preservation of the Union, the rights of southern planters or enslaved African Americans to control their own lives. What does a presidential site tell about leadership and the values and experiences that define that elusive quality? What does a coal mine or textile factory tell about entrepreneurial risk-taking or respect for human labor? Without becoming simplistic, describe the essence of the story and think about how the search for that essence continues.

Here, too, National Register documentation can be useful. Each nomination should contain a paragraph summarizing what is most important about a historic place, must assign that importance to what is called an "area of significance," and must explain in a narrative why the property is important in that context. This information can be helpful in selecting a focus for interpretation. Nominations also identify the time period associated with the importance of the property. This "period of significance" can be invaluable in defining a temporal focus.

3. What audience(s) do you hope to reach?

Who is likely to be interested in your historic place? Do you hope visitors will come to you or will you take your story to them? Think about demographics—age, gender, place of residence, etc. Do you hope to encourage local bus groups, school groups, or family groups? Local support is important and programs designed specifically for neighbors can have positive benefits. Each of these groups has special needs which you will have to respect if you wish your message to be effective.

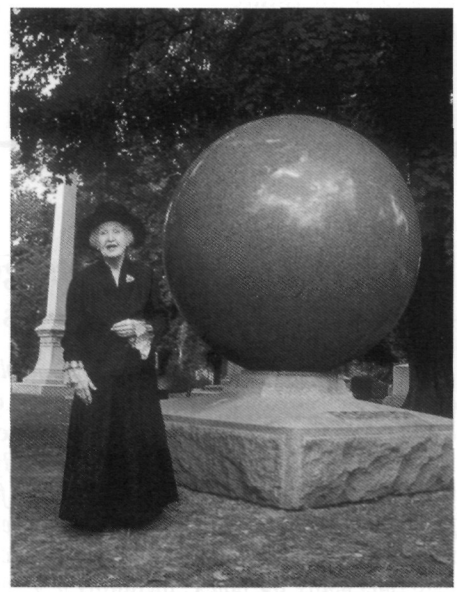
Many programs related to historic properties are designed for and appeal only to those already interested in history, historic structures, and architecture. If you want to reach out to new audiences and build support among new constituents, plan programs for existing supporters and for new friends.

Case Study 3.
Chippiannock Cemetery, Rock Island County, IL (listed in the National Register on May 6, 1994)

The 1855 Chippiannock Cemetery, in Rock Island, Illinois, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a good example of a mid-19th century "rural cemetery," complete with Gothic Revival Sexton's House and 19th- and early 20th-century cemetery markers ranging from simple Victorian obelisks to Classical Revival mausoleums. Volunteers from the Rock Island Preservation Commission, Chippiannock Cemetery Association, and local community theaters celebrated the occasion with a three-hour presentation, "Epitaphs Brought to Life." At 15 carefully chosen grave sites, costumed actors briefly revived the Rock Island personalities buried there. Over 600 people of all ages attended, including many who did not usually come to events relating to historic preservation. Refreshments were donated by a local market. Not only did the program cost nothing, it actually ended up raising $900 from the $2 admission charge. The event, which received an award from the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois, has been repeated every year since, with different characters (merchants, bankers, inventors, African American Civil War heroes, exemplary women, and even a mass murderer), different grave markers, and different presentations.

Jill Doak, one of the organizers, had some useful advice for anyone considering this kind of event:

- *educate actors about the significance of the site so they can answer questions between vignettes.*
- *have an experienced person conduct research and provide the script writer with background material.*
- *select characters from all socio-economic backgrounds, but make sure each has an interesting grave marker.*
- *have an interpretive introduction.*
- *provide copies of the National Register nomination to people waiting for the next tour.*



The six-ton granite sphere (with six-ton base) that marks the Robinson family plot is one of the most popular attractions in the"Epitaphs Brought To Life" presentation. Julia Spencer Robinson, daughter of one of Rock Island's best-known early settlers, was one of the characters portrayed in 1994, the first year of the event. The sphere was reportedly purchased from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.
(Jill Doak)

One of the wisest investments you can make is the creation of an educational program for school groups and home-school students. Students, after all, are the next generation of visitors and supporters for preservation. They also influence the involvement of parents. As a result of recent educational reforms, teachers are actively looking for ways to supplement textbooks with experiential, community-based learning. They eagerly welcome lessons at or about historic sites, including both field studies and classroom materials.

Many children visit historic properties with family groups. As every parent knows, bored kids destroy vacations for everyone, including unlucky fellow visitors. Intergenerational interpretation designed for the whole family can appeal to both the children and their parents, creating a successful visit that is likely to be repeated. Children respond well to story-telling, hands-on activities and publications written specifically for them. More and more historic places are using

"touch it" displays, including reproductions of historic games, toys, and period clothing. These reproductions sometimes are readily available and not too expensive. Demonstrations of skills or processes relating to the theme of the property keep hands and minds occupied. It is important to take the time to develop programs that respect children's abilities and give them freedom to learn on their own.

While most educational programs concentrate on primary or secondary schools, colleges and schools of education can be another potential audience. Demonstrating how historic places can be used to teach can help train teachers of the future to see historic places either in their communities or farther away as resources they can use in their classrooms. Increased emphasis on experiential learning means that many colleges are looking for new ways to provide students with real life experiences. Community service now forms part of the curriculum for many high-school and college students.



A child playing with a hoop, a popular toy during the 18th century, at the Carlyle House Historic Park in Alexandria, VA. Many historic places have created activities for children using reproductions of historic games, toys, and period clothing. *(courtesy: Carlyle House Historic Park)*

Case Study 4.
Swart-Wilcox House, Otsego County, NY
(listed in the National Register, June 11, 1990)

In the late 1980s, four elementary school teachers and their students in Oneonta, New York, adopted the 1807 Swart-Wilcox House, the oldest surviving building in the town, that stood, badly deteriorated, within view of one of their schools. The teachers organized themselves into the Swart-Wilcox Committee and worked closely with the New York state historic preservation office to prepare a National Register nomination for the house. They then applied for and received grant funding to prepare a historic resource study that was used as the basis for an accurate restoration. Grant funding also was used to develop imaginative curriculum-based educational materials using the house, including a song and a miniature golf course. The students have been involved in every stage of this long-term project—even wearing hard hats to inspect the restoration as it progressed. At the dedication of the house following its listing in the National Register, costumed students served as tour guides. Parents and grandparents, state and city politicians, and one substantial local contributor joined the enthusiastic audience.



Four elementary school teachers in Oneonta, NY, formed a committee to save the oldest house in town. They worked with the New York state historic preservation office to prepare a National Register nomination and to obtain funding to restore the house. Their students participated in all stages of the restoration, including acting as tour guides at the dedication of the house shown in this photo.
(courtesy: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation)

Think about adult audiences for educational programs as well. Groups interested in themes relating to your historic place, such as Civil War Roundtables, might appreciate a seminar series. Elderhostel groups are always looking for educational experiences. They enjoy travel and are often eager to visit historic sites. Local groups and organizations welcome speakers at their meetings and might enjoy special tours, presentations, or other activities. Sites that succeed in gaining the interest of these groups have also gained potential supporters and allies.

A recent survey showed that almost half of the 104 million U.S. adults taking family vacations planned to visit historic sites. Perhaps you hope to attract some of these people. Check with those who make tourism their business—local chambers of commerce or tourist bureaus, for example. What information do they have on visitors to the area? Other local attractions may have data on visitation that they would be willing to share.

4. What do you want interpretation to achieve? Remember that the interpretation of historic places seeks to help visitors understand the place and make connections between the past and the present. Its long-term goal is an understanding of the importance of places as documents of the past, ultimately leading to the creation of a sense of stewardship.

Perhaps the immediate goal is to educate members of your local community about who or what you are. Perhaps your organization has stated goals. How can interpretation address them? Maybe there is a need to protect a landscape or archeological site, which is vulnerable to damage because its significance is simply not known. Interpreters at many historic properties struggle to change stereotypical romanticized views of their site, story, or time period. Antebellum plantations were not bastions of hoop skirts and parasols. Slaves, the source of the wealth that built the "big house," were not invisible.

What memories do you want to create? Are there experiences that you can provide that will reinforce your stories? Perhaps you will decide that words are a poor substitute for a short walk across a battlefield where many men fought and died. Machines in motion, producing inhuman sounds, might do more to explain working conditions than a lengthy dissertation. Think about how you can use each of the senses effectively. Whenever appropriate, consider hands-on activity, well-conceived to offer your audience the gift of experience.

Finally, consider what you want visitors to do. What actions do you hope your audience will take, either right away or, perhaps more importantly, after they return home? Are you creating new constituents who will attend public meetings and support preservation? Do you need additional volunteers? Will landlords and shopkeepers begin to look with different eyes at proposals to revitalize Main Street? Will ethnic groups share more of their heritage with and feel more a part of the broader community? Will teachers begin using your place in their classrooms? Will school children bring their parents to special events? Will foundations or governments approve grants? Will tourists bring in new sources of revenue to local businesses?

5. Where can you find the money, people, and space to support an interpretation program? Does your organization have a budget that can cover all or part of the cost? Are there local organizations or individuals that can provide monetary support?

- Local governments willing to fund educational programs or activities that increase the participation of historically important ethnic groups.
- Grant funding. There are over 30,000 foundations in the United States making grants for a wide variety of purposes, both locally and nationally. Do any of these have special interests in history, preservation, education, or other areas that might relate to the story your place has to tell?
- Large locally-based businesses or branches of national corporations. Many firms are actively seeking ways to increase goodwill in their local communities. Their budgets often include funds designated to support local non-profit organizations.
- Agencies and corporations promoting tourism.
- Local businesses willing to sponsor publications, brochures, or special events.
- Other historic places connected geographically or by theme that could pool their financial resources to develop programs that would otherwise be impossible. Such partnerships can be extremely useful in areas like publicity, educational programs, and publications. Neither the company owner's mansion nor a worker's house in an industrial city might be able to afford a video by itself. Produced cooperatively, the video not only would be affordable, but also would enrich the stories of both places by showing their interrelationship within the larger community.

What potential partners are available to donate goods or services to help develop interpretive programs? To what extent can you rely on volunteers?

- Dedicated volunteers able to take primary responsibility for organizing and conducting an interpretive program. Some of these people already may be experienced in doing research, handling public relations, working with consultants, or developing or presenting programs. Others might be willing to learn those skills.
- Teachers willing to serve as advisors on developing educational materials or training interpreters to work with school groups.

- Public relations professionals to develop lists of media contacts, deadlines, and publications guidelines.
- Designers and printers to assist with publications.
- Theater groups to provide talent or help with dramatic presentations.
- Historians and writers willing to work together to develop scripts for special events.
- Chambers of commerce, service clubs, historical societies, non-profit preservation organizations, cultural or ethnic societies, churches, scouting or other youth groups, schools, or local planning boards willing to developing cooperative programs.
- Someone who is familiar with on-line travel networks to post information about your place and your programs.
- Local, regional, or state tourist offices willing to help identify visitors to the area and what their interests are.
- Other historic sites in the area. If the story you want to tell is one that covers a broad area, such as a historic transportation corridor, for example, coordination among all the historic places along the corridor will tell the story more effectively than any one could alone. Divide the story that you have in common to broaden the context for each individual place. Places associated with an important person could each tell part of the story, thus providing a deeper and more complete picture of that person than any one could alone.
- Teachers looking for community-based activities for their students, whether at the elementary, middle, or high-school levels. High school teachers might be happy to work with you to assign research projects or group activities designed to answer specific research questions. National History Day projects can provide needed information while at the same time expanding interest and involvement in your local community.
- Colleges and universities. Invite local colleges to help create interpretive materials or complete essential research. College libraries are often valuable resources for research on general or local history, education, and even interpretation. Colleges might also find one of your projects an ideal hands-on experience for students.
- College or university students who might be able to obtain credit for helping you produce an interpretive program.

Do you have space available that can serve as a meeting place, where interpreters could be trained, visitors welcomed, exhibits displayed, audio-visual materials shown, and publications sold? Can space be found elsewhere in the area?

- Local bookstores willing to sell publications or distribute brochures.
- Downtown merchants or the owners of vacant stores who could make their shop windows available for displays, at least for a short period.
- Local libraries, historical societies, and schools interested in exhibits on the history of their communities.
- Tourist bureaus willing to distribute brochures, schedules of events, even posters or postcards.

Cooperation has enriched many programs. Develop a support network and share talent. Other organizations that already have successful programs are often willing to share training, cooperate in presenting seminars and workshops, or even set up employee exchanges. If a contractor is going to be doing some of the work, other places with interpretive programs can provide invaluable advice. Satisfied customers are happy to share information about the people who made them happy.

6. What interpretive techniques make the most sense for your property, given the answers to questions 1-5? Now you know what you want to accomplish, what groups will benefit from your labor, and what resources you have available. In effect you have a set of blueprints for the tasks you face. Look at the interpretive tools described in the next section, with their advantages and disadvantages. Take the time to consider the full range of options before deciding on the most effective interpretive technique for your place. Demonstrating the process of operating a printing press is not the best way to interpret a story about the power of a free press. Resist the temptation to create an audio-visual program simply on the basis of a wonderful video or slide program you saw on vacation last year. Similarly, the fact that some of the best-known historic sites dress interpreters in period clothing does not mean that costuming necessarily makes sense for your property. Match the medium to the message, the management goals, and the audience(s). Make sure the program you select is appropriate, given the nature of your property and the available resources. Talk to historians, interpreters at local historic sites, teachers, and others to help ensure that the medium you select does not leave out essential parts of the story.

Selecting media for interpreting archeological sites requires special care. Sites are fragile. Tours are often inappropriate. Even signs may cause permanent damage. In many cases, there is little or nothing visible above ground. Artifacts, foundations, and even whole buildings are still below the earth's surface or have been removed following excavation. Even if ruins are visible, the original appearance of the building or structure may be hard for visitors to visualize. Some ruined churches interpret their stories by holding religious services there on special

occasions. Archeological sites sometimes interpret the process by which archeologists learn about places. They invite the public to watch, or even participate in, excavations as they occur. This technique can be particularly effective in urban settings, attracting many visitors and considerable publicity.



Excavations led by staff archeologists are popular with visitors and play an important role in interpreting the lives of the many people at George Washington's Mount Vernon plantation.
(courtesy:
Mount Vernon Ladies Association)

Case Study 5.
Lowry Ruin, Montezuma County, CO
(designated a National Historic Landmark on July 19, 1964)

In their new "People in the Past" interactive multi-media computer program, the Anasazi Heritage Center in Dolores, Colorado, interprets the story of Lowry Ruin. This National Historic Landmark, a complex of rooms and ceremonial spaces defined by carefully laid cut stone walls, is part of a large cluster of pueblo sites covering several square miles and about two centuries, from A.D. 1050 to the late 1200s. The program is a cooperative project of the Bureau of Land Management, which administers the Center, the Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association (the Heritage Center's interpretive association), private consultants, the Colorado Historical Society (which provided grant funding) and American Indians from the San Juan, Santa Clara, and Hopi pueblos.

Through simulation, visitors can climb ladders to rooms in Lowry, examine apparently three-dimensional artifacts, and see how food was prepared, both in the past and in the present. A narrator tells about seasonal activities in the pueblo and the symbolism of the murals in the



The "People in the Past" interactive multi-media computer program was developed by the Bureau of Land Management's Anasazi Heritage Center in Dolores, CO, to interpret the story of Lowry Ruin. Through simulation, visitors move around the pueblo, watch food being prepared, and interview both Pueblo Indians and archeologists.
(courtesy: Bureau of Land Management, Anasazi Heritage Center, Dolores, CO)

ceremonial kiva. Videos present messages emphasizing the importance of preserving ruins like Lowry. In a virtual archeologist's tent, visitors can select video interviews with the project's Pueblo advisors, look at photo albums and field notes from an excavation in progress, and determine the period of an artifact through tree-ring dating.

"People in the Past" looks at this important pueblo both from the scientific perspective of the archeologist and from the cultural perspective of the Pueblo Indian. By emphasizing these combined perspectives, the program hopes to communicate the cultural significance of all Puebloan sites in the Four Corners area, thus discouraging the "recreational" vandalism and looting that are still causing significant damage to these sites. As LouAnn Jacobson, Director of the Center, says:

> *A preservation message is woven into its content, but "People in the Past" will rely upon education and enhanced appreciation of archeology and Native American cultures to communicate the need for preserving what remains of the archeological record here and elsewhere.*

Remember that what you are choosing is a place to start. No single medium is going to reach everyone. The long-term goal is a mix of materials to appeal to all the audiences you hope to reach and to suit a variety of learning styles. Be patient and consider all the options, but don't be afraid to experiment. Selecting the mix of media that is best for your site, your audience, and your message is the heart of the interpretive planning process.

7. Can you actually accomplish what you are hoping to do? Is the plan that is evolving really practical? What will the interpretation cost in terms of both people and dollars? Can you afford it? Cost estimates are not impossible to obtain, if you find the right people to ask. Exchange information. Just like any other project, it pays to shop around to get the best price.

If it turns out you can't afford the interpretive program you have selected, do not be discouraged. Take heart in the knowledge that other places are facing the same difficult decisions. Look for a way to start moving towards your long-term goal. Many a successful interpretive program began with one oral history project, one newspaper article, or one special event.

8. How do you ensure that your plan is carried out? Which tasks should be undertaken right away and which ones should be considered long-term goals? Who will be responsible? When will the work be finished? Keep a written record of the answers to these questions and the decisions made. Create a simple action plan. List those tasks that you have decided to implement down one side of a page and then identify who will be responsible for each task on the other. Include deadlines.

A plan should also include some way to evaluate the effectiveness of the interpretive program once it is put in place. Include evaluation forms or postcards with materials you distribute or sell. Collect brief questionnaires after tours. Check license plates on vehicles in parking lots at special events. Such measures help validate, or cast doubt on, general impressions formed in the course of visitor contact. Ask your visitors a few simple questions. Where did they come from? How long are they staying? How did they hear about your program? What did they like about it? What didn't they like? What other places have they visited in the area? And, of course, pay attention to attendance, still one of the most powerful forms of evaluating either content or publicity. If a more scientific approach is needed, contact a local college and ask for help in designing a survey.

Periodically recheck the plan and make sure that it is moving ahead. If things change, revise it. The worst thing you can do is ignore new conditions and new ideas and allow all of your work and analysis to become outdated. If a program doesn't accomplish all that you hoped, it can be modified or replaced with something better based on what you have learned.

Interpretive plans need not be elaborate. Anyone can follow logical steps, answer the questions posed in this bulletin, and develop a short, straightforward plan. With a plan in hand, the emphasis shifts from continually trying to figure out what to do to actually doing it. Actions become proactive rather than reactive. Potential donors recognize organization and are likely to be more generous. A sense of direction emerges and individuals know what is expected; with that knowledge they can be empowered to act.

ENDNOTE

8. Iron and Steel Resources in Pennsylvania MPS

VI. WAYS TO TELL THE STORIES

Many techniques are available to help historic places tell their stories. Some use traditional means, such as costumed docents or published guidebooks. Others use newly developed technologies, such as interactive video, CD-ROM, or the World Wide Web. Whatever the medium, good interpretation is always based on reliable research and tries to tell the whole story of a place. In some cases, National Register documentation is the only source for this information. It is always a good place to start. Often, however, existing materials must be augmented or completely new ones created to provide the firm base needed for effective interpretation. Persuasive, dramatic interpretation of incomplete or inaccurate information is worse than no interpretation at all.

Interpretive tools fall into two broad categories, those that are provided directly by people (usually referred to as personal interpretation) and those that are not (non-personal interpretation). This section discusses each of the major techniques, outlining the advantages and disadvantages of each.

INTERPRETATION PRESENTED BY PEOPLE

- talks and tours
- curriculum-based field studies
- "living history"
- drama
- special events
- workshops, seminars, discussions, debates

TALKS AND TOURS

For many people the interpretation of historic places is virtually synonymous with guided tours given in historic house museums, national parks, or restored towns or neighborhoods. When well done, there is no question that people talking directly to people can compete with all other media for impact and effectiveness. The interpreter is face to face with an audience and can respond to its particular needs and interests. Not only can skilled interpreters adapt to the unexpected, they can thrive on surprises by incorporating spontaneous exchanges into the interpretive message. Presentations can shift their focus, incorporating different information, themes, and objectives in response to audience reactions. This two-way conversation can produce a memorable experience. Good "live" interpretation creates a sense of shared experience between interpreter and audience.

A tour presented from the viewpoint of a non-traditional observer —a slave, a chambermaid, a child— can effectively counter stereotypical views of a traditional site. On a more practical level, the additional security and visitor control provided by guided tours can help protect a fragile landscape or deter vandalism at a ruin or archeological site. Guided tours also have the luxury of time to help visitors make connections between the history of specific places, broad historical trends and currents, and their own experiences.

But guided tours have disadvantages that keep them from being the interpretive medium of choice in many situations. Programs that rely on paid employees and maintain a regular schedule are very expensive. Those operated with volunteer interpreters need less money, but still demand some form of organizational structure to be responsible for recruitment, training, and management. Both volunteers and paid staff must be selected with care to ensure the necessary commitment and enthusiasm.

In all cases, training is critical to the success of both paid and volunteer interpretation programs. It takes time, and sometimes money, to ensure that what people learn on tours is accurate, complete, and current. Mastery of historical information does not automatically convert to effective interpretation. Training in the techniques of interpretation is equally important; success is measured not just by *what* is said but by *how* it is said. Costumed interpretation and role-playing need special training. This training also can be expensive, both in time and in money.

Established tour programs require regular supervision and evaluation. Consistent quality is hard to achieve. What interpreters tell the public can never be fully controlled, because it is impossible to anticipate what visitors will ask. Interpreters also sometimes communicate incorrect or inaccurate information. Regular tours easily become repetitious, losing the enthusiasm that engages visitors. Both paid interpreters and volunteers need standards and guidelines on what is expected of them. Some type of formal evaluation is usually necessary. Turnover is high and finding good replacements is sometimes difficult, particularly for programs that rely on volunteers.

It takes time and effort to build in the rewards and recognition that help maintain freshness and enthusiasm.

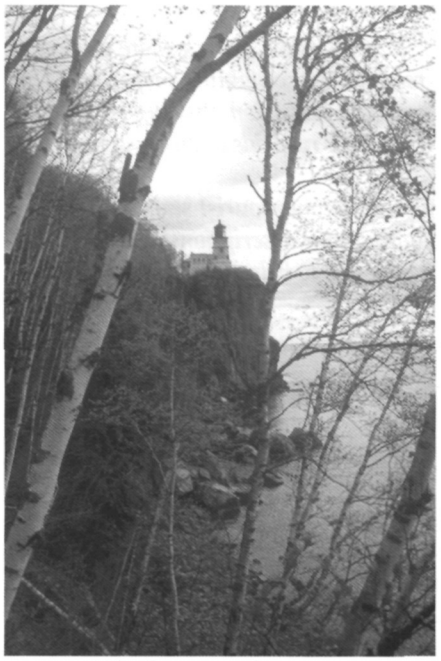
Tours and other formal interpretive presentations generally attract only those who are already interested in history and historic places; their appeal to the general public is often limited. Publicity for a regularly scheduled interpretive program is not easy to obtain, and it is sometimes difficult for even those who are interested to discover what tours are available in an area and where they are. Finally, tours of historic houses and districts often are perceived by the general public as being elitist, dealing only with the lives of the rich, white, and famous, a perception that is, unfortunately, sometimes deserved.

Informal interpretation, where interpreters are available but do not present formal, scheduled programs, is usually combined with special events or other types of interpretation. It may be a good choice if you do not have a large group of potential tour leaders, but the ones you have are dedicated and experienced. Perhaps an interpreter could circulate through a historic district during a holiday house tour. A seemingly casual greeting to visitors standing on the porch of one of the houses could become a mini-tour—flexible, spontaneous, personalized. In responding to visitors' need for specific orientation and information, the interpreter could direct their experience toward broader meanings. A question about the date of construction of a house could lead to a discussion of the whole history of the neighborhood. Why was the house built where it was? Who designed it or helped build it? Who lived in it, including extended family members, servants or slaves, possibly boarders? The house could be related to the primary themes of the neighborhood. The interpreter could make connections with past and current trends and patterns. How does the relationship of the neighborhood to the downtown of 1890 compare with its relationship to the shopping mall of 1990? What are the differences? What are the similarities?

Although this kind of occasional interpretation is much less expensive and easier to manage than regularly scheduled tours, success still depends largely on careful selection, training, and supervision. Informal interpretation requires creativity and knowledge in many areas both to answer specific questions and to make connections with broader historical themes.

Case Study 6.
Split Rock Lighthouse, Lake County, MN
(listed in the National Register on June 23, 1969)

Split Rock Lighthouse was constructed by the U.S. Lighthouse Service in 1909 to guide ships carrying iron ore from Minnesota's Mesabi Range to steel mills along the Great Lakes. The lighthouse, high on a cliff overlooking Lake Superior, has been a popular tourist attraction since 1924, when the North Shore highway was built as the first road to penetrate this wilderness area. Since 1976, the lighthouse has been operated as a historic site by the Minnesota Historical Society. The story of the lighthouse and its keepers is told to over 120,000 visitors every summer in a variety of ways. Casual visitors move at their own pace, using a self-guided brochure and talking to interpreters stationed at particular points of interest. Visitors who want more information may choose hour-long guided tours. Costumed interpreters playing the roles of lighthouse keepers and their wives in 1925 greet visitors in the lighthouse and the lighthouse keeper's house. The keepers polish the 242 glittering cut-glass prisms of the original Fresnel beacon and crank up the 250-pound weights powering the clockwork mechanism, while explaining to visitors that the lighthouse was needed to keep freighters from running aground. The high-grade iron ore they carried reacted with iron deposits on the lake bottom to cause false readings on the ships' magnetic compasses.



High on a cliff overlooking Lake Superior, Split Rock Lighthouse had been a popular tourist attraction since 1924. It is now a state park operated by the Minnesota Historical Society.
(courtesy: Minnesota Historical Society, Split Rock Lighthouse)



The interpretive program at Split Rock Lighthouse is based on a comprehensive plan that established what story would be told and how it would be told. The paid interpreters receive extensive training, in both interpretive techniques and lighthouse history, including the daily lives of the keepers.
(courtesy: Minnesota Historical Society, Split Rock Lighthouse)

The twenty paid interpreters are carefully trained. An interpretive staff manual, updated annually, gives basic information on interpretive techniques, the history of lighthouses, shipping, the Great Lakes, the U.S. Lighthouse Service, and Split Rock Lighthouse. Each interpreter also receives a detailed outline of the tour, including what visitors are expected to learn at each of the seven stations. In the spring the whole staff comes together for two full days of training, supplemented by brief meetings every morning during the season and longer meetings monthly.

The interpretive program at the lighthouse is based on a plan that established both what story would be told and how it would be told, taking into account such factors as visitation patterns (already known in this case), audience interest and demographics, the physical environment of the site, finances, and the availability of historical information. Lee Radzak, site manager for the lighthouse, stresses the importance of accurate history: "Solid and well-researched documentation provides the fuel that will drive a successful interpretive program."

Case Study 7. "Buffalo Tours"

In Buffalo, New York, the Preservation Coalition of Erie County has developed a series of tours to help both local residents and visitors appreciate the rich legacy of industrial, commercial, and residential architecture in the "Queen City of the Lakes." The Coalition is a non-profit organization established by the New York State Department of Education in 1981 to preserve the historic and architectural legacy of Buffalo and Erie County. Working with local partners, the Coalition's staff and volunteers offer a series of walking tours of Buffalo and the surrounding area. The tours are based, in large part, on the information contained in the nomination forms prepared for the many districts and buildings in Buffalo listed in the National Register.

Most of the tours are tied together by themes. They go beyond architectural descriptions of buildings to give a sense of the complexity and conflict of the city's past. The "Working Waterfront" tour, for example, documents Buffalo's industrial, working-class heritage. The tour includes the grain elevators some architectural historians have called the most influential structures ever put up in North America and a tavern dating back to the days of the saloon-boss system in local politics. On another tour, visitors are invited to explore life inside three houses on "Millionaire's Row," to "see how taste, money, and social rituals helped to shape interior arrangements and appointments."

Driving tours "bring back the early days of automobile tourism, when getting there was half the fun." Participants meet at a central staging area, receive a kit containing maps, an identification button, and other material, and set off on an all-day excursion, visiting parks, mills, mansions, "tourist cabins, diners, homey tourist attractions, roadside oddities, artifacts and endearments."

Each of the tours is scheduled two or three times during the summer tourist season. Their availability is publicized in a broadly distributed flyer including tour descriptions and a registration form inexpensively printed on newsprint. Registration fees go to help local preservation.

CURRICULUM-BASED FIELDS STUDIES FOR SCHOOL GROUPS

Tours for school classes and other organized groups of young people play a central role in interpretation at many historic sites. An excellent way to reach the people who will be making preservation decision in the future, school tours also demonstrate a commitment to education that local governments and other potential sources of funding like to see. Working with teachers who understand how students learn and have mastered skills that facilitate learning also can help strengthen interpretive programs for all ages.

If tours to historic places are to achieve their full educational potential, they must fit the local curriculum. They must help teachers accomplish what they are required to do. Local curricula are increasingly likely to reflect national standards, which were created in the mid-1990s and have been adopted by many state educational systems. The best way to insure that interpretive materials fit established curricula is to work closely with local teachers in developing those materials. Your property may illustrate the same themes, trends, and patterns discussed in a textbook or included in local history standards. Perhaps the local fourth grade studies inventors and your property is related to the industrial revolution. Railroads, canals, and coal mines are often excellent places to teach transportation, immigration, and acculturation. A frontier fort in western Pennsylvania or Kansas illustrates lessons on westward expansion, the clash of cultures between newcomers from the East and indigenous peoples, and the tension between local residents and the central government, whether that government was located in London or Washington.

School tours have their disadvantages. Many school systems have little money for field trips. It is easy for these trips to turn into holidays from school for both the students and the teachers, and undisciplined headaches for the historic places they visit. Finding the right teacher or teachers to work with can be difficult. It is not easy to institutionalize a long-term commitment from a whole school system, so that a successful school program can survive the departure or retirement of active teacher partners.

Case Study 8.
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, CA

For thousands of years before the arrival of the Spanish, the area northwest of what is now Los Angeles provided a home for the Chumash and Gabrielino/Tongva cultures. A Chumash village called "Satwiwa," meaning "the bluffs," was located near an important trade route that followed Big Sycamore Canyon from the Santa Monica Mountains down to the Pacific Ocean. The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, a partnership of federal, state and local park agencies, has developed a curriculum-based program that helps third and fourth grade students visiting Satwiwa understand how the Chumash people used the rich diversity of plants and animals available in this area as the basis for a complex culture and social life. During a two-hour program, students see how the tule and willow growing at the site were used to construct the traditional Chumash dwelling house. They see acorns, a staple of the Chumash diet, being ground but don't ask to taste them. Like the Chumash, they have learned that acorns are inedible without further processing. They taste the naturally occurring chia seeds (sage) that were traded for pinon nuts and other articles not available locally. They also investigate how the Chumash used the animals that were once common here not only for food but for other products important in their daily life. They practice traditional skills in toolmaking and shell drilling. After looking at how the natural environment has been affected by later settlement, the students gather to draw some conclusions. How has the environment changed and why? Could families live off the land today as successfully as the Chumash did in the past?

Teacher workbooks provide detailed practical guidance on making arrangements for the tour. The workbooks also include pre- and post-visit materials and worksheets that can be photocopied and used in the classroom to prepare for or reinforce the learning experienced in the park. Summer teacher workshops help teachers prepare for their site visits. The program has been so popular that schools sometimes have to wait as long as two years before being able to schedule a trip.

LIVING HISTORY

In "living history," broadly defined, interpreters, often dressed in period clothing, enliven the story they are telling with demonstrations of activities. They cook in restored or recreated kitchens and tend fields or animals. A teacher conducts a lesson in a historic school house. Military reenactors charge across open fields, wreathed in clouds of smoke from muskets, rifles, and cannon. Sometimes the interpreters discuss what they are doing with visitors. On other occasions, they may not step out of their historical character and period or even acknowledge the presence of their audience.

Well executed living history seems to bring the past to life before the audience's eyes. Real equipment, clothing, and products (perhaps even edible products), reinforce important messages. A demonstration can explain an unfamiliar process in a way that words alone could never match.

Living history has disadvantages as well. Like more traditional talks and tours, this kind of interpretation requires careful selection and training of volunteers or paid staff. The strength of living history is immersion in a particular historical moment. It is not well suited to interpreting change over time.

The most serious problem is often the content. Just what does living history teach? Because it is so persuasive, historical accuracy is particularly important. But information on the daily activities of life in the past is hard to find. How much reality is it possible to communicate? Is the impression created simplistic or even romanticized? Is there substance to the message, i.e., is the *why* included or does the learning stop with the *how*? Is the living history demonstration integrated into the over-all story of the property, or does it serve mainly to entertain the audience and the interpreters? How many compromises are necessary to make the clothing worn by interpreters comfortable? Do safety concerns require significant alterations of equipment? Authentic materials can be expensive and costly to maintain. It is also sometimes difficult to ensure that living history includes the whole story. In our increasingly multi-cultural society, it is essential to include all races and both men and women in interpretation. Without careful attention to all of these concerns, living history can become one of the most abused forms of interpretation.

Case Study 9.
Three Historic Places Use Living History

Living history need not be presented by interpreters. In the Weave Room at Lowell National Historical Park, in Massachusetts, a huge room is filled with early-20th-century looms. Not all the machines are running, yet the sound is so loud that visitors are given ear plugs. Anyone who walks the fifty yards or so through the room will have no difficulty understanding why textile workers, most long retired, keep repeating that they will never forget the noise.

At the Ninemile Remount Station, in the Lolo National Forest, much of the appeal of the interpretation, discussed in more detail below, is carried by the mules that graze where "historic" mules were once pastured.



Building small mounds with the same techniques as the Mississippian Indians used, students visiting Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site get a sense of the amount of work required to build the site's huge prehistoric mounds. (courtesy: Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site)

At the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site in Illinois, not far from St. Louis, Missouri, members of scheduled school tours participate in living history themselves. They build small mounds using the same tools and techniques used by the Indians who constructed the prehistoric mounds preserved at the site. They loosen the heavy soil with hoes and digging sticks, fill baskets with earth, carry them to the mound, and tamp the dirt into place. Based on the amount of dirt they have moved and the time it has taken, they calculate how long it would take to build Monk's Mound, the largest of the monuments at the site. They discover that a class of thirty students carrying eighty baskets full of dirt every day would have taken 509 years to complete the huge structure, which covers about fifteen acres and still reaches a height of approximately a hundred feet.

DRAMA

A number of historic sites use scripted presentations by trained actors and even by puppeteers. The historical record is filled with drama, and skilled writers can work with historians to turn careful research into engaging performances. Trained actors ensure polished and effective delivery. Unlike tours or living history, a scripted dramatic program can be carefully reviewed in advance and regularly updated, guarding against false impressions and distorted conclusions. Dramatic performances can be either regularly scheduled or used only occasionally. Sometimes they can be moved from one location to another, even into a school room. Theater can help people understand human response to past events and situations, can present richly textured characters, and can show the complexity of historical situations that seem simple in hindsight. Perhaps most importantly, drama can demonstrate the passionate conviction that people in the past brought to disputes over issues that continue to be hotly debated today.

Difficulties emerge when audiences want more information. Actors usually do not have the depth of knowledge to answer questions. In most cases, a staff member or volunteer must be available to address the interpretive provocation that occurs during the performance. The research necessary to ensure accuracy must be conducted or at least coordinated by someone with experience in historical research. Script writing is best left to experienced writers. To be convincing, only actors with the necessary skills and training should make up the cast. Drama can be expensive, even though some of the expense is one time (script, props, and to a lesser extent, costumes).

Case Study 10.
"Steps in Time"

In 1985, the Baltimore City Life Museum developed the first in a series of short scripted dramas relating to historic sites in the city. In "Steps in Time," visitors to the reconstructed 1840 House witnessed a dramatic presentation involving the family of wheelwright John Hutchinson, who lived here between 1835 and 1840 with his wife, three children, two boarders, and a free African American servant. After a short introduction in a museum meeting room, small groups moved from room to room in the eight-room house, an apparently invisible audience walking in on small dramas that were already in progress as they arrived and continued after they left. John Hutchinson argued with his servant and boarder about colonialism and abolition. The brother and fiancé of the African American servant disagreed heatedly about the prospects for a free black man who had lost his job in the shipyards due to competition from Irish immigrants. The Catholic Hutchinsons and their Protestant boarder disputed over an 1839 riot at a Carmelite convent. After the tour, a discussion back in the meeting room gave participants an opportunity to ask questions and to talk about what they had seen.



Visitors to the "Steps in Time" program moved through the reconstructed 1840 House in Baltimore, MD, as invisible witnesses to passionate disputes about religion, class, and race. (courtesy: Baltimore City Life Museum)

A private, non-profit organization, the Baltimore City Life Museums used funding from federal, state, municipal, and private sources to develop this unusual urban living history program and to present it to local schools at no cost. The script for "Steps in Time" was based on extensive historical research and constantly modified and updated to reflect new information. Although some of the characters were portrayed by professional actors, the use of volunteers from local schools and colleges for other roles kept costs relatively low. "Steps in Time" was so well received that dramatic presentations were developed for other sites as well. Between 1986 and 1996, when the Baltimore City Life Museums closed, they put on over 900 performances of a dozen different plays for more than 20,000 people.

The fact that visitors viewed these small dramas without being directly involved made it easier for them to detach themselves from their own emotional involvement in controversial issues like class, race, and religion to understand the importance of these same issues to people in the past. As Dale Jones, creator of "Steps in Time," said:

> *Our primary purpose here is not so much to get people to come in and learn facts, but to get people to leave knowing about issues like abolition, colonization, and what it was like being black back then through the eyes of a black. We're really trying to get people to make a tie with the past."*

FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events are excellent opportunities to educate communities about their own historic places, to reach new audiences, including volunteers and potential donors, to attract new visitors, and even to do a little fund-raising. Special events, with their attendant publicity, can increase visibility for a new site that no one knows about or an old one that everyone takes for granted. They may be the best way to engage local audiences, particularly if your historic place is just developing or trying to change an interpretive program. Even a small group of volunteers can plan and execute an effective special event; this may attract the people and support needed to expand interpretation into a broader or more permanent program. Local chambers of commerce and businesses welcome these activities and often will support them with donations of money, products, or services. Events bring in visitors while reaffirming local values. Volunteers enjoy participating. Publicity is relatively easy to arrange.

Special events can commemorate significant dates identified in the historical record: youth activities on a birthday; festive decorations or parades to match a historic celebration; a train excursion, a few speeches, even a workshop or seminar on steam trains to mark the anniversary of the day the first steam engine puffed into town. If the story is one without landmark dates, the event can celebrate everyday life. A busy Saturday on Main Street in 1880 or 1920 could be recreated, with signs in the stores identifying the businesses that were there in that year and advertising the goods and services they provided, even including prices. Historic photos of the downtown during its historic period can stimulate the imagination. Displays in merchants' windows can remind people of the vibrant life that once centered around this area. An event like this is an excellent way to create new interest in revitalizing a downtown Main Street.

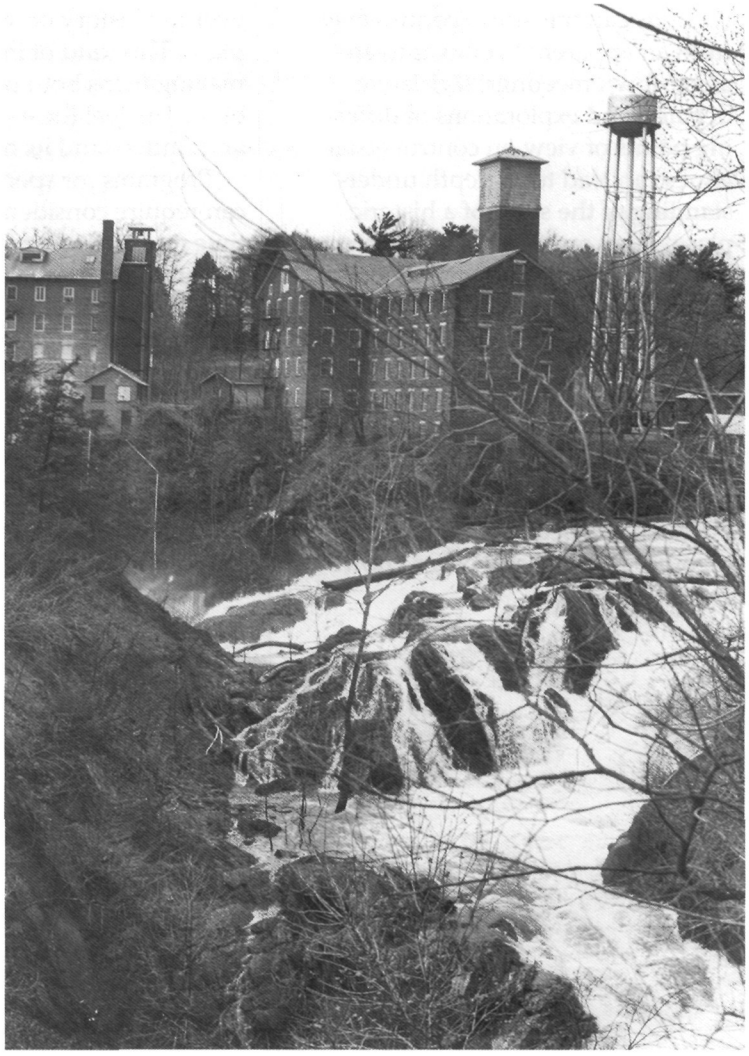
It takes careful planning to ensure that special events are integrated into the overall interpretive plan you have developed. If they are not directly related to the story that a place has to tell, they can easily turn into free-for-all, anything-goes excuses for turning out crowds or rewarding neighbors with a day of fun. It is sometimes difficult to resist the temptation merely to entertain with cotton candy and a local band and to ensure that reenactments, musicians, craft demonstrations, or even just speech makers relate clearly and directly to the story that the place has to tell, that the holiday is one that was actually observed, and that the technology used is not anachronistic. Civil War reenactors do not belong on the farm of a Quaker who opposed the war, but a parade of antique automobiles would be both appropriate and highly photogenic in the neighborhood where the man who owned the first car in town lived. The event must fit the period chosen for interpretation; the past was not all the same. An old automobile display is not appropriate for the commemoration of an 1876 centennial celebration, for example.

Publicity for special events, through feature stories in local newspapers or magazines, public service announcements, or community bulletin boards on radio and television, is critical and needs to be carefully planned. Special events also require planning to prevent damage to the places being celebrated. Large groups of visitors easily can have harmful and overwhelming impacts on fragile historic structures and landscapes. Most historic buildings were not designed to accommodate hundreds of guests. Only so many feet can walk across a historic landscape before grass dies and bare earth appears. Safety for both visitors and property is another concern. Plans may need to provide for parking and traffic control, first aid, and possibly law enforcement.

Case Study 11.
Stuyvesant Falls Mill District, Columbia County, NY (listed in the National Register September 16, 1976)

Stuyvesant Falls is a village of about 700 people, located in New York State not far from the town of Hudson. Here the water of Kinderhook Creek falls 70 feet on its way to join the Hudson River. Beginning in the early 19th century the power of the falls attracted water-powered industries to the town. In 1976, the Stuyvesant Falls Mill District was listed in the National Register, including the falls and related mill dam, three 19th-century cotton mills, a more recent hydroelectric power plant, the archeological remains of grist, paper, cotton and woolen mills, and an 1899 iron truss bridge over the creek.

In the early 1990s, the county proposed replacing the badly deteriorated bridge. The people of the town banded together to use National Register listing to save the bridge that had tied the community together for almost a hundred years. The bridge was saved and reopened to traffic in 1993. The following year, the town organized "Stuyvesant Day" to celebrate. Community members organized a pot-luck picnic at the bridge, developed a walking tour of the town, exhibited historic photographs on the front porch of one of the houses, interviewed long-time residents, and even sold tee-shirts with pictures of the bridge. The organizer of the event reported, "it is amazing how this has given the people a feeling of pride in their town."



The 1976 listing of the Stuyvesant Falls Mill District in the National Register helped save the iron truss bridge that had tied the community together for almost a century. "Stuyvesant Days," held the year following the reopening of the bridge, brought local people together to celebrate the rich history of their town. (courtesy: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation)

Case Study 12.
Boston Manufacturing Company, Middlesex County, MA (designated a National Historic Landmark December 22, 1977)

In Waltham, Massachusetts, the Charles River Museum of Industry, the City of Waltham, and the Boston Metropolitan Transit Commission sponsor a Great New England Steam Expo. Steam trains, steam cars, steam engines, steam toys, and steam whistles all wheeze and whirl interpretively. Steamboats on the Charles River, both historic and modern, complement the land-based displays. Stanley Steamer automobiles, once manufactured nearby, are also on hand. Because the museum's home is the former power plant of the National Historic Landmark Boston Manufacturing Company complex, which still houses the original 3,000-horsepower steam boiler dating from the 1840s, this event relates directly to the museum's message while still appealing to large numbers of volunteers and visitors. Local newspapers publicize the event with articles and colorful photographs.

WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, DISCUSSIONS, DEBATES

Workshops, courses, and seminars can be effective tools in increasing awareness of the significance of a historic place among targeted audiences, such as local teachers and students, Civil War Roundtables, or genealogical groups. Community-based educational institutions and organizations are often willing to sponsor such programs. Public service announcements in local media help publicize their availability. Knowledgeable paid or volunteer speakers or instructors ensure that the content of the program is accurate and intellectually challenging.

Carefully done, debates and discussions can transform controversy from an apparent liability into an asset. Town meetings, legislative debates, and explorations of differing points of view on controversial issues can lead to in-depth understanding of the story of a historic place. They can enrich future interpretation and, at the same time, attract newspaper or television coverage that might not be available for regularly scheduled tours. Workshops including oral histories can help encourage the involvement of ethnic groups that have contributed to the growth of a community. Symposiums or discussions can bring together scholars and other knowledgeable people to debate disputes over the history or meaning of a place. This kind of intellectual role-playing helps both participants and observers feel the emotion of history and understand its hard choices.

Programs for specific audiences can require considerable planning time for relatively few consumers. Debates and discussions, especially those that recreate past events, require skilled facilitators to direct the program, keep it in perspective, and bring it to closure. The interpreter/facilitator must have a wealth of information to avoid inappropriate or inaccurate conclusions. Simplistic inferences are easy to make and hard to disavow.

Case Study 13.
Lowell National Historical Park, Middlesex County, MA

The Tsongas Industrial History Center is located in the Boott Cotton Mills complex, part of Lowell National Historical Park in Lowell, Massachusetts. In the same brick buildings where hundreds of workers produced thousands of yards of cotton textiles between 1835 and the 1950s, students now practice "hands-on" history. Developed as a partnership between the University of Massachusetts Lowell Graduate School of Education and Lowell National Historical Park, the Tsongas Center offers eight workshops for students focusing on the technology of the industrial revolution and the lives of the workers who made it possible. In the "Workers on the Line" workshop, for instance, students take on the roles of workers on a textile printing assembly line. They experience the loss of control that comes when management "speeds up" the machinery. They decide whether to go on strike when wages are cut. They look for better ways to organize their workplace. The workshop incorporates the historic site where the Tsongas Center is located, taking students through the recreated Weave Room to experience the industrial environment the workers knew. The Center sends out curriculum packages with activities and historic photographs that can be used in classrooms before and after each of the workshops.



The Weave Room at Lowell National Historical Park, where workers produced thousands of yards of textiles between 1835 and the 1950s, helps participants in Tsongas Center workshops experience firsthand the work environment that they are studying. (James Higgins, courtesy: Lowell National Historical Park)

The Center also has created materials for classroom use. These interdisciplinary programs integrate social studies with science, language arts, mathematics and art to supplement the Massachusetts Social Studies curriculum. In one of these Lowell Industrial Learning Experiences, rangers or museum teachers help younger students imagine how life changed for one of the famous Lowell "mill girls" when she moved from a farm to a factory. The students dress in reproduction 19th-century clothing and learn to pick, card, spin, and weave wool and cotton. In another Lowell Industrial Learning Experience offering, middle and high school teachers can rent a kit containing copies of letters, hospital records, city directories, maps, and photos. Using these materials, the students enter the world of 15-year-old Barilla Taylor.

The Center also works closely with schools to develop professional development and in-service programs related to industrial history. A resource center has audio-visual materials, software, books, and sample curriculum units on subjects relating to industrial history that teachers can use.

Case Study 14.
"Civil War Weekend"

In 1995, Harrisburg Area Community College, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, offered a Civil War Weekend primarily designed for adults, particularly those interested in participating in the many popular Civil War reenactment groups. On Saturday, a Civil War Exposition provided a full day of demonstrations by costumed reenactors of infantry and artillery maneuvers, signaling, camp life, and music and dance. Historical societies and other groups interested in the Civil War set up displays, and merchants offered antiques, reproductions, books, prints, and other souvenirs for sale.

On Sunday, the College offered a series of seminars. Some dealt with topics of particular interest to reenactors, including descriptions of the undergarments and headgear worn by mid-19th-century women in Pennsylvania, and discussions and demonstrations of weapons and signaling. Others concentrated on facets of Civil War history relating to Pennsylvania, including the invasion of Harrisburg's West Shore by the Confederacy in June 1863. A number of sessions focused on the Battle of Gettysburg and its effects on the town. Other sessions broadened understanding of the War by discussing non-traditional topics, such as black and white spies for both sides, the role of women as both combatants and civilian participants, the two prominent African American citizens who played an important role in the operations of the Underground Railroad in Columbia, Pennsylvania, and the effects of the War on ordinary people. The modest registration fee included four seminars and a special luncheon featuring a speaker in the role of Abraham Lincoln.

Case Study 15.
"Downtown is a Classroom"

The Kentucky state historic preservation office has cooperated with the Kentucky Main Street program to develop day-long workshops to encourage local Main Street managers and teachers to work together to bring student groups downtown to visit and explore. As a result of the Kentucky Education Reform Act, teachers are actively seeking ways to link the curriculum and local resources by using community resources in the classroom. High school teachers are also looking for community service opportunities for their students.

Local Main Street managers bring teachers from their communities with them to the workshops. The teams work together to discover resource materials on their own downtowns, including National Register nominations. Coordinators work with teachers to develop interdisciplinary and thematic units based on the built environment. Workshop participants model an activity that teachers might use with their classes, going on a scavenger hunt for evidence on the Main Street of the host community and using Polaroid cameras to capture what they find. The scavenger hunt is based on the National Register nomination and the Polaroid cameras are provided free by the Polaroid Education Program. The group also completes an activity where participants use their bodies as buildings on a "Main Street" laid out on the floor with masking tape. Each "building" tries to position itself in the best possible location for its particular business. A lively discussion about prime locations, parking, and proximity, both to each other and in the community as a whole, including on occasion a bit of good-humored pushing and shoving, helps develop an understanding of the complex dynamics of "downtown."

At the end of the workshop each team is challenged to create an activity they would undertake with a school group in their own town. Through these activities, teachers can bring students to Main Street to practice the observation, research, and critical thinking skills required in their local curricula and to enhance their own sense of place and community identity. The Main Street managers can help students experience downtown as a familiar, but fascinating place and can invite them to participate in the ongoing discussion of what downtown was, what it is now, and what it should be for them in the future.

INTERPRETATION NOT PRESENTED BY PEOPLE

- publications
- newspapers and magazines
- educational materials
- indoor exhibits (artifacts, art, dioramas, text, and three-dimensional maps)
- exterior exhibits and signs
- audio-visual materials
- electronic media

Together these tools make up a kind of self-service system of communication. By definition they are impersonal. They lack the ability of "live" interpretation to adjust to the needs of particular individuals or groups. But, like the 24-hour teller machine at a bank, they are available whenever they are needed. While non-personal interpretation does not require continuing costs for staffing, it does involve extensive investments of both time and money during development. Like personal interpretation, it is dependent on good research to insure that it is both accurate and inclusive.

PUBLICATIONS

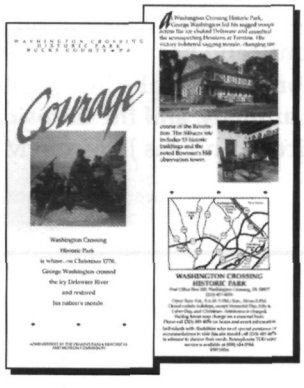
Publications, including books, walking or driving tour brochures, maps, posters, and postcards, are widely used, and sometimes misused. Because there are many types of published materials and some of them are relatively inexpensive, they are a popular interpretive choice. Some publications are easily portable; visitors carry them as guides while touring and take them home as souvenirs. They provide both general orientation and detailed information. Publications can help visitors prepare before they arrive and provide important advice that will affect how they experience the place.

When creatively written and visually appealing, publications evoke vivid images and stir the emotions. They are relatively easy to update or revise. Translations done with care and sensitivity broaden the audience to include those who do not speak English. Skillful writers can prepare a series of publications that interpret the story of a historic place at different levels, making the story interesting and understandable to a range of audiences. Uniform design can help such families of publications maintain the identity of a property or group of properties. Publications help satisfy the curiosity provoked by other interpretive programs. Visitors willingly pay and the process of learning continues when they return home. Sales can be an important extension of this interpretive medium, covering costs and sometimes even making money.

Publications do not solve every interpretive problem. No site can offer a full range of free, printed items. Books and other publications that address a story at length and in depth are expensive to produce and usually only feasible if sold. Sales entail administrative expenses and require space for both sales and storage. Published materials often lack focus. They try to do too much. They become over-burdened with too many tasks, for too many audiences. When this occurs, no one uses them, they end up only as litter and limited funding is wasted. Publications intended to meet everyone's needs meet no one's. Successful publications must address specific goals and be directed at defined audiences.

Travel guides are a special category of publication that can be critical in attracting visitors by including information on properties and any scheduled interpretive events. Many potential visitors check travel guides, such as those published by the American Automobile Association (AAA), when planning a trip. Many of these guides now indicate when the places they feature are listed in the National Register.

Case Study 16. Rack Cards



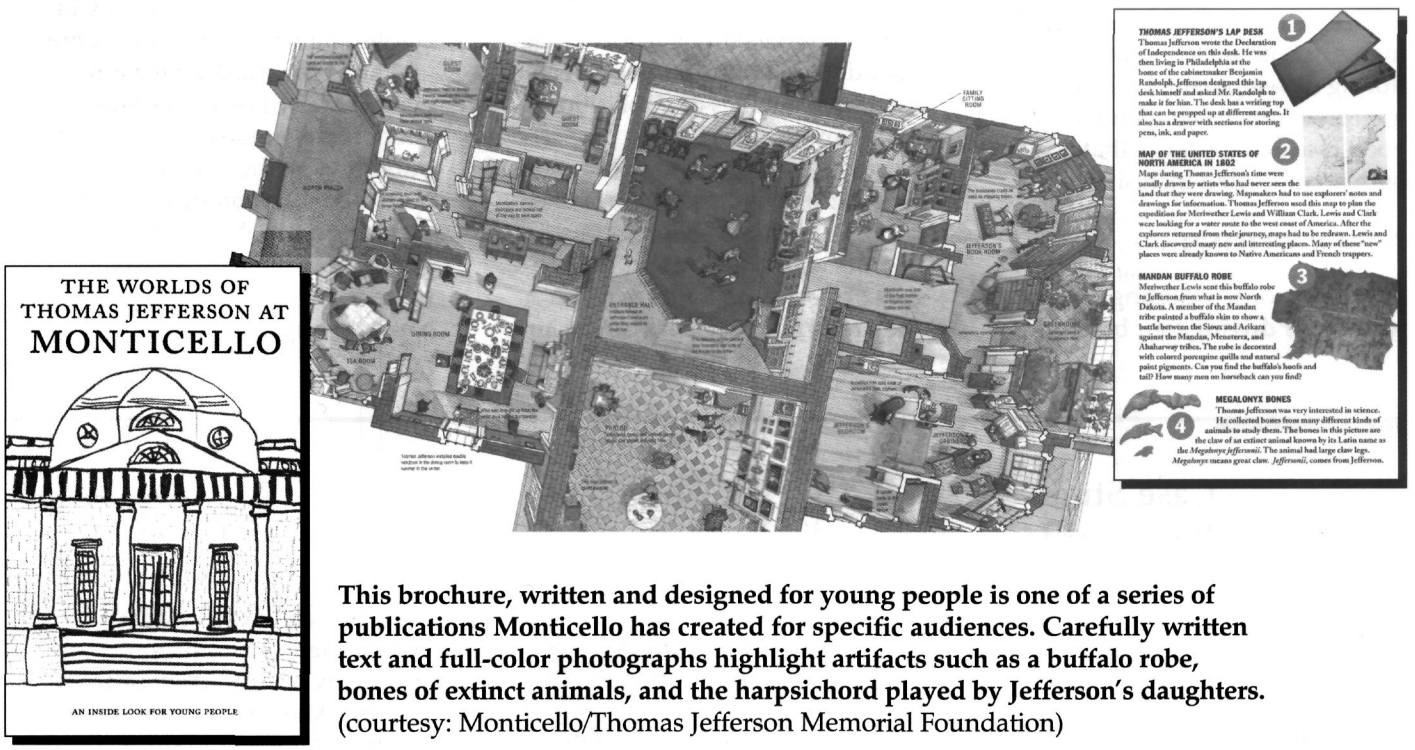
The glossy, full-color rack cards produced for the historic sites administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission do not try to tell the whole story. Restricting the content to the highlights makes the effective and eye-catching design possible. (courtesy: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission)

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has created a series of glossy, full color rack cards for the 27 historic sites that it administers. Measuring 4" x 9", these cards are designed specifically to fit in the racks at tourist bureaus and welcome centers. The theme of the site is summarized in one word, written in sweeping letters across the top of the card, where it will catch the eye of travelers. The theme for Washington Crossing Historic Park, in Bucks County, is "COURAGE." The front of the card contains only the name of the park, the theme, a detail from

the famous painting of Washington crossing the Delaware, and a very brief text: "Washington Crossing Historic Park is where, on Christmas 1776, George Washington crossed the icy Delaware River and restored his nation's morale." The reverse contains a somewhat longer story, a description, two black and white photos showing what visitors will see when they visit the site, a map, information on hours, and a contact address and phone number. Because the card does not attempt to tell too much, it has the open space that makes for a striking design.

Case Study 17.
Monticello, Albemarle County, VA
(designated a National Historic Landmark on December 19, 1960)

Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson in Charlottesville, Virginia, has created a series of publications targeted to specific audiences. A promotional brochure goes to hotels, welcome centers, and visitors' bureaus. A series of garden and grounds brochures, including a self-guided tour of the slave and free workers' quarters along Mulberry Row, allows visitors to explore on their own. A newsletter keeps supporters informed of site-related activities. One of the most innovative ideas is a brochure specially written and designed for "young people." The large format is easy to handle. Full-color photographs highlight artifacts likely to interest children. Young readers have no problem with the carefully written text. For those who want to learn more, the brochure includes a bibliography.



This brochure, written and designed for young people is one of a series of publications Monticello has created for specific audiences. Carefully written text and full-color photographs highlight artifacts such as a buffalo robe, bones of extinct animals, and the harpsichord played by Jefferson's daughters. (courtesy: Monticello/Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation)

Case Study 18.
U. S. Forest Service Remount Depot, Missoula County, MT (listed in the National Register on April 10, 1980)

In the 1930s, the U.S. Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps converted a run-down ranch in the Lolo National Forest 25 miles east of Missoula, Montana, into the Ninemile Remount Depot. Here the 100 to 200 horses and mules needed for fire fighting in the Northern Rockies were bred and trained. Listed in the National Register in 1980, Ninemile Remount Depot is both an operating ranger station and a historic site. Here the public can learn to understand the complexities of caring for wilderness and to appreciate the historic role of the Forest Service. A brochure, designed to fit into a shirt pocket, leads visitors through the Depot, from the bell that called the firefighters to work ("This Bell Meant Business"), through the corrals ("Load 'Em Up"), the blacksmith shop ("Where Iron Meets the Trail"), the saddle shop, the barns, and the field where Cindy, the station's retired lead mule, grazes happily after 25 years of service. The brochure also provides safety information for visitors to this working ranger station: "corral your kids," keep a safe distance from the horses and mules, and stay on the trail ("Mules stay out of trouble by staying on the trail. We ask that you do the same.") The Ninemile Ranger Station also sponsors wilderness training courses, provides winter range for over 200 Forest Service horses and mules, and is home to the mule packtrain which has represented the Forest Service in parades all over the nation.

Case Study 19.
City of Rochester Publications Series

The Landmark Society of Western New York, in cooperation with the City of Rochester, developed a series of several publications filling different functions. A large and glossy "coffee table" book doubles as a fund-raiser. A relatively low-cost 50-page spiral-bound booklet, Tours of Downtown Rochester: Images of History, includes six different walking tours of the city. A two-color brochure, donated by a local utility, reproduces Tour 3: the High Falls and Brown's Race Historic District (listed in the National Register on March 2, 1989). This tour features the city's earliest industrial area, centered around the 96-foot Genessee River falls, and is available free of charge.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Newspapers and magazines form a special sub-category of publications that are often underused. Since they reach mass audiences, they can disseminate information to thousands of readers, many of whom might be unaware of the historic places in their own communities. This is one of the best ways to reach new audiences. Well-placed articles create interest, elicit support, and, at a minimum, result in widespread casual familiarity with local historic places. Publicity related to special events is ideal for these media. Preparing news releases and offering to write or help write feature articles may well be worth the time it takes.

Research is as essential to effective media relations as it is to interpretation. It takes time and work to develop a list of media contacts, editors and reporters, along with notes about deadlines, style sheets, types of material used, etc. The list must be kept current if it is to be useful. Experienced historians and writers, either professional or volunteer, are essential to ensure that newspaper feature articles or magazine stories are accurate and effective.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Although most students learn about historic places through field trips, working with local teachers to develop lesson plans and other written educational materials is another good way to reach young people. These materials can be used before or after a field trip to increase its effectiveness and can bring places into classrooms when visits are impossible.

Developing educational materials is not always easy. Establishing partnerships between historic places and local educators can be difficult. Teachers may not know about the places that are available for their use, and historians are often inexperienced in dealing with educational bureaucracies. Like school tours, educational materials must meet the established objectives or outcomes required in state or local curricula. Teachers are expected to accomplish certain things, and educational materials that don't help them with their task will sit, expensively, on the shelf. Working closely with teachers in the development of educational materials is the best way to ensure that the materials will be used.

Some historic sites have developed "traveling trunks" as classroom supplements or substitutes for field trips. These are usually large boxes that contain artifacts, games, puzzles, posters, books, possibly audio tapes or videos, and suggestions for teacher activities. The trunks are shipped out to teachers that request them at a rental charge that covers the cost of shipping. Because they generally include many "hands-on" activities—artifacts that the students can touch, reproduction clothing that they can try on, possibly tools or toys that they can use—the trunks are popular with both teachers and students. Because they don't require staff involvement, they are ideal for places without large paid or volunteer staffs.

Trunks need to be planned as carefully as any other interpretive technique, if they are to be effective. Like all educational materials, they should be curriculum-based. Everything in them must relate directly to the story of the place or the space and money that is invested in them is wasted. Including too many items adds to the cost of preparation and shipping, and dilutes the interpretive message.

Case Study 20. PARTNERS

The Potomac Area Rural Teachers Using National Education Resources for Students (PARTNERS) is a cooperative program involving four National Park Service sites, Shepherd College, and six local school districts in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. Together the partners organized summer institutes for teachers and employees of the cooperating agencies. Participants in the institutes were paid and could also earn graduate credits from West Virginia University. Everyone worked together to produce curriculum-based multi-disciplinary educational materials for each of the parks. These materials are closely tied to local school curricula for 4th through 8th grade students. After field testing, the materials were published in a comprehensive teacher's guide. Introduced to local schools in workshops conducted by the teachers who helped create it, the teacher's guide includes a video and the curriculum-based lesson plans developed for each of the four parks. The partners also produced a "how to" evaluation guide other areas could use to evaluate education programs.

Case Study 21.
Teaching with Historic Places

Teaching with Historic Places, a program administered by the National Register of Historic Places, has produced nearly 100 short lesson plans that can be used to bring historic places into classrooms nationwide. The lessons serve as "virtual field trips" when a site visit is impossible, but also can be used as effective as pre- or post-visit classroom materials. Each Teaching with Historic Places lesson links one or more historic properties listed in the National Register to broad themes, issues, and events covered in most social studies curricula. A lesson plan on Ybor City, in Tampa, Florida, for example, describes a multiethnic, multiracial community in the Deep South in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Students can compare the strategies immigrants from Cuba used to maintain their ethnic identity with those of the more often studied eastern and southern European immigrants in northern cities. A lesson plan on the USS Arizona Memorial, in Hawaii, helps students understand how the Pearl Harbor attack precipitated the United States into World War II. All Teaching with Historic Places lesson plans include background information, learning objectives, maps, readings, photographs, and activities—everything students will need to attain the objectives of the lesson. Many of the lesson plans are now available for downloading on the National Register Web site. The program has also developed a curriculum framework and other guidance for organizations and individuals seeking to develop educational material based on their own historic places. The lesson plans can be found on the Web at <www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp>

Case Study 22.
Monocacy Battlefield, Frederick County, MD (listed in the National Register November 12, 1973)

On July 9, 1864, Confederate Gen. Jubal A. Early attacked Union forces commanded by Major Gen. Lew Wallace on the Monocacy River near Frederick, Maryland. Although the battle was a Confederate victory, it bought critical time to organize the defenses of Washington. Listed in the National Register in 1973, the battlefield is now a unit of the National Park System. This small park worked with the NPS Harpers Ferry Center to design and develop an educational outreach kit for use in 5th and 6th grade classrooms within driving distance of the park. The activities help students understand the battle's impact on soldiers and local civilians. An introductory brochure describes how the kit can be used. A Teacher's Guide helps teachers prepare the materials for classroom use. The activities are flexible, taking several hours or several days to complete.

The two self-contained wheeled boxes holding the kit fit easily in vans or station wagons. They contain a large (approximately six feet square) vinyl floor map, timeline maps for the teacher, an audio tape, a tape player and a reproduction haversack for each student. Each haversack contains a playing piece, a name tag, a character card representing a person involved in the battle, and a read-along booklet. The character card contains background information about the person that the student is to portray, such as a soldier, a general, a young woman or man, a six-year old boy, a farmer, a minister, or an enslaved African American. Students wear the name tags identifying their characters and move their playing pieces on the floor map as they follow the taped account of the battle. Because students were bored with a traditional narrative when the kits were tested in classrooms, the tape uses a professionally written and narrated script and sound effects and sounds very much like a radio drama.

The kit also includes additional background material on the Civil War, the battle, the Frederick community, and on fashions, cooking, and popular songs of the period as well. Supplemental student activities include newspaper templates, so students can prepare their own news accounts of the battle and its effects on the local population.

The kit is intended to provide a model for other places that want to reach out to their local schools but do not have the staff to provide direct assistance. All that is needed is an exciting story, a map with interesting visuals, characters to provide students with role-playing opportunities, and ideas for add-on activities. It takes time and effort to put the visual materials together and to do the research, however. Because students wanted to know more about the real people they were playing, additional research had to be completed before the kit assumed its final form.

Student thank-you letters to the park include the following comments: "I was Lieutenant George Davis and I didn't even know about him and that he became in charge too till we saw the trunk that you used," "I liked your trunk. It was neat except the haversacks smelled a little," and "It was so fun to learn and be a character. It was like you could really be at the battle..."

INDOOR EXHIBITS

Exhibits usually combine art, artifacts, and maps with interpretive text and photographs to communicate directly, without lengthy explanation. They are versatile and colorful. Rich in texture, they are visually appealing. Visitors can move through them at their own pace, spending as much or as little time as they desire. Restored furnished interiors in historic places provide a direct connection to the past, as well as providing an appropriate setting for important collections. Museum exhibits, using artifacts and artists' recreations of past conditions, are often the best way to tell the stories of archeological sites, because much of what has been learned about these places comes from artifacts found though excavation.

Exhibits, of course, require space. Many historic places are themselves exhibits, at least in part. Many parks and large historic sites have visitors' centers that may also house exhibits. Here, visitors receive orientation to both physical setting and historic context. In other cases finding space for the exhibit may be a problem. The display space needs to have controlled heat and humidity if it contains delicate or irreplaceable items. Unique and fragile artifacts need special care to protect them from the environment, from theft, and from damage.

While exhibits excel when they deal with concrete objects, they are not well suited to interpreting abstract concepts or dynamic stories. Restored interiors can be the springboard for countless stories, but they need to be supplemented with other types of interpretation if these stories are to be told effectively. Exhibits are often static. It is hard to design an exhibit that can discuss a story in depth—too many words convert museum displays into unread decoration. Attempts by subject matter experts to incorporate too much information can be confusing. Standing and reading long labels eventually exhausts even the most interested visitor.

Careful research is necessary to ensure that only authentic and well documented artifacts are used. Items that never would have shared the same space historically should not share an exhibit either. To be effective, the story of each exhibit needs careful definition, usually focusing on a specific theme or a relatively short timespan.

Case Study 23.
Cahokia Mounds, St. Clair County, IL
(designated a National Historic Landmark on July 19, 1964)

Cahokia Mounds State Park, near Collinsville, Illinois, about eight miles east of St. Louis, preserves part of the largest prehistoric site north of Mexico. From 1100 to 1200 A.D., the more than a hundred earthen mounds at Cahokia, occupying almost 4,000 acres, were home to an estimated 20,000 people. The park's interpretive center is designed to appeal to a variety of audiences. The interior is divided into seven "islands," each devoted to a different theme: time (Cahokia's position in the evolution of cultures in North America), culture (how the site reflects the traditions of Mississippian culture), city (the nature of the site as an urban area), life (beliefs and customs from birth to death), products (fabrication or acquisition), and knowing (the process of archeological investigation). Each of the islands contains displays that include artifacts (some of which visitors can handle), artwork, dioramas, video-disc monitors, and explanatory labels. Visitors can enjoy a half-an-hour whirlwind tour or stay for a whole day, reading and looking.



The interpretive center at the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site in Illinois is designed to appeal to amateur and professional archeologists, collectors, academics, casual tourists, local residents, educators and students alike.
(courtesy: Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site)

The high point of the exhibit is an award-winning audio-visual presentation, using a 40-foot screen and 13 slide projectors in a special theater. When the theater darkens at the end of the presentation, the screen rises and day apparently begins in a 60'x40' diorama behind the screen. The diorama includes 18 life-sized models of men, women, and children going about their daily tasks in a setting incorporating seven replica structures. The diorama is surrounded by mirrored walls that extend the image, suggesting the scale of the prehistoric city. Recorded sounds of birds, activities, and voices speaking an unintelligible language give a remarkable sense of immersion, truly an "empathetic understanding of the past." When the lights come on, the audience can move from the theater into the diorama. When they then go outside onto the actual site, they take the understanding that they have gained in the museum with them, "seeing" the landscape in a way that they could never have done without this powerful experience.

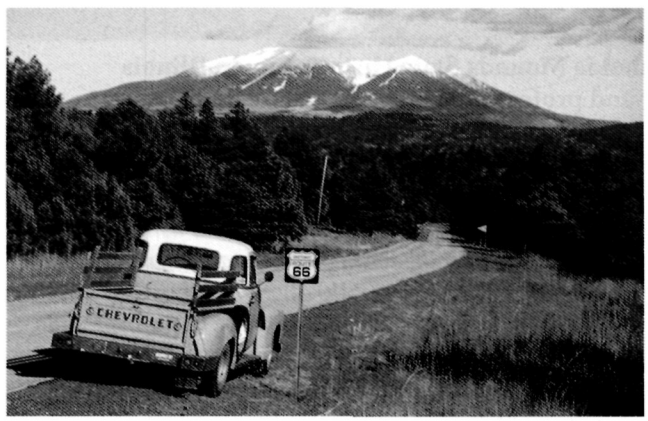
OUTDOOR EXHIBITS AND SIGNS

Historic districts and landscapes are, in a sense, outdoor exhibits that can give visitors the sense of actually being in the past. They help to satisfy the need to see the "real thing"—a common motivation for visitors to historic sites. Permanent signage, such as historic markers and wayside exhibits, are one way to provide the supplemental interpretation that is usually necessary before the stories of these places can be clearly communicated. They help visitors understand what is in their field of vision—the broad panorama below Little Round Top at Gettysburg, the texture of an adobe wall, a downtown historic district. They are often the only form of interpretation at outdoor locations. Since they are outside, they are usually available at any time, independent of staffs and building hours. Visitors read at their own pace, making them the ultimate form of self-service interpretation. New technologies and more durable materials allow the addition of illustrations, greatly increasing visual appeal and interpretive depth at a reasonable cost. Effective signs are not dependent on visitors seeking them out; they can easily attract the attention of the man-in-the-street—literally.

Exterior signs are like photos in a book. The captions only address a tiny piece of the story. Texts must be short (some experts recommend limiting signs to 50 words). Nothing can be interpreted in detail. These outdoor signs are very site specific and usually express a single thought. It is easy to present a distorted or oversimplified view of the past, as many older historical markers did. Environmental conditions affect both the comfort level of visitors and the durability of the exhibits themselves. Locations must be chosen carefully. If signs are to be placed along busy walkways or roads, specific issues need to be considered. Can cars pull off the road safely? Can the sign be read by disabled visitors? Do the signs block foot traffic? The environment also influences the choice of media. Outdoor exhibits need to be designed with the elements in mind—sun and wind, rain and snow. Even vandalism must be considered when selecting materials and determining design. Signs that annoy invite vandalism. It is also essential to evaluate the potential impact of the signage on the historic places being interpreted. This is particularly important in the case of historic landscapes.

Case Study 24.
Historic US Route 66 in Arizona Multiple Property Submission

From its establishment in 1926 through 1984, when the last segment was replaced by the new interstate I-40, US Route 66 carried many thousands of Americans from Chicago to Los Angeles, fleeing hard times or seeking good ones. The highest stretch of the 2,282-mile highway lies within the boundaries of the Kaibab National Forest, just west of Flagstaff, Arizona, and south of the Grand Canyon. The U.S. Forest Service, which administers the forest, identified three abandoned sections of "old Route 66," three sections of "rural Route 66" still in use for local access, and one section of "urban Route 66" in the town of Williams. The agency nominated all seven segments to the National Register in 1989.



US Route 66 carried thousands of Americans from Chicago to Los Angeles. The US Forest Service tells the story of the highest stretch of the historic road in a program using imaginative interpretive road signs.
(Teri Cleeland, courtesy: Kaibab National Forest)

The Forest Service also created a series of markers for the historic road segments. Featuring a prominent "Route 66" shield, the markers are made of porcelain enamel, the same durable material used for historic road signs. They are printed in full color and are designed to look like the postcards that travelers along old Route 66 sent back to friends and family. Three are

located along a driving tour that takes travelers over 22 miles of the old highway, some of it paved roadway dating from the 1930s, some a gravel road following the alignment of 1926. The other two are located at the beginning and end of a mountain bike tour covering rougher sections of the old roadbed. Brochures describing both tours are available from local sporting goods stores and Forest Service offices. Although the small Route 66 markers that the Forest Service installed disappeared almost immediately, the only damage to the larger ones has been caused by someone using one of them for shotgun practice. The colors have not yet faded in the years since they were installed.



The Forest Service has also developed markers for people who bicycle along "old Route 66." Some of the auto and bike markers are printed in full color and look like old-fashioned picture postcards. (Teri Cleeland, courtesy: Kaibab National Forest)

Because the fabric of the old road is fragile, the Forest Service decided not to try to attract the general public. The principal audience for their interpretation consists of the many people who are fascinated with Route 66. Stories appear regularly in specialized magazines for enthusiasts and the distribution of over a thousand auto tour brochures annually seems to indicate that the audience is being reached.

Case Study 25. City Walk

In Nashville, Tennessee, the Metropolitan Historical Commission developed a multi-faceted City Walk that combines publications and exterior signage and that is both fun and good for business. They envisioned families exploring Nashville streets, laughing, posing for pictures, and spending a few dollars along the way. They wanted to be sure that these visitors appreciated that the history of the city of Nashville is the story of people, events, and activity. City Walk includes:

- *A blue-green line on the sidewalk that draws visitors off the most congested city streets and leads them past historic sites and less frequented shops and restaurants.*



Visitors following Nashville's City Walk find both informative historical markers and unusual life-sized silhouettes of former inhabitants of the city. (courtesy: Nashville Metropolitan Historical Commission)

- *A well designed map and brochure that provides a lively, easy-to-use, portable interpretive commentary that discusses historical context as well as facts.*
- *Interpretive signs that satisfy those visitors who want more historical information on individual sites. Durable and readable, these exterior signs respect the fact that readers are on their feet and may be hot or cold. Matte finishes minimize sun glare. Color and material control visual intrusion, while the typeface reflects the era or architecture of the tour's structures.*

Breaking out of the traditional mold, City Walk also includes life-size silhouettes at each site. Designed to attract attention, these silhouettes portray a wide range of Nashvillians. A man plays a saxophone outside one location while a doughboy returning from World War I enthusiastically embraces his girl at another. On the tour's inaugural day, some of these characters came to life thanks to dramatic vignettes prepared and delivered by local actors.

Case Study 26. Visually Speaking

The 150-mile-long Delaware & Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor links coal fields near Wilkes-Barre with the port of Philadelphia in southeastern Pennsylvania. The Corridor also passes through the Bucks County villages of New Hope and Doylestown, the old Moravian settlement of Bethlehem, with its restored 18th-century buildings and huge, 20th-century Bethlehem Steel plant (now largely abandoned), and the exuberant Victorian architecture of the town of Jim Thorpe (formerly Mauch Chunk) in the scenic Pocono Mountains. The community includes over 200 properties listed in the National Register. The Corridor was authorized by Congress in 1988 to preserve the historic heritage of anthracite, its transportation routes to market and the industries it spawned, and to contribute to the economic development of the area.

Using funding from a variety of public and private sources, the Corridor Commission developed "Visually Speaking," a series of guidelines for directional, identification, trail, pedestrian and information signs, historical markers, waysides, and orientation kiosks. These guidelines, which can also be used on brochures, stationery, and maps, were designed to link the many historic sites along the Corridor into an identifiable whole. The central element is a logo that incorporates symbols of the mountains, river and canal, and of the coal fires and toothed gear wheels of the industries that contributed so much to the history of the area. The committee that selected the logo represented many of the partners in the corridor. The guidelines were designed not to impose a unified identity, but to reveal a unity that was already there. Sue Pridemore, the Corridor's Interpretive Specialist, described the purpose of "Visually Speaking":

> *Residents and visitors will know that they are in a special place when they see directional and entrance signs bearing the Corridor's colors and shape. This unified visual approach to identifying our living space encourages partnerships and the sharing of resources.*

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

Large parks and historic sites have long used films as important parts of their interpretive programs. With the explosion in new audio-visual technologies, groups with smaller staffs and smaller budgets have increasingly been able to afford this technique. Video and video projection is replacing film. Compact disks now carry both sound and image and allow the audience to make selections from a menu of programs. Recorded audio messages can be played back from a device commonly called a message repeater. A Traveler's Information Station (TIS) picks up very short-range radio broadcasts and plays them at the extreme ends of a car radio dial. Short interpretive programs, quotations, or even music can be played on these devices in outdoor settings. Synchronized sound and slide and other portable audio-visual programs can be shown in meeting rooms, small theaters, classrooms, even in private homes. Visitors can buy or rent films, tapes, cassette disks, and other audio-visual materials. If the audience is large enough, these programs can even make money.

Audio-visual programs are particularly effective in presenting the broad strokes of a story—the overview. When the story is dynamic and full of action and activity, movies or videos are ideal. They are excellent mood setters. They are adept at showing change and special effects dramatize the story. Cassette tape driving tours are an excellent way to link the stories of whole communities or regions. Videos combining historic photographs with taped oral histories are very effective. Music creates a mood and evokes powerful memories. Scripted and well-performed interpretation can be captured for repeated use. An audio-visual program can even illustrate otherwise invisible features of a place—fragile artifacts, historic fabric that has been lost through alteration, or even archeological sites temporarily uncovered during excavation. Translations, amplified sound, and closed captions assist visitors with special needs. Radio and television can supplement on-site audio-visual presentations effectively. Local television and radio stations are often willing to air well-produced pieces or even assist with production.

Audio-visual programs are, of course, impersonal. The possibility of communicating with large numbers of people brings with it the loss of direct face-to-face contact. Once produced, programs can be extremely difficult to change. Initial costs for producing the more elaborate audio-visual materials, such as 35-mm films and videos, are still high. Although the new audio-visual techniques are less expensive than the old ones, they are not cheap. It is difficult and expensive to keep up with rapidly changing technology. Viewers demand nothing less than professional quality. Both the materials and the equipment necessary to show films and videos can be costly to maintain. All machinery requires controlled environmental conditions. Backup equipment and maintenance must be planned. In many cases, films and videos require a controlled setting, often a theater, and are usually presented on a fixed schedule. In addition to the obvious start-up costs, administration of a program with loaned equipment requires storage and distribution space and staff to give out and collect the players. As in the case of tours, publicity is critical and not always easy to get. Visitors need to know that these materials are available and where to find them.

In some situations, audio programs or audio-visual equipment are simply out of place. They are discordant and inappropriate elements in a historic setting. Recorded sound interferes with places designed for contemplation. Electronic equipment, even when mostly hidden, jars in a meticulously restored landscape or room interior. Many historic properties predate the electricity that makes audio-visuals possible. Without an appropriate setting, audio-visual programs should be used with extreme caution.

Case Study 27.
Kingston Stockade District, Ulster County, NY
(listed in the National Register on June 19, 1975)

In Kingston, some of the buildings in the city's historic core "speak for themselves." In a program co-sponsored by the Kingston Urban Cultural Park, the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, the City of Kingston, and a local radio station, the "Historic Kingston Talking House Tour" features ten properties, ranging from the 1620 Old Dutch Church to the Volunteer Fireman's Museum, built in 1857 as the home of the Wiltwyck Hose Company. The stories are told over two frequencies at the top of the AM dial. Visitors with cars can tune in on their car radios; those on foot can borrow walkman-type portable radios from the Kingston Urban Cultural Park Visitor Center.

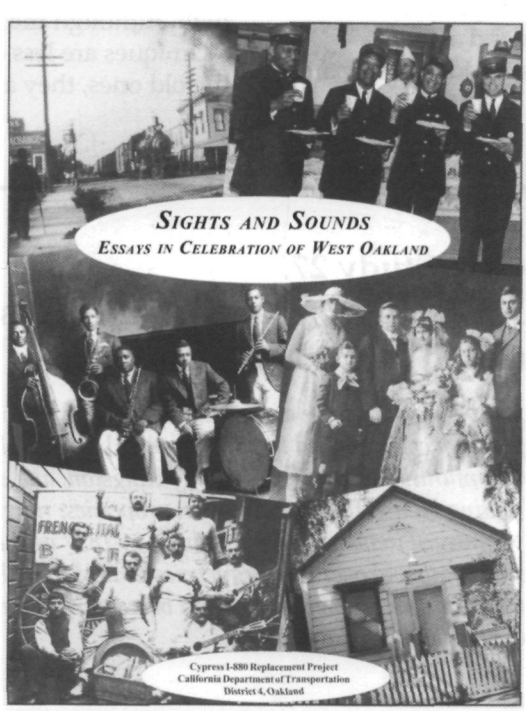
Case Study 28.
Gaslamp Quarter Historic District, San Diego County, CA (listed in the National Register on May 23, 1980)

The Gaslamp Quarter Foundation in San Diego, California, worked with a contractor to produce an audio tape tour that guides visitors through an area that represents both the city's transformation from frontier town to commercial urban center between 1889 and about 1910 and its notorious gambling and "Stingaree" red light districts. A narrator directs visitors from point to point, telling them when to turn off the tape and look around, pointing out interesting architectural features, and alerting them to traffic when they cross busy streets. The narration is supplemented by three or four "guests"—including Wyatt Earp, who owned three gambling halls in the city in the late 19th century; his wife, very concerned about the former houses of ill repute which her husband seems to know all too well; the woman who operated one of these places, who is about to tell Earp whether it was the chief of police or the mayor who was almost caught in a police raid on her establishment when she is interrupted by Mrs. Earp's arrival; and the "Father of Chinatown."

Visitors rent the tapes as the William Heath Davis House Museum, the oldest building in the district and the headquarters of the Foundation. The availability of the tape and other tours presented by the Foundation is publicized in local and national travel publications. The Foundation also is working closely with the city's Cultural Planning Office to promote San Diego as a cultural center. Comments by visitors who have used the tapes have been uniformly enthusiastic, and apparently all of them have negotiated the street crossings safely.

Case Study 29.
Oakland Point Historic District, San Francisco County, CA (determined eligible for listing in the National Register in 1990)

In 1990, the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) identified a number of historic resources in West Oakland, across the Bay from San Francisco, that would be affected by the reconstruction of the Route I-880 freeway that collapsed during the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, including the old Southern Pacific railyards and the Oakland Point Historic District. In order to fulfill its commitments under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, CALTRANS embarked on an interpretive program as partial mitigation of the impact



The California Department of Transportation worked closely with local preservation and planning organizations in West Oakland to create an interpretive program for the Oakland Point Historic District. The program included a book, *Sites and Sounds: Essays in Celebration of West Oakland*. (courtesy: California Department of Transportation)

of the project on the Oakland Point Historic District, which was determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register. After extensive consultation with local neighborhood preservation and planning organizations, the program grew to include two sophisticated videos, a book, Sites and Sounds: A Celebration of West Oakland, and a number of traveling exhibits.

Oakland Point began as a commuter suburb in the 1860s. The Central (later the Southern) Pacific Railroad arrived in 1869, transforming what had been a small commuter suburb into the western terminus of the first transcontinental railroad and virtually a railroad "company town." Many nationalities have been represented in the town over the years—first Yankee and North Europeans, then Italians and Slavs, Asians, and African Americans. The numbers of African Americans grew dramatically during World War II, when young men from the South arrived in large numbers, attracted by good-paying railroad and shipyard jobs. This is the rich heritage that is documented in the two videos. "Crossroads: A Story of West Oakland" uses historic views, both still photographs and early motion picture footage, to dramatize the railroad's dominance in the area during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Interviews with long-time residents show the strength and resilience of all of the groups that have occupied "The Point," still one of Oakland's largest and most intact Victorian neighborhoods. "Privy To the Past" concentrates on information on the daily lives of ordinary families living in West Oakland from the 1800s through the early 1900s provided by archeological investigations conducted by CALTRANS.

Both videos have been very popular. They have been shown on local cable television channels and are in much demand in local school districts. Not only have they encouraged a sense of pride in the neighborhood, they have also helped improve CALTRANS's largely negative image in the community.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Electronic media are particularly effective at telling stories about change or ones filled with action and activity. Computer technology provides rapid access to huge amounts of information and can drive interactive simulated programs. Simulations are uniquely adapted to showing change over time. Simulations interpreting the stories of archeological sites can be very effective in providing visitors with a sense of the life that once filled these now apparently barren places. Interactive interpretation in the form of devices like quiz boards has been used for years, but computers, touch screens, and laser disk players have made interactivity both more exciting and more affordable. Budgets capable of buying personal computers can now support sophisticated programs. Interactive exhibits increasingly allow visitors to select those aspects of a story that interest them—to tailor the exhibit to their particular interests. They can record their opinions, ask questions, and get answers from historic figures.

Exploration of the interplay between the Internet and historic properties is still in its early stages. A computer and modem open new opportunities for the dissemination of information. Worldwide audiences are now within reach. More and more museums are providing access to their collections via the Internet. Visitors and potential visitors can now read brochures and other publications on Web sites developed by museums and historic sites. The Internet can link geographically or thematically related sites at the click of a button. More and more people turn to the World Wide Web for travel information. Bulletin boards help those with special interests exchange information.

Web sites and interactive programs require a considerable amount of time and money to create. Web sites, in particular, must be continually maintained and updated to be useful. Users are increasingly familiar with this technology and demand programs that respond quickly with state-of-the-art graphics. Equipment is relatively durable but requires protection from heat and dust, as well as other environmental controls. Back-ups for both hard- and software are essentials—not luxuries. Interactive programs can be monopolized; it may be necessary to plan ways to induce a turnover of users.

There is also the danger that technology can become the message. If visitors remember the program and forget the story, if children push the button to simply start the computer and then dance along to another gadget, technology is ill-used. Keeping the focus on the story that you want to tell and integrating these new and exciting technologies into an overall interpretive program is the best way to ensure that this doesn't happen.

Case Study 30.
Pickett's Mill Battlefield Site, Paulding County, GA (listed in the National Register April 26, 1973)

On May 27, 1864, Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman's Union troops attacked Confederate units commanded by Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne near Pickett's Mill in northwest Georgia and were repulsed with a loss of an estimated 1,600 men. At Pickett's Mill Historic Site, administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, an interactive computer game called "Take Command" allows visitors to test their skill as battle commanders. The 5- to 10-minute game uses an ordinary personal computer, video disk player, and touch screen, all installed when the park first opened to the public in 1990.

The game assigns players the generally unpopular role of Union commander. Using maps showing the positions of Union and Confederate troops, players make choices that affect the outcome of the battle. They can choose a frontal attack or a flanking maneuver; they can decide whether to hold back reserves or commit all their troops immediately; they can construct their own protective earthworks or continue to attack the Confederate fortifications. When the video smoke clears and either Union or Confederate strategies prevail, the vicarious participant receives a rank based upon the quality of decisions made in the heat of battle. Successful players may come out of the battle as major generals. Those with less strategic ability or worse luck may find themselves reprimanded for their "dismal performance" and reassigned to procuring pork! The game is fun—on busy weekends families monopolizing the screen sometimes have to be asked to move on to let others play. But it also makes an important point about contingency. A notice mounted above the screen reminds players that:

> *Battles do not follow fixed laws, only general principles. This game may present variable situations and results even if you do everything exactly the same. You can do the wrong thing and win, and the right thing and lose, just as commanders did in the war.*

Case Study 31.
The National Register of Historic Places *Discover Our Shared Heritage* Travel Itinerary Series

Working with the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Offices and other public and private partners, the National Register has developed a series of print and electronic itineraries called Discover Our Shared Heritage. *The itineraries help travelers plan trips that link a variety of historic places listed in the National Register, including National Parks, National Historic Landmarks, and state and locally significant historic places. The itineraries include essays providing historic contextual information, interactive maps, descriptions of each place's significance in history, photographs, information on public accessibility, and links to state historic preservation offices, state tourism bureaus, and local sites which can provide additional information. Internet travelers can view the itineraries on-line and print out copies of the maps, photographs, and property descriptions.*

In 2000, the series included 10 geographically based itineraries, covering Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Seattle, Washington, DC, the Georgia-Florida coast, Central Vermont, Charleston, South Carolina, Kingston, New York, and Cumberland, Maryland, the latter four produced in cooperation with local communities. Thematically based itineraries included "Aboard the Underground Railroad," "Places Where Women Made History," and "We Shall Overcome: Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement." The itineraries can be accessed through the National

Register Web site <www.cr.nps.gov/nr>. They require fairly sophisticated, and expensive, hard- and soft-ware, but are relatively easy to develop and update and have been very popular.

The format for the electronic itineraries is based on published four-color printed itineraries on sites in the Southwest, Georgia-Florida, Texas, California, and Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands that highlight early Spanish settlement in the area that became the United States. These itineraries were developed in partnership with American Express. The printed travel itineraries can be ordered by contacting, NCSHPO, 444 N. Capitol St., NW, Suite 342, Washington, DC 20001.

Case Study 32.
Fort Sumter National Monument, Charleston County, SC (listed in the National Register October 15, 1966)

Tulane University has developed a multi-media site on the World Wide Web called "Crisis at Fort Sumter" <www.tulane.edu/~latner/CrisisMain.html>, which leads viewers through the period leading up to the attack on this fortified island in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, that precipitated the Civil War. Using text, photographs, maps, and music, the program allows viewers to participate in President Lincoln's decisions leading up to the attack, stopping at five different turning points to listen to varying recommendations and decide what course of action they would take. They can then compare their choices with what actually happened. More detail is available through hypertext links. Other sections call up the opinions of well-known historians on the meaning of these events. Finally, a section called "Questions for Consideration" leads participants beyond the facts, pointing out that "asking questions and looking for answers are essential components of the historian's craft." It asks such questions as: Was Lincoln responsible for the outbreak of the war because of his provocative actions? Would a more conciliatory course have made any difference? Did the Confederacy really need to take Fort Sumter? Was Lincoln's decision to relieve the fort based on a sense that there were no good alternatives, "that the 'best' decision was actually only the 'least bad' alternative"?

VII. WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

There are many places to turn for more information on the topics discussed in this bulletin, most of which have been studied in detail by interpreters, historians, and others. This section provides a list of sources where additional information can be found, divided by topic following the order used in this bulletin, and annotated in some cases. Much of the material on this list will need to be ordered through inter-library loan, although some of it may be found in local school or university libraries or is available online. This section also includes a list of organizations that can provide assistance. Publications can be purchased from some of these organizations. This section concludes with brief guidelines for identifying and selecting consultants to help with planning or creating interpretive programs.

THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Contact Information:

National Register of
Historic Places
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW, Room NC400
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 343-9536
www.nps.cr.gov/nr

Copies of individual National Register nominations and MPS forms can be obtained from the National Register or from historic preservation offices in each state (see below). Each nomination contains a description, historical background, evaluation of historic significance, bibliography, boundary description, maps, and current photographs. Some may contain copies of historic maps, photographs, or other documents.

The National Register Information System (NRIS) provides an index to the over 71,000 properties listed in 1999. It can also use selected data elements, such as location, period of significance, significant person, architectural style, or historical theme, to identify single properties or related groups of properties. Information on the NRIS can be obtained through the address and telephone number for the National Register listed above. It also can be accessed directly through the National Register Web site. The Web site provides links to National Register travel itineraries and introductions to and examples of Teaching with Historic Places educational materials.

NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETINS

Other bulletins in this series can be useful in developing interpretive programs. Many of these were initially prepared to help people who wanted to nominate particular property types. They provide a wealth of information which can be used to enrich the story of a specific place, such as a post office or historic mine, for instance. Most also include useful bibliographies.

Bulletins can be ordered from the National Register at the address shown above or by e-mail at nr_reference@nps.gov. The bulletins are also available in electronic format through the National Register Web site <www.cr.nps.gov/nr>.

The Basics:

Guidelines for Completing National Register of Historic Places Forms
Part A: How to Complete the National Register Form
Part B: How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form

How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation

How to Prepare National Historic Landmark Nominations

Researching a Historic Property

Property Types:

Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Historic Aids to Navigation

Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Historic Aviation Properties

Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons

Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Last Fifty Years

Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes

Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties

Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Historical Archeological Sites

Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating and Registering America's Historic Battlefields

Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating and Registering Historic Mining Sites

How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes

How to Apply the National Register Criteria to Post Offices

Nominating Historic Vessels and Shipwrecks to the National Register of Historic Places

Technical Assistance:

Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties

Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning

How to Improve the Quality of Photographs for National Register Nominations

National Register Casebook: Examples of Documentation

Using the UTM Grid System to Record Historic Sites

Related publications and videos dealing with National Register and its programs include:

African American Historic Places. Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, 1994 (distributed by John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY)

American Legacy: The Work of the National Register of Historic Places Video, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1998.

Chambers, S. Allen, Jr. *National Landmarks, America's Treasures: The National Park Foundation's Complete Guide to National Historic Landmarks.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2000.

Cultural Diversity and Historic Preservation. Special issue of *CRM* (Cultural Resources Management—a journal published by the National Park Service), Vol. 15, No. 7, 1992

The National Register of Historic Places, 1966-1994. Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1995 (distributed by John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY)

A cumulative list with abbreviated information on all properties included in the National Register as of the end of 1994.

National Register of Historic Places *Discover Our Shared Heritage* Travel Itineraries, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service. (For ordering information for the printed itineraries and to access the electronic itineraries, visit the National Register Web site <www.cr.nps.gov/nr>).

Produced in cooperation with the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and local communities around the country, each itinerary includes a map, a brief description of each site's importance, and a series of full-color photographs.

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submissions (Supplement to *CRM*, Vol. 19, No. 9, 1996)

A cumulative list of all MPS's accepted by the Register through October 1996. The most up to date list is available on the National Register Web site <www.cr.nps.gov/nr>

Teaching with Historic Places lesson plans, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service. (For ordering information and to download many of the lesson plans, visit the National Register Web site: <www.cr.nps.gov/nr>)

Created by National Park Service interpreters, preservation professionals, and educators, these lessons use historic sites to examine developments throughout American history and across the country. The lesson plans are designed for secondary school students learning history, social studies, geography, and other subjects in the humanities. Each lesson includes maps, readings, and photographs, all of which are accompanied by questions; at the end are activities that pull together the ideas students have just covered.

Teaching with Historic Places. Special issue of *CRM*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1993

The Multiple Property Approach Video: Nominating Groups of Properties to the National Register of Historic Places, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1992.

Through the Generations: Identifying and Protecting Traditional Cultural Places Video, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1994.

Using the National Register of Historic Places. Special issue of *CRM*, Vol 17, No. 2, 1994

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One of the few books on interpretation that deals specifically with historic sites. Its primary focus is on historic house museums and interpretation by trained docents, but it also contains much information that can be useful in planning other kinds of programs. Helpful appendices include concrete examples.

Beck, Larry, and Ted Cable. *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture.* Champaign, IL: Sagamore Publications, 1997.

Ecroyd, Donald H. *Talking with Young Visitors in the Parks.* Philadelphia, PA: Eastern National Park & Monument Association, 1993.

Includes a discussion of how children at different ages learn and how interpreters need to respond.

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Fleming, Ronald Lee, and Judith Hadden Edington. *If Walls Could Talk: Telling the Story of a Historic Building to Create a Market Edge.* Washington, DC: The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1989

Explains why interpretation is good business for projects funded with the Investment Tax Credit. Good examples and planning guidelines.

Grater, Russell K. *The Interpreter's Handbook—Methods, Skills, and Techniques.* Globe, AZ: Southwestern Parks and Monuments Association, 1976.

Grinder, Alison L., and E. Sue McCoy. *The Good Guide: A Sourcebook for Interpreters, Docents, and Tour Guides.* Scottsdale, AZ: Ironwood Press, 1985.

A basic primer on starting and sustaining a program with "live" interpreters.

Knudson, Douglas M., Ted T. Cable, and Larry Beck. *Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources.* State College, PA: Venture Publishing, ca. 1995.

Lewis, William J. *Interpreting for Park Visitors.* Philadelphia, PA: Eastern Acorn Press, 1980.

Designed primarily for rangers giving tours, talks, or demonstrations in the national parks, Interpreting for Park Visitors provides a great deal of information that can be used in a variety of interpretive situations. It discusses the principles, goals, and primary elements of interpretation in a style that is both effective and easy to read, with lively cartoon illustrations. It also explains how to provide information and orientation effectively. The "Self-Evaluation" section allows interpreters to review their own presentations and correct potential problems themselves.

Machlis, Gary E., and Donald R. Field, eds. *On Interpretation: Sociology for Interpreters of Natural and Cultural History.* Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, ca. 1992.

Regnier, Kathleen, Michael Gross, and Ron Zimmerman. *Interpreter's Guidebook: Techniques for Programs and Presentations.* Stephens Point, WI: UW-SP Foundation Press, ca. 1992.

Useful advice for planning personal interpretation. This book covers both the basics (tours and slide talks) and more creative techniques (living history, storytelling, puppets, etc.). It also includes chapters on interpretation for children and methods of evaluation.

Risk, Paul H., "Interpretation: A Road to Creative Enlightenment, *CRM: Historic Transportation Corridors,* Vol. 16, No. 11 (1993), pp. 47-49.

————, "Interpretation: A Road to Creative Enlightenment," *CRM: Using the National Register of Historic Places,* Vol. 17, No. 2 (1994), pp. 37, 40.

Both articles provide details on Risk's "sensitivity continuum" and also include a variety of imaginative suggestions for interpretive programs.

————, "A Public Historiography: Review Essay." *The Public Historian,* Vol. 14, No. 3 (Summer 1992).

While this article is primarily a review of state highway historical marker programs and local guides to historical resources, it also addresses broad questions about the interpretation of historic places.

Sharpe, Grant. *Interpreting the Environment.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976.

Colleges and universities teaching interpretation have been using this classic text for many years. Sharpe discusses the advantages of specific interpretive media in detail and provides help in defining and producing effective non-personal interpretive programs.

Tilden, Freeman. *Interpreting Our Heritage,* 3rd ed. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1977.

This classic text sits dog-eared and well-thumbed on many interpreters' bookshelves. Tilden's principles of interpretation still provide an excellent place to begin any discussion of what constitutes quality interpretation.

www.nps.gov/idp/interp.

The National Park Service's Interpretive Development Program (IDP) Web site contains the Interpretive Development Curriculum used for training National Park Service interpreters.

TELLING THE WHOLE STORY

Acosta-Belen, Edna. *The Puerto Rican Woman.* New York: Praeger, 1970.

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Includes essays on Native American women.

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Contains a useful bibliography, as well as a discussion of recent trends and problems in interpreting women's history in the National Park Service.

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Genovese, Eugene. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1974.

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Harley, Sharon, and Rosalind Terborg-Penn, eds. *The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images*. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1978.

Hutchinson, Edward P. *Legislative History of American Immigration Policy, 1798-1965*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.

Jackson, Kenneth. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Jameson, John H., Jr. *Presenting Archaeology to the Public: Digging for Truths*. Walnut Grove, CA: AltaMira Press, 1997.

This book describes how archeological sites across the nation are telling their stories to the public.

Jones, Jacqueline. *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family from Slavery to the Present*. New York: Basic Books, 1985.

Kammen, Carol. *On Doing Local History: Reflections on What Local Historians Do, Why, and What It Means*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1995.

Originally published by the American Association for State, and Local History (AASLH) in 1986, this book is an excellent guide for using the widest possible array of sources, from documents to material culture to oral history, to illuminate the past. Provides suggestions for ways that the history of a place can be expanded to ensure that stories of women and underdocumented ethnic and cultural groups are included.

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This column, a regular feature in History News, discusses the dangers of factually accurate, but incomplete information.

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Kettner, James H. *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608-1870*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1978.

Kyvig, David E., and Myron A. Marty. *Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You*. Walnut Grove, CA: AltaMira Press, 1996.

First published by the AASLH in 1982, this useful book is the first in the "Nearby History" series, which now includes volumes on documenting local schools, houses and homes, public places, places of worship, and businesses.

Leon, Warren, and Roy Rosenzweig, ed. *History Museums in the United States: A Critical Assessment*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989.

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INTERPRETIVE PLANNING

Delaware & Lehigh Canal Heritage Corridor, *Interpretive and Educational Plan.* Bethlehem, PA: Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Commission, 1999.

Developed to help a wide variety of sites related by the transportation corridor develop integrated programs. Includes definitions of terms, a method for site assessment, a descriptions of personal and non-personal interpretive services, and other information.

Getting Started: How to Succeed in Heritage Tourism. Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1993.

An excellent overview of techniques for developing tourism in historic areas, full of easy-to-follow, logically organized advice and real examples.

Harpers Ferry Center (US) Division of Interpretive Planning. *Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience.* Harpers Ferry, WV: [National Park Service], Harpers Ferry Center, 1998.

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This booklet outlines the National Park Service Comprehensive Interpretive Planning (CIP) process.

Paskowsky, Michael. *Interpretive Planning Handbook.* Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1983.

Produced for use by National Park Service staff, this handbook describes both the planning process and the advantages and disadvantages of interpretive media.

Veverka, John. *Interpretive Master Planning.* Helena, MT: Falcon Press, 1994.

Based upon years of experience, Veverka's book provides step-by-step guidance in interpretive planning. It also discusses trails, auto tours, and interpretive exhibits.

FUNDING

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The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Bi-weekly periodical with articles, resources, calendars, grant deadlines, and much more. Call 1-800-347-6969 for information.

Ferguson, Jacqueline, ed. *The Grantseeker's Guide to Project Evaluation.* Alexandria, VA: Capitol Publications, 1992.

The Foundation Center. *The Foundation Directory*

The Directory lists a number of organizations that fund preservation or educational projects. It also identifies the geographic area in which foundations are particularly active. The Foundation Center is an independent national service organization established by the foundations themselves to provide information on private giving. The Center maintains comprehensive reference collections in New York, Washington, DC, Cleveland, and San Francisco. A core collection of Foundation Center publications, including the Directory, is available in a number of cooperating collections, including libraries, community foundations and other non-profit agencies. Many of these cooperating collections also provide special services for local nonprofit organizations, using staff or volunteers to prepare special materials, organize workshops, or conduct orientations. To find the location of the nearest cooperating collection and for other current information, call 1-800-424-9836 or check the Center's web site: <www.fdncenter.org>.

Grantsmanship Center, *Nonprofit Catalog*

The Center also publishes a magazine and provides training. For more information, call 213-482-9860 or consult the Center's web page: <www.tgci.com/>.

Hall, Mary. *Getting Funded: A Complete Guide to Proposal Writing.* Portland, OR: Continuing Education Publications, 1988.

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Call 415-896-1900 for information.

Reilly, Patti. "Grants—A New Way of Thinking." *Interpretation* (a publication of the National Park Service), Special Issue on Education, Summer 1995

The Taft Group, *Taft Corporate Giving Directory.*

Other funding directories are also available. Call 1-800-877-TAFT for a catalogue of publications.

www.epa.gov/seahome/grants/src/open.htm.

This web site, developed by the Environmental Protection Agency, is a tutorial program on preparing successful competitive grant applications. Also includes examples of successful grants and a useful bibliography.

INTERPRETIVE MEDIA

Cody, Sue Ann. "Historical Museums on the World Wide Web: An Exploration and Critical Analysis." *The Public Historian,* Vol. 19, No. 4 (Fall 1997).

This article explores how museums have used the World Wide Web, highlighting both the weaknesses and strengths of this medium.

Conroy, Pete. *Collection-Based Loan Programs and Their Development.* Jacksonville, AL: Center for Social Design, c. 1997.

This small publication provides suggestions and guidelines for developing "traveling trunks" and other resource materials for public school use.

Ecroyd, Donald H. *Living History.* Philadelphia, PA: Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1992.

Detailed discussion of the uses and the abuses of living history.

Hall, Eleanor J. "Putting It All Together: How to Produce a Traveling Trunk." Guidelines and Workbook. St. Louis, MO: [National Park Service] Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, 1991.

Helpful step-by-step guidelines for preparing a traveling trunk, from identifying the theme to selecting the artifacts.

Hughes, Catherine. *Museum Theater: Communicating with Visitors Through Drama.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998.

Serrell, Beverly. *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach.* Walnut Grove, CA: AltaMira Press, 1996.

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Thomson, Ron. "A Different Path for Historic Walking Tours." History News Technical Leaflet #194. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1996

Step by step guidance in developing effective walking tours. Also contains useful examples.

Trapp, Suzanne, Michael Gross, and Ron Zimmerman. *Signs, Trails, and Wayside Exhibits.* Stevens Point, WI: UW-SP Foundation Press, ca. 1991.

Excellent resource for those interested in exterior trails and signs. Solid advice on both writing and producing signs. Well illustrated and supported with examples.

www.nps.gov/htdocs3/hfc.

The Web site for the National Park Service's Harpers Ferry Interpretive Design Center has a wealth of good information on media development.

Zehr, Jeffrey, Michael Gross, and Ron Zimmerman. *Creating Environmental Publications.* Stevens Point, WI: UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc., ca. 1990.

Covers both writing and design.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Armstrong, Thomas. *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1994.

Provides a practical overview of Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory. Chapter 5, "MI and Curriculum Development" makes connections between theory and practice by listing intelligences, sample teaching materials, sample teaching activities, and instructional strategies.

Bednarz, Sarah Witham, et al. *Geography for Life: National Geography Standards 1994.* Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1994.

Outlines the six essential elements of geography education and identifies measurable standards for elementary, middle, and high school students. These standards have influenced and been incorporated in some state curriculum frameworks.

Bigge, M. L., and S. S. Shermis. *Learning Theories for Teachers,* 5th ed. New York: Harper Collins, 1992.

Bloom, Benjamin S. *Taxonomy of Education Objectives, The Classification of Education Goals, Handbook #1: The Cognitive and Affective Domain.* David McKay, 1984.

Bloom's Taxonomy describes the six stages of learning from knowledge to evaluation. This theory is the framework for developing higher-level thinking skills.

Burden, Paul R. *Classroom Management and Discipline: Methods to Facilitate Cooperation and Instruction.* New York: Longman, ca. 1995.

Chapter 3 divides models of discipline into three categories: low, medium, and high teacher control.

Cangelosi, James S. *Classroom Management Strategies: Gaining and Maintaining Students' Cooperation,* 2nd ed. New York: Longman, 1993.

Chapter 6: "Designing and Conducting Engaging Learning Activities" gives concrete examples of the connection between well-structured, appropriate activities and good management skills.

Educational Leadership. Journal of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Elias, M. J., *et al. Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997

Gardner, Howard. *The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach*. New York: Basic Books, ca. 1991.

Provides a look at learning that goes beyond rote learning to understanding. Gardner draws on recent research in cognitive development and cites examples from all disciplines and age groups. This is a very readable book.

Griswold, Robyn, and Audrey Rogers. *Cooperative Learning Basics: Strategies and Lessons for U.S. History Teachers*. Amawalk, NY: Golden Owl, ca. 1995.

Harmin, Merrill. *Inspiring Active Learning: A Handbook for Teachers*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1994.

This short book gives practical strategies for engaging students in learning and offers a wide variety of types of activities.

Harper, Marilyn M. "Including Historic Places in the Social Studies Curriculum." ERIC Digest EDO-SO-97-13. Bloomington, IN: Clearinghouse for Social Studies/ Social Science Education, 1997.

Discusses how teaching using historic places helps meet national curriculum standards for geography, history, and social studies.

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McCarthy, Bernice. "A Tale of Four Learners: 4MAT's Learning Styles." *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 54, No. 6 (March 1997), pp. 46-52.

Provides four case studies. Each illustrates a different learning style and the need to create diverse learning opportunities. This issue of the journal contains several other good articles on how children learn.

Metcalf, Fay, and Matthew Downey. *Using Local History in the Classroom*. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1982.

One of the first books published on this topic. Still useful.

National Center for History in the Schools. *National Standards for History*. Basic edition. Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools, 1996.

Identifies historical thinking skills and chronological periods that are significant for historical learning. Although these standards were initially controversial, they now have been adapted for incorporation into some state curriculum frameworks.

National Council for the Social Studies. *Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*, Bulletin 89. Washington, DC: National Council for the Social Studies, 1994.

Outlines the ten thematic strands of social studies and identifies competencies for elementary, middle, and high school students. These standards have been incorporated into several state curriculum frameworks.

Orlich, Donald C, et al. *Teaching Strategies: A Guide to Better Instruction*, 3rd. Ed. Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1994.

Chapter 6: "Deciding How to Ask Questions" describes different types of questions, and provides strategies for conducting effective questioning sessions.

Patrick, John J. *Heritage Education in the School Curriculum: Defining and Avoiding the Pitfalls*. Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation Heritage Education Monograph, 1992.

Thoughtful analysis of the unconscious biases that can creep into educational materials based on historic places.

"Programming For School Groups: An Interpreter's Guide." Boston, MA: Division of Interpretation, North Atlantic Region, National Park Service, 1991.

Useful overview of issues to consider in developing educational materials. Includes extensive bibliography.

Schubert, William H. *Curriculum: Perspectives, Paradigm, and Possibility*. New York: Macmillan, 1986.

Chapter 2 outlines the historical context for curriculum and organizes curriculum into different schools of thought.

Social Education and *Social Studies and the Young Learner*. Journals of the National Council for the Social Studies, 3501 Newark Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016-3167.

Voris, Helen H., ed. *Teach the Mind, Touch the Spirit: A Guide to Focused Field Trips*. Chicago, IL: Field Museum of Natural History, 1986.

White, Charles D., and Kathleen Hunter. *Teaching with Historic Places: A Curriculum Framework*. Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1995.

Describes theoretical basis for the use of historic place in teaching. Provides examples of typical curricula, discusses ways to create partnerships between historic places and schools, gives examples of lesson plans, field studies, and workshops.

www.mtsu.edu/~chankins/THEN

The Heritage Education Network Web site, developed by Caneta Hankins at Middle Tennessee State University, contains a wealth of information on educational materials based on place. It also includes information on specific types of properties and many useful links to related Web sites.

EVALUATION

Medlin, Nancy C. and Gary Machlis. "Focus Groups: A Tool for Evaluating Interpretive Services" (training manual and video tape). Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of Idaho, 1991.

A step-by-step explanation of focus groups and how to use them to create targeted, effective interpretive programs.

Medlin, Nancy C., Gary Machlis and Gene E. McKendry. *Self Critiquing: A Tool for Interpretation.* Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of Idaho, c. 1993.

REFERENCE WORKS (AVAILABLE IN MANY LOCAL LIBRARIES):

American Association for State and Local History, *The Directory of Historical Societies and Agencies.*

American Association of Museums, *The Official Museum Directory.*

This directory is an excellent source of information about museum organizations as well as contractors and suppliers. The directory's many lists include museums by area and by type, state museum organizations, state and regional arts organizations, humanities councils, and suppliers of products and services. It can be invaluable for non-museum people by identifying museum staff who are experienced in working with all kinds of media. The problems of producing a two-color brochure are the same whether it is for a walking tour or museum's calendar of events. The demands of planning and funding exterior signs are the same whether the topic is a historic bridge or the town's original post office.

Gale Research, Inc., *The Gale Directory of Publication and Broadcast Media*

This directory lists newspapers and radio and television stations by locality. It can be invaluable in planning publicity campaigns, as well as in identifying potential partners for audio-visual and other projects.

———, *The Encyclopedia of Associations.*

Helps identify organizations with members who have similar concerns, often potential partners.

ORGANIZATIONS

Many organizations can provide assistance in developing interpretive programs. Often they conduct training sessions or hold conferences. They publish newsletters or even books that can be useful in developing interpretation. Some of the most active are listed below. Others can be located through the *Encyclopedia of Associations* (see above).

American Association of Museums (AAM)
1575 Eye Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20005-1105
202-289-1818
www.aam-us.org

AAM has a large and diverse membership, including a number of historic house museums. They publish a newsletter, Aviso, and a magazine, Museum News, in addition to The Official Museum Directory, discussed above.

American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)
1717 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37203
615-320-3203
www.aaslh.org

The AASLH has been actively involved in the presentation of state and local history for over fifty years. Members include many small organizations operating on shoestring budgets. Publications are addressed specifically to the needs of this clientele. AASLH publishes the quarterly magazine History News, the monthly Dispatch newsletter, and a series of Technical Leaflets; sponsors workshops on interpretation, historic houses, and Making History with Your Community, an innovative training program designed to encourage and guide history institutions in involving the communities in which they are located in every aspect of their work. The AASLH also publishes the Directory of Historical Societies and Agencies. AASLH books, including the invaluable "Nearby History" series, are published by AltaMira Press in Walnut Grove, CA, and can be ordered through the AASLH Web site. Information on AASLH and other related publications is available on the AltaMira Web site: <www.altamirapress.com/>.

Association for Living Historical Farms & Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM)
care of Judith Sheridan, Treasurer
8774 Route 45 NW
North Bloomington, OH 44450
440-685-4410

ALHFAM is an excellent source of information on living history, particularly as it relates to agriculture. Has committees on consultants, historic clothing, and historic replicas. ALHFAM holds both national and regional meetings.

Council for the Interpretation of Native Peoples
care of Dr. James A. Goss
Texas Tech University
Box 41012
Lubbock, TX 97409-1012
806-742-2228
jgoss@ttacs.ttu.edu

A special section of the National Association for Interpretation (q.v.), the Council acts as a clearinghouse, matching interpreters with appropriate Tribal contacts. The Council also publishes a newsletter, Storyteller.

Federal Preservation Officers (FPOs)

Historic properties that are owned by federal agencies are nominated to the National Register through Federal Preservation Officers (FPOs). FPOs administer the preservation program within their agency and provide public information, technical assistance, and education and training. A list of FPOs is available through the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation on the Web at: <www.achp.gov>.

History Teaching Alliance (HTA)
Loretta Sullivan Lobes, Director
Carnegie Mellon University
Department of History
Baker Hall 240
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890
412-268-1143
LL1J@andrew.cmu.edu

The Alliance works to encourage collaboratives between elementary and secondary school teachers, museum educators, public historians, and college and university faculties. It assists with designing collaboratives, drafting proposals, identifying potential funders, implementing programs and evaluating projects. It also serves as a clearinghouse for information about history collaboratives and is developing a handbook on how to establish and sustain a local collaborative.

National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC)
Post Office Box 1605
Athens, GA 30603
706/542-0169
napc@arches.uga.edu

NAPC is the national organization for the hundreds of local preservation commissions across the country. The organization produces a newsletter, provides information on establishing local preservation districts and design guidelines, and conducts workshops.

National Association for Interpretation (NAI)
Post Office Box 2246
Fort Collins, CO 80522-2246
970-484-8283
www.interpnet.com *or* .org

NAI is emerging as the most active national organization of interpreters. It publishes a magazine, Legacy, holds an annual conference with published proceedings, and offers employment assistance. Regional NAI organizations also publish newsletters and sponsor training and annual conferences. Both advertisers and members can provide information on interpretive products and services.

National Council on Public History (NCPH)
David G. Venderstel, Director
327 Cavanaugh Hall – IUPUI
425 University Blvd.
Indianapolis IN 46202-5140
317-274-2716
www.iupui.edu/it/ncph/ncph.html

A membership organization of historians working outside an academic setting, NCPH seeks to bring together individuals, institutions, agencies, businesses, and academic programs. NCPH sponsors two quarterly publications: The Public Historian emphasizes original research and new viewpoints and provides a forum for addressing substantive and theoretical issues. Public History News offers articles, reports on legislative issues and other concerns, and informs readers about upcoming conferences, meetings, awards, and recent publications. The executive office of NCPH also hosts the PUBLHIST discussion list on the Internet.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
202-606-8387
www.neh.gov

The National Endowment is a federal grant-making agency promoting humanities education.

National History Day
Cathy Gorn, Executive Director
0119 Cecil Hall
University of Maryland, College Park
College Park, MD 20742
301-314-9739
www.thehistorynet.com/NationalHistoryDay

Each year more than half a million middle and high school students nationwide conduct research using primary sources on topics of their choice, related to National History Day's annual theme. Students in 47 states and the District of Columbia present exhibits, performances, video or slide-tape documentaries and papers at a series of contests at the district, state, and national levels. Professional historians, museum educators, and teachers serve as judges at the contests. National History Day provides a whole network of possible partners and is always seeking local sponsors and judges. Helping students with projects is an excellent way to publicize the story of a historic place in your local education community.

National History Education Network (NHEN)
care of Loretta Sullivan Jobes
Carnegie Mellon University
Department of History
Baker Hall 240
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890
412-268-1143
LL1J@andrew.cmu.edu

NHEN is a coalition of organizations that serves as a clearinghouse for information related to the teaching of history. The Network also works actively to encourage history teaching and learning in community and cultural institutions, as well as schools. In addition to providing information about the education programs of its member organizations, the Network publishes a quarterly newsletter, The Network News, that describes materials and opportunities available to history and social studies teachers.

National Park Service
Office of Public Inquiries
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW, Room 1013
Washington, DC 20240
202-208-4747
www.nps.gov

The National Park Service is dedicated to conserving unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. All of the more than 370 units of the System provide some form of interpretation to park visitors; 221 tell stories that are primarily historical. Your local library or ParkNet, the Park Service Web site listed above, can provide information on any of the parks in

the System or help you identify parks that are close to you or that address similar themes.

The National Register of Historic Places is also part of the National Park Service. See entry for the National Register (above) for more detailed information.

The Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) was established before the Second World War to record historic buildings in narrative descriptions, measured drawings, and photographs. A number of buildings listed in the National Register are also documented through very high quality photographs and measured drawings in the HABS/HAER collections, which are maintained at the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. Further information on the programs can be obtained from HABS/HAER (202-343-1024) or the Prints and Photographs Division (202-707-6394).

The Interpretation Division of the Park Service has developed extensive training materials that cover interpretive planning, media, and evaluation, among other subjects. These materials can be accessed through the National Park Service Web site. Some are listed individually under the appropriate topic (above).

National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-588-6000
www.nationaltrust.org

The National Trust is a non-profit membership organization established by Congress to foster an appreciation of the diverse character and meaning of the American cultural heritage and to preserve and revitalize communities by saving America's historic environments. It offers a wide range of educational and interpretive programs through its national and regional offices and its 18 historic properties. It also works with more than 48,000 local and state preservation groups to interpret and protect their communities' historic and cultural resources. The Trust publishes Preservation magazine, as well as a series of technical publications on interpretation, heritage education, and other subjects.

Oral History Association
Baylor University
Post Office Box 97234
Waco, TX 76798-7234

This group can help use the memories of living witnesses to enrich interpretation. People still alive today can provide information unavailable from any other sources about places significant in the recent past, ranging from World War II to the Civil Right Movement.

State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs)

Most nominations to the National Register are made by the states through State Historic Preservation Officers. SHPOs also administer state programs of Federal assistance for historic preservation within the state and provide public information, technical assistance, and education and training. Their files often contain color slides, historic photographs, and other materials not submitted to the National Register. They maintain files on properties considered for listing but not nominated. Most states have created historic contexts that they use as the basis for evaluating historic properties. These can provide invaluable background information for interpretive programs. Many of the programs described in Chapter Six of this bulletin were produced with the support and often with the financial assistance of the SHPO in the state in which the historic place is located. The name, address, and telephone number of the SHPO in your state can be found on the web site for the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers: <www.sso.org/ncshpo>. You can also obtain that information from the National Register at the address and telephone number listed above.

State/County/City Park Systems

Interpretation at this level varies widely in its scope and sophistication. Most historical properties have some on-going or seasonal interpretive program. A telephone call to parks near you might uncover some helpful advice and a useful partner eager to pool resources.

Reenactment Groups

Reenactment groups can be located through battlefield parks and other sites that interpret warfare. They can provide information on uniforms and weapons, as well as civilian clothing and social history. They may be potential partners if their interest coincides with the theme of an interpretation.

Tribal Preservation Officers (TPOs)

In 1996 the national historic preservation program entered a new era, as numerous Indian tribes were approved by the National Park Service to assume national program responsibilities on tribal lands, pursuant to Section 101(d) of the National Historic Preservation Act. Among the responsibilities assumed by these tribes are conducting historic property surveys, maintaining permanent inventories of historic properties, nominating properties to the National Register of Historic Places, and reviewing Federal agency undertakings pursuant to Section 106 of the Act. A list of TPOs is on the Web at:<www2.cr.nps.gov/tribal>.

Local organizations and historical societies

Local resources can be invaluable sources of potential partners, knowledgeable people, and archival collections of newspapers, photographs, and other materials that can enrich interpretation.

CONSULTANTS

As the profession of interpretation matures, the number of free-lance interpretive specialists and consultants is growing. Services cover all aspects of interpretive planning, media development, training, and evaluation. Most consultants can assist with a variety of interpretive problems. Small organizations and properties with no paid staff might find that consulting is a cost-effective way to achieve professional results.

To find the right consultant, look first for someone who has experience with historic properties. Just as you might find a plumber or auto mechanic, contact others who have developed interpretive programs and ask for recommendations. Visit the public library and find *The Official Museum Directory* published by the American Association of Museums, discussed above. Look up other historic properties in your area, properties that deal with similar resources and themes, or turn directly to the section that lists product and service suppliers. Most consultants are members of organizations that address interpretation (see above) and some organizations maintain consultant registers.

When you have located one or more possible contractors, ask to see samples of their work and, of course, talk to references. It is important that you and the consultant see eye to eye on the nature of the project. It is always useful to get more than one bid, if you can. Ask for as detailed a proposal as possible, one that includes both products and costs.

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

National Register Bulletin
Telling the Stories: Planning Effective Interpretive Programs for Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

Note to the bulletin.
Dr. Paul H. Risk is correctly quoted in the bulletin but he is not associated with Yale University. As per an e-mail he sent to us in November, 2017, he was a professor and taught Environmental Interpretation at Michigan State University, Penn State University, University of Maine at Orono and Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. He is now retired and Professor Emeritus in the College of Forestry and Agriculture at Nacogdoches, Texas.