

Newsletter

Spring 2021



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Dear members,

Although the crisis has still not reached its end: Spring is coming!

Now nature is the perfect place to find some balance from the 'screen world' that keeps so many of us trapped indoors. Do you have a local heritage site around that is worth a visit? Perfect. And are restaurants and cafes still closed? Even better. Take a bottle of tea and a lunch box and enjoy being alone at a place that might otherwise be too crowded.

Open your senses and look for unfiltered experiences: the sun and the wind, green sprouts and yellow blossoms, singing birds and playing foals... Rediscover the value of authenticity and get inspired. Maybe there are some forgotten customs of your local ancestors to celebrate at this time of the year, which are perfect for more intimate ceremonies rather than large gatherings? In the end, true interpreters don't need much to find inspiration and draw meaning from a site or object. So, challenge your skills.

For some of you it might be difficult to imagine that all will return to normal in just a few months but even while we write this, IE courses are taking place in four different countries where restrictions are slowly being relaxed, and more trainers and organising partners are in their starting blocks, ready to go.

In this newsletter, you will find the call for papers for our conference, 'Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation', which we intend to run from 1-4 October in Spain if possible. We will consider this carefully and inform you in May whether it can take place in person on site or whether we will need to turn it into another web conference. Nonetheless, please think about your contribution now and we look forward to hearing about your ideas and projects.

We wish you the time and space to take a deep breath – and that it doesn't take too long until you will have the chance to release all your energy.

Helena Vičič and Thorsten Ludwig
Managing Directors



The road to summer shepherd settlements (Image: Bojana Seculić)

Safe spaces for all

Dirk Bennett (UK)

Interpreters are advocates for audiences and not political activists – an appeal for our cultural sites to provide safe places for all visitors.

I am worried, and I suspect I'm not the only one. First of all, Brexit. Then the Covid crisis, which has thrown our sector into turmoil. But we have also seen developments in the cultural sector which are no less concerning. I mean political interference from, at least, two sides: government and political activism.

Against that background, sectors and professions like ours are faced with an unenviable, but all the more important, set of choices: What should be the role of museums, heritage sites and cultural venues today? Should we take the middle ground in any political, ideological, or moralistic movements? Or do we actively participate in the debates of the day, taking a particular position ... become actors or even activists, influencers? And to what extent do we allow our sites to become activist spaces? Do we risk becoming propagandists? However, while these core questions are still unresolved, initiatives to "decolonise" museums, to remove statues and landmarks, to reorganise collections under political aspects, are happening with a distinct lack of transparency, scrutiny or debate within the sector.

So, what is the role of interpretation today? After all, it is us, in collaboration with the organisations we work for, who develop the narratives, produce the theme tables, select the content, write the panels, make the films, provide the experience. To highlight the problem we're facing let's look at the main questions in today's discourse: climate change, diversity, racism, capitalism, globalism, and the heritage of colonialism. These are underpinned, of course, by the concept of intersectionality. The latter is an argumentative tool to prove the existence of injustice, discrimination and racism by examining the various elements that form the character of an individual or organisation. However, looking at it in a bit more detail and its practical application, it is also highly problematic: it means no less than using a foregone conclusion, an assumption, and then looking for evidence for its proof.

In its approach this turns traditional ideas of academic research and discussion on its head. De-duction instead of in-duction. Make a statement, state an opinion, then pick the evidence. And importantly:

neglect, disregard, attack anything that does not fit the conclusion or sheds a slightly more varied light, adds another dimension, or two...

As an argumentative tool it allows us to argue almost anything, and in consequence, nothing: the earth is flat; mispronouncing a name is racism; the moon landing was faked; I won the election (Donald Trump); I won the World Cup (Gary Lineker's response to Trump) ...

This is an approach no different to religions or political ideologies, and a quite fundamental renouncement of centuries-old and hard fought-for ideas developed by the European Enlightenment. Using Western values as part of this strategy to question and in effect denying its cultural, political and scientific achievements; in human rights, in liberalism, in equality, democracy. The simplicity of the concept makes it so attractive and when it combines with human behaviours and developments in social media it makes for a toxic mix.

What to do? Firstly, as a leading principle, we are beholden to our audiences, and that means: all of our audiences. That means to represent them, to reflect their glorious variety, respect their multitude of views, in an inclusive manner. And that also includes politically. However, looking at ourselves, how representative of the population are we? Is there any political bias in the sector?

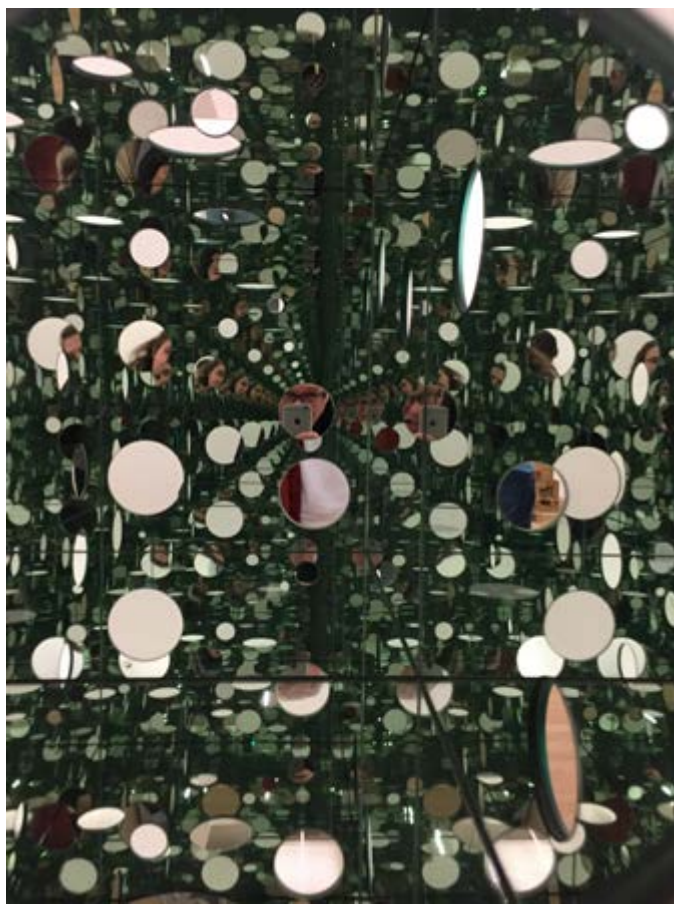
Recent developments seem to suggest so: the bewildering debate (or lack of?) around the translation of the poems of Amanda Gorman; the unquestioning support for the reorganisation of collections following a new, politically motivated orthodoxy; the lack of scrutiny surrounding the removal of historical statues in the UK; all this paints a fairly lop-sided picture.

Secondly, racism. Much is made of Western (Caucasian?) racist attitudes being mainstream or dominant to the detriment of others, but this still begs the question: does it not exist in our other communities? What about African tribalism, Chinese attitudes to Westerners, Eastern Asians and Indians, Muslims and Jews, Hutus and Tutsis, the Yezedis, Shiites and Sunnites? Aren't its roots rather a human condition, and the fear of the 'other' originally served as a survival mechanism, a protective measure against predators and competitors? We (should) have developed the capacity to overcome this instinct, through our intellectual potential, language, culture; but as history shows, this is true only to a

degree. To truly overcome it, each of us have to take that long hard look in the mirror, as the saying goes.

Thirdly, starting with decolonisation, shouldn't we be consistent and truly radical – and honest –, and lead the moral argument to its logical conclusion: shouldn't we erase all traces of injustice, racism, sexism, oppression, exploitation, conquest, imperialism etc out of our collections? Let's really put our money where our mouths are, and re-arrange our collections completely, according to our assessment of historical rights and wrongs. Obviously, this should and would have to involve not just Western collections, but everywhere in the world. Wars and conquest have happened throughout human history, across the world. Let's be consistent, let's set in motion a process of the complete redistribution of artefacts along the lines of historic justice.

But this is difficult. History, and framing it to suit one's argument, can prove anything (and nothing). Treating history, and indeed culture, in such a way reduces it to a mere tool in a political dispute, and robs it of any intrinsic, let alone transcendental value. Doing so also leaves us caught in an endless circle, reliving, refighting past conflicts and arguments that in all likelihood do nothing to resolve today's issues. On the contrary they will lead to disappointment and further fragmentation.



Looking at multidimensions in the mirror at The Tate, UK
(Image: Dirk Bennett)

Unless their political purpose is clearly established and signposted, museums, heritage sites and cultural spaces should, in my opinion, not be places for political, ethical, social indoctrination or alignment; or follow whatever viewpoint their director, curator, interpreter stands for. Or be subject to the twin threats of government interference and politically motivated activist pressure. Particularly as a German, this makes me uncomfortable and feels like a move into the dangerous territory of political propaganda, however well-meaning and benign the original intentions. There is always the temptation to make value judgements based on our own political, ethical, moral views; to frame the argument from the outset (and "framing" has a double meaning as we all should be aware!); define a "corridor of opinion" – that fitting term for the current, intersectionalist model of cancelling out uncomfortable opinions that don't fit the accepted discourse.

It might help to think back to the origin of our discipline, and to Freeman Tilden's interpretive principles. (Obviously, there is abundant, further literature about the significance of sites, heritage, tangible and intangible culture and the role interpretation plays.) His interpretive planning process might, should, still enable us to approach most sites, collections, country houses, etc with the cool, rational, organised and non-partisan mindset that is required, now more than ever:

1. Possibly the most important point: we produce content for audiences. We are interpreters and use the interpretation planning process to make sure we do not create exhibits and displays for ourselves or our peer groups, but for "the public". That includes diverging views on almost every topic. But it also means to be inclusive and not favour the interests of one group over another.

2. We build our exhibitions on the prevalent themes of the individual site to make it sing to our visitors. That also implies we remain thematically, historically, narratively true and provide a storyline relevant to that particular site. Content that does not relate to the site, or only with much twisting and shoe-horning, has no place in that narrative.

3. Tilden encourages us to take the holistic view, to include all relevant viewpoints, not just the ones which are convenient, "correct", or expedient, or follow the accepted and acceptable discourse, the narrow "corridor of opinion". This also includes historic views, language and terminology that are out-of-date (we don't know how our views and language will be judged in future!).

4. One of the key aims of the interpreter is that elusive element: revelation. However, this is a deeply personal experience. It will be different from visitor to visitor, and we have simply no right to impose, direct and lead that process according to our own wishes ('lead' as in 'suggestive'). Our responsibility is to provide an environment that enables this process.

5. Use induction instead of deduction, i.e. take the evidence to form our opinion, not your opinion to shape the evidence. Which obviously also means to accept contradictory facts and acknowledge them as they are. We should take a measured approach, step back, a bit like a referee that allows for the game to move on and just observe the rules are kept.

6. A reminder: the 2010 Equality Act provides comprehensive protection in terms of the nine key characteristics, which include gender, religion, race. This means any discrimination under these characteristics is illegal but also vice versa, any preferential treatment. The name of the act emphasises its purpose: inclusion and equality. Any interpretation worth its salt will have taken this into account from the outset.

7. I always found learning through stealth and enjoyment is much more effective than political lecturing and hectoring. In a confused and fragmented world, it will be helpful for visitors to enter a safe, protected and a tranquil space. And if there is no obvious learning outcome for some of our visitors: so be it, as long as they had a good time!

None of the above has anything to do with (political) indifference. We may have strongly held views on many topics, but how do we know if they are representative of any meaningful segment of the population rather than a vocal minority; or any more than a reaction to temporary issues?

Is it really in our right, role or responsibility to force discussions, and foist our views onto visitors who might come to our sites for other reasons than political, social or cultural education? To spell it out: in my definition of my role as an interpreter I do not see myself as an activist or a propagandist, rather as a referee or mediator; and reading Tilden I am sure this aligns more closely with what he had in mind for that special moment of revelation that should be the outcome for each visitor.

Also, in all of this, where is the sense of awe at a beautiful image, if we only look at its political background?; where the respect for the craftsmanship if we only think in ethical dimensions? History, culture and heritage are multi-dimensional. For me, we are losing the simple joy: the sense of amazement, of

curiosity, of exploration and, speaking as a true German: humour. History and culture should be exciting and fun. The danger is that we are now on the way to creating very didactic, negative and joyless experiences. In German we have a word for this: 'moralinsauer'

This moralising view is reductionist, the experience becomes one-dimensional, boring for many visitors and, in the worst case, annoying. Equally, the focus on guilt, shame and bad conscience is hardly a solid basis for our actions: we should be doing the right thing for the right reason not in order to avoid doing the wrong thing – or what is perceived, interpreted or suggested as such.

The latest reactions to the UK National Trust's initiative show just that, the reverberations of a hastily incorporated and clumsily coordinated campaign for the sake of wokeness, has needlessly upset core (and paying) target audiences; rather than involving them and taking them on a shared journey.

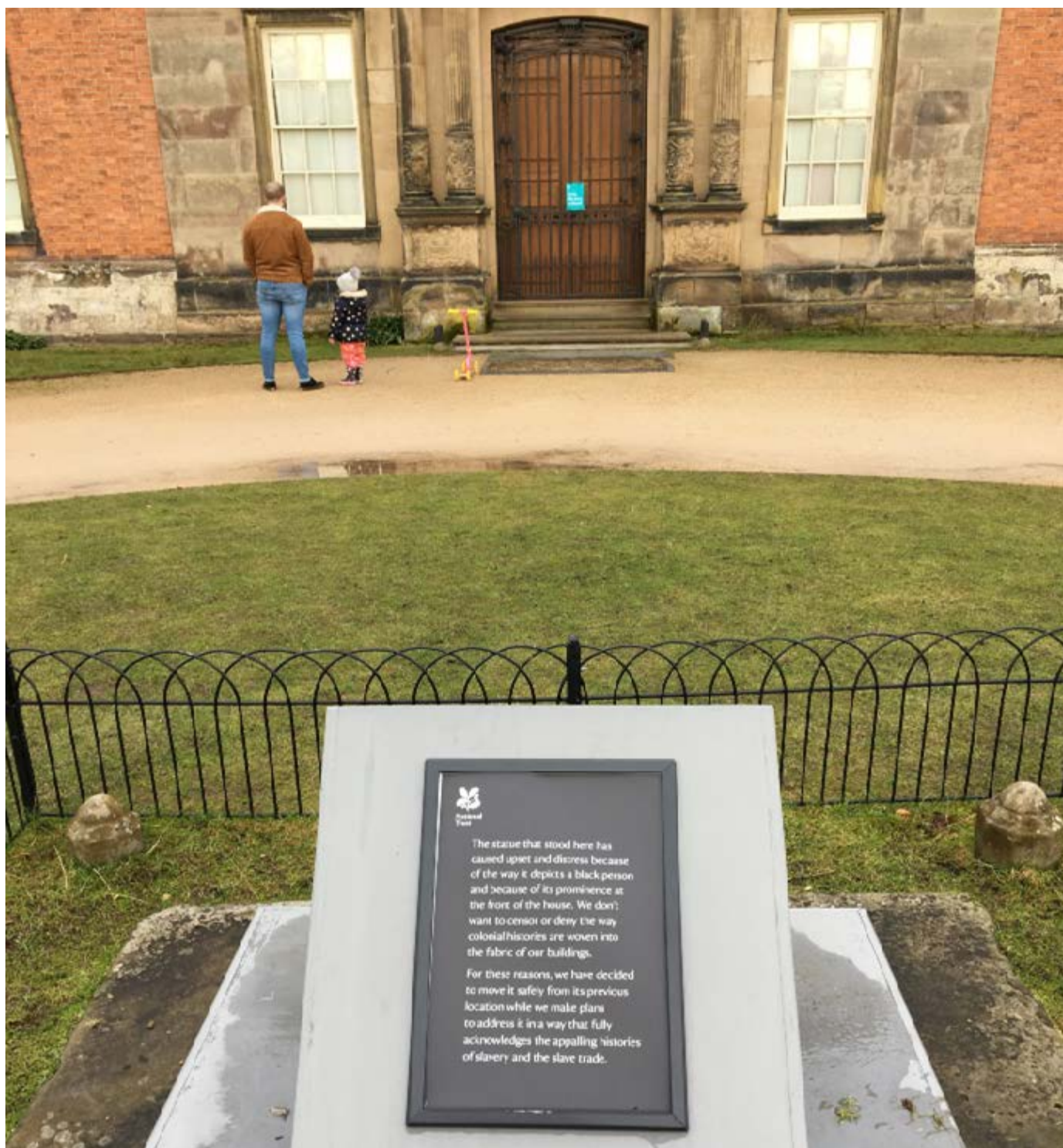
Not all of us in the sector have the luxury to work politically or otherwise independent, but are under commercial remits and pressures. So, what then about our involvement in projects in the Middle East, in Central Asia, Russia, Africa? Attractive, lucrative, high-profile. But how do projects like these fit with our exacting standards on human rights, on equality, on democracy, on race, modern-day slavery, ecology and environment, ableism, ageism etc – which we're at the same time happily and freely discussing at home. Brutally speaking, we have to question ourselves: how honest are we, when the standards that we are demanding from within the comfort and protection of our own four walls, within our own safe political systems, are not applied in quite the same way elsewhere, everywhere in the world? Doris Lessing touched on this in an interview in the Guardian in 2001, and I summarise that it is quite easy to be ethical when the circumstances are right and where it doesn't hurt.

In conclusion, **this is an appeal for museums, historic sites, country houses etc as safe spaces.** They are, should remain, or even become, the best places to glance at human history, to wonder about human conflict, its stupidity, and the pointlessness of human strife. A place where we can mourn, marvel, consider and reflect. Accept that history is not fair. Where we can therefore, if we want, learn from it to help resolve today's issues or at least see them from a different angle. And positively speaking to give us an opportunity to appreciate the light that culture can shine on the futility of human life.

What remains essential, in my view, to achieve this, is that we provide a calm and safe environment for all of our visitors, away from the fragmentation, disruption and politicisation that surrounds us. Our sites might be the only ones that are left for them.

The topic of this article will form the focus of June's Thematic table. Why not join us online to share your own thoughts and experiences? Details can be found later in the newsletter.

Dirk Bennett, originally from Germany, has been in the UK since 1994. He holds an MA in history and archaeology and has worked in the cultural sector for private and public bodies. His projects have included the SS Great Britain, Battle Abbey and Dover Castle. Dirk is currently responsible for the City of London Corporation for the interpretation planning and delivery at Tower Bridge and The Monument. He writes extensively for publications in the UK and Germany as a freelance author and cultural correspondent. Dirk can be contacted at: dirk.bennett@cityoflondon.gov.uk.



This sign replaces a statue that depicted a black person in front of Dunham Masey National Trust property, UK, because it "caused upset" (Image: John Clarke)

Strategic review and planning: A five-year cycle

IE News Team

IE's Strategic Plan 2016-2020 just ended. A review of the achievements in that period is being used to help plan our next five years.

IE's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 is currently being developed by the Supervisory Committee and Management with support from the managing coordinators and input from members at certain stages. Maybe you took part in the SWOT analysis session to help assess the organisation's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats? These results are feeding into the planning process and we thought it would be good to share a summary of the 2016-2020 review report.

Review of activities

From 2016 to 2020, IE grew its membership to five times its size. In 2015, most members knew each other as heritage interpretation specialists, and although conferences were small, the share of those members who met there every year in person was significant. The work was mainly done by the directors backed by the Supervisory Committee.

By the end of 2020, 117 members were actively engaged in 29 IE teams, and there are many more ways to contribute and to benefit from IE than joining a conference. Most new members now join for participating in an IE training course.

IE has grown much bigger and has many more active members, but on the other hand the average commitment and connectedness of all members are lower than five years before. IE changed much more during the period 2016-2020 than during the period 2011-2015.

IE's 2016-2020 strategy had been based on an analysis of two internal and two external areas. On the internal side, its previous achievements and membership development, on the external side its surrounding stakeholders and general trends in Europe were analysed. The latter was examined through a STEP analysis, reviewing social, technological, economic and political developments.



Coordinators' meeting in Bratislava, 2018
(Image: Iva Klarić Vujović)

Findings suggested that search for purpose was the most critical trend to which IE should refer by addressing all those who intend to give natural and cultural heritage deeper meaning. As a result, IE opened more to the wider public while in 2011-2015 it had mainly been focused on fostering the community of professing heritage interpreters and debating shared standards.

Another focus resulting from the STEP analysis was search for authenticity. While people receive more and more information through screens and entertaining stories became almost mainstream, first-hand experience was defined as a unique selling point and a characteristic way to make heritage more meaningful to people and people more mindful towards their role in shaping our shared future.

Further developing those thoughts in exchange with members and other stakeholders emphasised the conclusion that the future interpreter should more be seen as facilitator encouraging and supporting people to interpret responsibly on their own, and to get into an exchange about their varying points of view. This was different from looking at interpretation more as mission-based one-way communication, revealing what was meant to be inherent in 'the resource', as it had been mainstream in the interpretive community during previous years.

Since 2016, IE used its training programme to introduce, discuss and test the qualities of its modified paradigm, as it now used its annual conferences to invite leaders from other European stakeholder organisations as keynote speakers to foster strategic alliances. IE joined the European Heritage Alliance and triggered debates about the idea of empowering people to interpret heritage in order to reflect upon human values and future

perspectives. All of this received more perception and political relevance during IE's 2016 conference, 'Heritage interpretation for the future of Europe', and against the background of debates around populism, mainly triggered by the Brexit and Trump campaigns.

The development continued in 2017 in preparation for the European Year for Cultural Heritage. IE's initiative, 'Engaging citizens with Europe's cultural heritage', resulted from workshops for the European Commission and the Council of Europe. The report was awarded the Altiero Spinelli Prize by the EU, which significantly fostered IE's reputation at European level.

In 2018, during the European Year of Cultural Heritage, IE benchmarked in the heritage and interpretation communities, joined more than 30 international meetings, was an active member of the European Commission's Stakeholder Committee (and later of the permanent Expert Group on Cultural Heritage) and won the EU Commissioner for Education and Culture to open its conference.

Since 2019, UNESCO's Regional Bureau for Europe showed interest in what it called 'value-based heritage interpretation', including subjects such as community involvement and sustainable thinking, and UNESCO's quality criteria for learning became part of IE's training programme.

Especially during the years 2016 to 2019, IE made some progress regarding its 2030 vision that, "heritage interpretation will be established as the generally-accepted and professional approach to creating public understanding and appreciation of natural and cultural heritage throughout Europe".

At a global level, IE joined the Global Alliance for Heritage Interpretation and the Climate Heritage Network but it also became clear that IE's perception as a benchmarking organisation was not in accordance with its actual capabilities and capacities. IE was still not able to pay its Management.

From 2016 to 2020, considerable progress was made regarding IE's purpose "to enhance heritage interpretation as part of public education" and to "conduct educational and training activities" (Constitution, §2). In 2015, it was decided that increasing IE's membership numbers was critical to secure a constant and independent long-term income from membership fees, and IE's own training programme became one key lever to achieve this.

From 2016 to 2020, 41 IE trainers were certified and encouraged to develop the programme. They ran 124 training courses in 22 countries with more than 1,200 participants. 74% of IE's new members joined through IE training events, and by the end of 2020, more than 60% of IE's membership had been certified after participating in at least one 40-hour training course. Through 70 in-person introductory events, trainers actively promoted IE and since 2018, they also ran most of the webinars of that newly launched programme (from September 2019 on a monthly basis).



IE Certified Interpretive Trainer (CIT) upgrade course, Admont (Image: Helena Vičič)

To encourage members to take responsibility for specific tasks, IE established 29 volunteer teams from 2016, run by coordinators from 22 countries acting on behalf of the Management. By the end of 2020, five managing coordinators, seven subject coordinators and 17 country coordinators formed the backbone of the association, delivering on specific objectives and keeping members engaged and active. By the end of 2020, about 10% of IE's members were engaged in teams.

For more comprehensive information provision to all members, the quarterly newsletter was significantly extended. The average issue grew from 12 pages in 2011-2015 to 35 pages in 2016-2020, and since 2016 it has also been offered as an electronic version. Additional newsmails were introduced for short-term information, regular surveys were launched, and IE became active on several social media channels, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and Wikipedia.

Besides 'Engaging citizens with Europe's cultural heritage', IE launched two more initiatives: the regional initiative 'Fostering communities through heritage interpretation' in the Western Balkan region and the subject-related initiative 'Recreating tourism

through heritage interpretation' that will unfold as our focus after the coronavirus crisis and become the subject of our iecon21 conference in October. As an associated partner, IE was also involved in the EU projects HIMIS and DELPHI.

Challenges

There have also been some challenges during this period, not least the impact last year of the global pandemic, and according to the key strategic goals planned for 2016-2020, IE was not able to:

1. gain external funding due to missing high-level connections (politics, economy, media, law)
2. set up more reliable teams around coordinators who proactively care for their replacement
3. install a sophisticated database that allows to manage the membership more efficiently
4. keep more members and gain new institutional and business members as key contributors
5. establish an Office that is engaged and qualified enough to take on tasks independently

IE achieved a lot but there is still a lot to do to fulfil that vision of a vibrant network we all appreciate. This also depends on you, the members. From taking responsibility as a coordinator or joining a team, through running a webinar or writing a newsletter article to posting in our Facebook group or just getting in touch with a member you haven't seen for a while. There are so many opportunities to be active, and each is one more reason for looking forward to the next future of IE. We hope that you have been inspired as a member to take part in the strategic planning process when asked by the Supervisory Committee – it is, after all, YOUR membership organisation. We are looking forward to the next five years of IE and what we can all achieve together.



New-look IE website

We have spent time this year updating the IE website with a fresh new look to make it clearer what we do and to make it easier to find the information you need.

In time, there will also be a secure members' area to access recordings of webinars and other features for members only.

Take a while to browse around as we continue to add more content to it:

www.interpret-europe.net.

Many thanks to Adi Kasumović, Janja Sivec and all involved in this huge task.



IE Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course in Peru (left)
(Image: Evarist March Sarlat)

Thematic tables: Live(ly) exchange about creating connections

Janja Sivec (Slovenia) &
Dubravko 'Max' Fijačko (Croatia)

IE's new event on the first Wednesday of the month encourages members to meet online for live(ly) exchange around a different topic each time.

All IE members are invited to join us on Zoom (registration needed) or you can follow the livestream of the event in the IE members' group on Facebook, where it will also be live for one week after the event each time.

Around thematic tables we will discuss how heritage can become more meaningful for people, and how people can become more mindful through heritage. We will exchange ideas and also practical tips on different areas of heritage interpretation, e.g. geological or gastronomic, and we will talk about subjects such as the role of architecture in interpretation and how interpretation can help to recreate tourism in a more sustainable way.

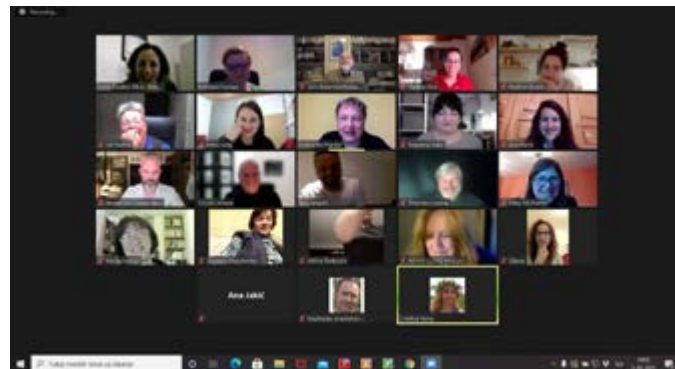
Our first thematic table took place on 3 March on the topic: **Food makes everything better! – Reinforcing the experience with local gastronomy.** It was hosted by our Gastronomic Heritage Coordinator, Dubravko 'Max' Fijačko, and his team.

For starters Max offered some food for thought:

- What is important when interpreting gastronomic heritage?
- We need food to survive, but still there are so many stories related to food.
- Do you involve gastronomic heritage in your interpretation?

The thematic table was a real banquet of exchanging ideas, good practices and ways we can include food in any tour. Participants were split into small groups to discuss the inclusion of food in interpretation through the perspectives of the five senses and give a broader perspective on food. In fact, we had six groups and in the extra one we dealt with combinations of senses that can give us a whole new perspective on the world around us. We tried to focus on the method of preparation, but also on the places where food is made, where it is sold, and where it is consumed. Of course, all this gives additional possibilities of interpretation because we tried to 'feed' all the senses with additional sounds, smells, colours, shapes, etc. as much as possible.

The Gastronomic Heritage Team will now work over the next few weeks on a document that will share all these interesting experiences gained in group conversations. We believe that this will provide motivation for many who do not have direct contact with food in their interpretations to perhaps evoke a culture, tradition or custom through food.



IE's first online Thematic table (top)
Making memories and connections through corn
(Images: Janja Sivec)

We hope you will join us and share your views, experiences and thoughts in the next thematic tables coming up. Save an hour or so in your diary on the first Wednesday of the month at 17.00 (CET).

7 April – The interpretive brief; Architects Team led by Angus Forbes, Architects Coordinator

5 May – Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation; Tourism Team led by Nuria Mohedano, Events Coordinator

2 June – Safe spaces or ...? The role of cultural interpreters as advocates for audiences vs political activism; Dirk Bennett

Janja Sivec is IE's Social Media Coordinator and is an IE Certified Interpretive Trainer. She can be contacted at: janja.sivec@interpret-europe.net.

Dubravko 'Max' Fijačko is IE's Gastronomic Heritage Coordinator and is an IE Certified Interpretive Trainer. He can be contacted at: dubravko.fijacko@interpret-europe.net.

CIW – A calling

Pavel Hristov, Rayka Ivanova & Tonya Todorova (Bulgaria)

We are lucky to love our jobs. To present and promote our natural and cultural heritage is a great responsibility and a challenge.

We all had the opportunity to take part in an IE Certified Interpretive Writer (CIW) course in January and wanted to share our experiences and what it means for our jobs.

Pavel:

Before the start of the course, I didn't even know what the term interpretive writing stood for, or how to present information better. Thanks to our experienced trainer, however, by the last day of the course I had a clear idea of how to deliver information to the general public in an attractive and engaging way. Actually, only a week after the CIW course, I already had a chance to use my new knowledge and skills in the preparation of posters for a temporary archaeological exhibition. I believe it went rather well!

Rayka:

The way of organising and handling the course turned out to be very effective and useful for our museum; it gave us the chance to involve a larger number of museum specialists. The topics included in the CIW course presented the important tools and rules which are used to interpret scientific information in an accessible and impressive way. Our trainer, Simana Markovska, prepared appropriate practical tasks and examples in Bulgarian for us, in order to 'visualise' and reinforce the theoretical part. The knowledge and skills that we acquired during the training are very important to us as museum workers in order to attract more visitors by applying the interpretive tools when presenting the cultural and natural heritage of the region. The biggest challenge was to realise that it is more important for the visitors to leave the museum remembering three interesting and meaningful things than loaded with scientific data and unnecessary details of which they would recall, at best, only the headline.

Tonya:

We must be convincing in our strive to show how precious our heritage is and how important it is to cherish and protect it. But, as we learned from the CIW course, this can be done in a more delicate way, with a smile and other tactical methods of the interpreter.

We don't have to impose our opinions and views; there is a very appropriate Bulgarian saying here: "Beauty doesn't come by force". And, when we come to think of it, it is exactly so. We don't have to burden the public with unnecessary facts; we must make an influence through emotions; turn a visit into an experience which is worth remembering. To help the visitors find for themselves the conclusions we have already made for ourselves. We are able to realise all of this because of the training. The commitment and the good examples provoked us to look 'from the other side' and step into the shoes of our public.

The three authors all work for the Regional Historical Museum of Blagoevgrad. Pavel Hristov is a curator in the Archaeology Department and is one of the newest members of the museum team. Rayka Ivanova is the chief curator in the Nature Department and Tonya Todorova is also a curator in the Nature Department. Rayka and Tonya have worked at the museum for many years.



CIW course: Interpreting phenomena (top)
Team work (Images: Simana Markovska)

Optimism is a strategy for making a better future

Dubravko 'Max' Fijačko & Sabina Fučić (Croatia)

Spreading optimism and enthusiasm to guides during a difficult year is easier with a Tourist Board that prioritises human resources.

"Optimism is a strategy for making a better future." This interesting quote by Noam Chomsky shows exactly what happened in Zagreb in February, at the first CIG course in the Croatian capital. In fact, this optimism was really sparked four months earlier when the Zagreb Tourist Board recognised the importance of education for local interpretive guides, but even more this important dose of optimism (and enthusiasm) that joint workshops and exercises over five days would bring them.

That's exactly what happened. Fifteen individuals – some of the best tourist guides of the city of Zagreb – in one place, with one goal: to raise awareness of their own knowledge and adopt the tools of interpretation in order to even better present the rich cultural heritage of the Croatian capital. Perhaps they were not aware at the start, that those five days would mean so much to them, especially after this crisis situation that has befallen tourism in the last year. They adopted the techniques of interpretation and ideas as presented by Interpret Europe, but even more they were left with a sense of togetherness and a message of optimism.

Once again, the IE CIG course proved to be greater than the technique and method itself. It revealed to the participants their love for the heritage they share together, of course revealing the deeper meaning of their work as guides and, in fact, connecting them in a special way with the heritage phenomena at that common point. A point that unites us even in a bad situation, but also one that unites us even more in our optimistic views of the world. Noam Chomsky added to the quote above: "... Because if you do not believe that the future can be better, it is unlikely that you will step up and take responsibility for it." Just like that, the guides took this step that leads them to a more optimistic future. But that sparkle, that initial idea of the Zagreb Tourist Board to offer them a path to that optimism, proved to be extremely prophetic, somehow in the same way as we as facilitators open paths to deeper meaning.

Listening to the song of the American rock band, Timbuk 3: 'The Future's So Bright (I Gotta Wear Shades)', I thought this is exactly how, as tour guides, we want to look optimistically at the world around us! And for the tourist season ahead of us!



Our group with lots of optimism
(Image: Dubravko Fijačko)

And so it was great to hear from one of the course participants, Sabina, and how optimistic she is now feeling after experiencing an IE ray of light in the gloom of the pandemic.

After the year-long agony, during which we have mostly been stuck at home, deprived of our main source of income and worried about the future of our profession, seeing the call for the Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) training course at first felt slightly unreal.

However, the training was so thoughtfully planned and presented to us, that it soon became apparent that we would be given a chance to leave all our worries behind, at least for a few days, in order to fully immerse ourselves in exploring the new perspectives to both our inner worlds, and our seemingly well-known surroundings.

Thanks to our trainer, Max, and the generous support of the Zagreb Tourist Board, we were given a chance to gather together for five days and acquire new skills and knowledge, which would allow us to turn any heritage phenomenon into an experience and, furthermore, develop, deliver and evaluate interpretive talks and walks.

There were 16 of us – one trainer and 15 participants; 13 licensed tourist guides and three members of the Zagreb Tourist Board staff – who came together as strangers and acquaintances, only to finish the training as friends, unified as new members of the Interpret Europe community.

Our training venue was the Museum of Broken Relationships, located in the very heart of the Upper Town – one of the oldest historical parts of the Croatian capital. In addition to that, we had a privilege to test, explore and implement our newly learned skills at yet another fascinating facility – the Museum of Chocolate.

During the course, we were very diligent about maintaining a safe distance between ourselves, and wearing masks while indoors, which by no means hindered our ability to communicate. Since we were fortunate enough to enjoy some wonderful, sunny weather for those five days, we were able to carry out most of the practical activities outdoors – in our little oasis of creativity, surrounded by the tranquility and greenery of the old town.

Experiencing the whole process of development and delivery of our interpretive talks during these demanding times served a purpose that surpassed the standard goals of the CIG training course: it stood as a powerful reminder that these difficult times indeed will pass, that there is still so much to give, explore and live, no matter how much our lives have recently changed. For this reason, our group bonded in an unusually strong way, which led to planning new meetings, discussions, tours, and various other plans for the future. After being isolated from the 'normal' world for such a long time and additionally terrified by the earthquakes that rocked our capital in 2020, having the opportunity to connect with both our cultural and natural heritage, and also with each other in person, turned out to be a priceless gift that we will cherish in our hearts forever.

Dubravko 'Max' Fijačko is an IE Certified Interpretive Trainer and is the IE Gastronomic Heritage Coordinator. You can get in touch with him at: dubravko.fijacko@gmail.com.

Sabina Fučić is a licensed tourist guide and a Polish-Turkish-Croatian conference interpreter, translator and copywriter. She lives in Zagreb, Croatia and can be contacted at: s.fucic@gmail.com.



How do we write, with pencil or the heart? (top)
Sabina by the old telephone box
(Images: Dubravko Fijačko)

Congratulations to our newly certified members

Certified Interpretive Guides (CIG)

Lea Altarac, Croatia
Maja Benzon, Croatia
Nataša Birčić, Croatia
Linn Björk, Sweden
Natasa Bulić, Croatia
Filip Chalupka, Czech Republic
Dora Čukušić, Croatia
Roman Friedrich, Czech Republic
Gorana Galić, Croatia
Klaudija Gamulin, Croatia
Dejan Gluvačević, Croatia
Ivana Gospodetic, Croatia
Martin Hlaváč, Czech Republic
Nada Holz, Slovenia
Nikola Indrová, Czech Republic
Emilia Janeczko, Poland
Zuzana Kaliská, Slovakia
Marie Karbusická, Czech Republic
Luka Kazimović, Croatia
Heda Kotrbáčková, Czech Republic
Alenka Krivić Ramic, Croatia
Hrvoje Krivošić, Croatia
Eva Kyšová, Czech Republic
Petr Locker, Czech Republic
Vanja Lovric, Croatia
Zdenka Majcan, Croatia
Vedrana Memiš, Croatia
Jasminka Mihoci, Croatia
Eva Neprašová, Czech Republic
Matija Nežić, Croatia
Ina Nikolić, Croatia
Perica Novosel, Croatia
Kristina Pandža, Croatia
Dorotea Pečarić, Croatia
Jana Pnioková, Czech Republic
Anđela Pranjić, Croatia
Sanja Rašković, Croatia
Agata Ravlić, Croatia
Jiri Roubinek, Czech Republic
Daniela Ruçi, Albania
Branimir Šajatović, Croatia
Wojciech Sanek, Poland
Jana Slezáková, Czech Republic
Dušan Štepec, Slovenia
Andrea Stojaković, Croatia
Mirjana Svagusa, Croatia
Mirela Tase, Albania
Nila Tudor, Croatia
Senka Vlahović, Croatia
Małgorzata Woźnicka, Poland
Ledio Xhoxhi, Albania

Certified Interpretive Writers (CIW)

Jana Jeglič, Slovenia
Jana Kárová, Czech Republic
Vlasta Kramperšek Šuc, Slovenia

Certified Interpretive Trainers (CIT)

Iva Čaleta Pleša, Croatia
Ivana Jagić Boljat, Croatia

Five years of IE training

In March, we marked the fifth anniversary of Valya Stergioti taking the role of IE Training Coordinator and starting the IE training programme. Since then, 37 Certified Interpretive Trainers have been trained and have delivered 124 training courses in 22 countries with more than 1,200 participants in total. Congratulations to the Training Team!



Valya Stergioti looks at the qualities of an IE trainer
(Image: Thorsten Ludwig)

Upcoming courses and webinars

Would you enjoy an enriching course with like-minded people and to gain an IE certification?

See below and keep an eye on the training pages of the IE website for up to date information on the next courses available near you:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/events/ie-training-courses.html>

or email training@interpret-europe.net.

**** Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, some courses had to be cancelled. They may get rescheduled. Keep an eye on the website for the latest information. ****

Date	Language	Location	Trainer
Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG)			
15-17/04/2021 04-05/06/2021	German	Usedom, Germany	Thorsten Ludwig
17-18/04/2021 24-25/04/2021 01/05/2021	Croatian	Dalmacia Biograd na Moru, Croatia	Ivana Zrilić
26-28/04/2021 08-09/06/2021	German	Bad Elster, Germany	Thorsten Ludwig
10-12/09/2021 23-24/10/2021	German	Freiburg, Germany	Thorsten Ludwig
Certified Interpretive Writer (CIW)			
08-09/03/2021* 12,16,23/03/2021	Hungarian	Magyarország, Hungary	Ivana Zrilić
16-18/04/2021 24-25/04/2021	Slovenian	Celje, Slovenia	Janja Sivec

*Due to COVID-19 restrictions this course had to be postponed. New dates will be announced as soon as possible

Upcoming IE webinars

31/03/2021: Mindful interpretation. Presented by Thorsten Ludwig (Germany).

22/04/2021: Interpretation for children – Exploring Cornell's approach to sharing nature in relation to IE quality standards. Presented by Janja Sivec and Urša Vilhar (Slovenia)

20/05/2021: Seeking the universal in the "outstanding universal value" at World Heritage Sites. Presented by Zsuzsa Tolnay (Hungary)

18/06/2021: Covid-19: Cultural heritage as a savior of the soul. Presented by Susanne Hauer (Germany)

08/07/2021: Novi Vinodolski Round Dance as an important guardian of heritage. Presented by Ivana Karanikić (Croatia)

IE webinars are free for members and are conducted in English.

Keep an eye on the website for further details of upcoming webinars and how to register:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/events/ie-webinars/>

Email webinar@interpret-europe.net for more information.

Interpreting a castle during closures

Laila De Bruyne, Barbara Struys & Helena ten Berge (Belgium)

The newly formed Team Belgium shares their love for the Castle of Horst and how interpretation of its heritage has changed and adapted.

Hello fellow members of Interpret Europe, we are Team Belgium – three heritage professionals who crossed paths at the beautiful 17th century Castle of Horst. Located in the centre of Belgium (near the city of Leuven), this noble residence or summer palace with a 15th century Donjon, is surrounded by a protected cultural landscape. We share a love for this place. Not only because the stunning medieval and renaissance wall-paintings and baroque stucco-ceilings excite our imagination, but also because we share common stories at the castle and its beautiful nature. And that's what it's all about, isn't it?

Let's set up a team, we thought. Let's excite other people to make connections with heritage. Because we strongly believe in the importance of heritage for society. A society where strong and warm communities are built on mutual connections with heritage places and respect for each other's meaning-making. We believe heritage interpretation is the tool to make this happen. So, here we are, Team Belgium was born.

Besides making a start with a stronger network for interpretation professionals in Belgium, we also want to introduce ourselves to the Interpret Europe network. So as a conversation starter, please find below a short story of how our beloved Castle of Horst and its community found a way to interact with its visitors during its closure – because of restoration in 2017 and during the current pandemic.

The Castle of Horst – Interpretation during its closure and the coronavirus pandemic

Since the building fever by widow Maria-Anna Van den Tympel in the mid-17th century, the castle hasn't been altered much. Because of that, the Castle of Horst is today a very authentic, almost magical castle, managed by Herita vzw – The Flemish National Trust. Unfortunately, the castle was closed to the public in 2017 due to safety reasons, awaiting a much needed and thorough restoration campaign. Nevertheless, the heritage site is still a very popular recreational location, for locals but also visitors from all over Belgium and Europe. The 17th century coach

house on site accommodates a restaurant and the visitor centre with heritage shop. The visitor centre was turned into an information-point during the first summer after closing.

The central questions were: How to stay connected with the local heritage community and visitors with a long restoration campaign ahead? How to give meaning to this historical place when people are not allowed to go inside or even visit the courtyard? And how to prevent losing the work that had been done since 2014, such as an interpretive family tour and the popular programmes for schools?

This is where a group of volunteers called the Horst Society stepped in. As long-term committed volunteers and guides, they felt the need to organise a bottom up incentive – also because the site had no professional staff. The Horst Society focuses on two things: keeping the heritage shop open, offering a wide range of local speciality products, and organising activities and small events in which the castle and its heritage value form the core content. Herita vzw realised only during the time after closing how important the continuity on site was for both the local community and reputation of the site. A renewed collaboration was born.



Castle of Horst in the snow (Image: Helena ten Berge)

Initially, activities such as alternative guided tours around the castle (focusing on the cultural heritage or nature), workshops for children and historical dancing workshops filled the gap. The volunteers and guides, dressed-up as historical figures, attracted a lot of attention on site. They became the point of contact for questions about the planned restoration works. They approach the visitors to give explanation or sometimes even offer live interpretation.

The challenge lay in continuously creating an experience when people are not allowed to go inside or even visit the courtyard. In September 2019, Herita and the Horst Society organised a special edition of Open Monuments Day, bringing the interior of the castle to the outside, by printing the famous stucco ceiling on a large canvas. They created a 17th century banquet hall feast, with the extra effect that this stucco ceiling could be touched and looked at from a close distance by the audience. The volunteers of the Horst Society received the visitors dressed as historical figures, which drew the attention of many visitors who often just come to relax in the beautiful atmosphere.

Of course, Covid-19 has changed a lot, but maybe not in the way you would expect. Since the start of the corona crisis in March 2020, the site became a Flemish Top 10 site of most popular hiking spots. Suddenly the big disadvantage of a closed castle became an asset, hence the previous experience of bringing heritage interpretation outside the castle came in handy. An autonomous and covid-proof family trail with interpretive assignments was set up to encourage families to connect with each other, the exterior heritage elements of the site and the stories of the castle. We benefitted from the new need for covid-proof outdoor activities and were very pleased to receive hundreds of families during the summer. The success of the family trail gained a renewed energy for the volunteers, who had been improvising for many years. In 2021, three family outdoor trails will be organised in a way that families are stimulated to come back to the site and discover new aspects of the richness of the heritage that Horst offers.

In 2020, the long anticipated restoration campaign of the castle finally started. During the years to come, Herita vzw, together with the committed volunteers, will invest in thorough communication and interpretation of the (mostly very technical) restoration works to the public. Through yard visits, blog-articles and on-site restoration-ateliers, they will aim to create more insight and initiate more community-wide support. During this period of restoration, the Horst Society will keep on telling the stories of this place and its inhabitants. Today, Horst is more than a 'closed castle' but a dynamic heritage site.

Laila De Bruyne is the former knowledge sharing coordinator at Herita. She is currently freelancing in cultural and heritage community building projects and is IE's Country Coordinator Belgium. Get in touch with her at: laila.debruyne@interpret-europe.net.

Barbara Struys worked for Herita as site manager of the Castle of Horst and audience development coordinator between 2014 and 2017. She is an active member of the Horst Society. Currently she works as a knowledge sharing coordinator for cultural education for publiq vzw. Barbara also offers support to heritage organisations as a freelancer in heritage interpretation for families and coaching of groups of guides. She can be contacted at: barbara@gidsenhumus.be.

Helena ten Berge holds an MsC in Conservation of Monuments and Sites and currently works at Herita, helping to rebuild the local heritage community by actively interpreting the planned and ongoing restoration works to the public. She is the coördinator of the crowdfunding project for the Castle of Horst. Get in touch with her at: helena.tenberge@herita.be.



Stucco ceiling interpretation during castle closure
(Image: Helena ten Berge)

Badenoch Heritage: Bringing the past to the 21st century

Jacquie MacIntyre (UK)

A tourism-based project with interpretation at its core. Three years of research, training, HI planning and resource creation reaps rich rewards.

The Badenoch Great Place Project (BGPP) is a partnership made up of key local organisations involved in heritage across an area in the Cairngorms National Park called Badenoch. The project was granted £352,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with additional funding from Cairngorms National Park Authority, Transport Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and The Highland Council. Since starting in 2018, the BGPP has been researching Badenoch's rich cultural heritage and the potential that exists to develop the area as a visitor destination in the Cairngorms National Park. A study into the wealth of historic sites and folklore in the area and a community consultation process to develop interpretive themes have led to the development of a new destination brand, 'Badenoch: The Storylands'.

Over the three-year life of the project, it has also created new volunteering and training opportunities, undertaken new research into the area's past and historic landscape, and commissioned marketing studies and the development of new promotional and exhibition materials. The project has also commissioned a photographer and illustrator to provide high-quality imagery for use in various media. It is currently working in partnership with Highlife Highland to utilise an existing digital archive called Ambaile.

It is hoped that a combination of these activities will help to promote Badenoch as a strong destination for heritage tourism in Scotland. The project will end in September 2021, but it is envisaged that a local organisation called Badenoch Heritage will continue to promote the area to visitors by marketing and holding an annual cultural heritage festival in the area.

Further info:

Badenoch

The historic area of Badenoch (from the Gaelic, Bàideanach, meaning 'drowned land') dates from medieval times. It now forms part of the Badenoch & Strathspey area of the Cairngorms National Park and The Highland Council. The area covers 36 miles from north to south and 15 miles from east to west and has a population of around 3,800. The ancient capital is the village of Kingussie (population: 1,400), and there are also important long-standing settlements at Newtonmore, Kincaig, Dalwhinnie, and Laggan.

Cairngorms National Park

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/discover-explore/>

Badenoch Storylands

<https://badenochstorylands.com/>

AmBaile

High Life Highland (www.ambaile.org.uk)

Jacquie MacIntyre lives in a village in the Highlands of Scotland. She has been a cartographer, graphic designer, interpretation officer, and visitor services officer. She is about to leave working for the Cairngorms National Park to embark on a new challenge as a self-employed interpretation consultant specialising in community heritage projects. Jacquie is IE's Media Library Officer and she can be contacted at: jacquie.macintyre@interpret-europe.net.



Ruthven Barracks (Image: James Stevens) (right, top)
Raitts Township (Image: Bob Marshall) (right, bottom)

How do we nurture memory in museums?

Jesenska Ricl (Croatia)

Family legacies evoke memories or the feelings we had on a child's birthday, on a unique family holiday, or at the moment of losing a loved one.

Sometimes I forget the groceries from the shopping list, sometimes I forget an appointment at the hairdresser, but imagine forgetting my mother's name, the location of a favorite patisserie I went to with my father as a child, or not recognising my sister at a family reunion. Have you ever wondered who a man or a woman without memory is? Loss of memory eats away at a person... tears apart our identity piece by piece, and makes us unhappy, scared and lonely. What can we do for people with dementia, and how can we support carers in their desire to make the care and nursing of the elderly more comfortable? Research suggests that a healthy lifestyle, including a healthy diet, regular exercise and cognitive stimulation, can reduce the risk of cognitive decline and dementia. One of the therapies in cognitive stimulation is reminiscence, in which people remember events from the past with the help of music or personal items such as photographs.

Museums are heritage institutions that preserve, value and promote heritage objects. These objects testify to socio-cultural or historical-economic changes, and to the life of an individual family, the mastery of craftsmen or artists' work. Museum exhibitions or individual items can stimulate visitors to reminisce. How many times have I had the opportunity to see a wide smile or a tear of joy on the faces of our visitors?

"My mother had the same tea set like this! She used it on special occasions. As a child, I secretly took sugar cubes from the same ceramic pot! My mother was very angry that I didn't leave anything for the guests." – through laughter, the older lady recounts her childhood adventures.



"I remember the factory from this photo. My uncle worked in it. They produced the most delicious chocolate and candies. He would often come to our home for Sunday lunch. We knew what was waiting for us for dessert!" – commented the gentleman, looking at the black and white photo of the workers in front of the factory hall.

The feelings that arise from visiting museum exhibitions do not leave anyone indifferent. Isn't that a sufficient reason for museum staff to get involved in the memory loss prevention programme in cooperation with caregivers for the elderly?

Interpretation of museum objects — photographs, personal objects, paintings and sculptures, household aids, or children's toys — can nurture memories of personal stories. Heritage institutions, museums and archives, can truly be treasures of memory. Interpretation can awaken a memory, memory evokes feelings, and because of feelings we feel alive. Follow more about the memory in the Box of Our Memories project here: <https://boxofourmemories.eu/>.

Jesenska Ricl has a master's degree in art, with many years of experience in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. She is currently employed at the Museum of Slavonia as a museum pedagogue and is collaborating on the international project, 'Box of Our Memories', funded by the Erasmus+ programme. Jesenska is an IE Certified Interpretive Guide. She can be contacted at: jesenska.ricl@mso.hr.

Tea set (left)
(Image: Museum of Slavonia)

International Day of Tourist Guides celebrated in Slovenia

Dominika Koritnik Trepel (Slovenia)

The International Day of Tourist Guides commemorates the founding of the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations on 21 February 1990.

This year, the way we tourist-guides run the celebration of our special day has completely changed. Covid-19 has forced us into a virtual version of our presentation. For a better presentation, we in the Slovenian Professional Guides Association ('Klub Profesionalnih Turistčnih Yodnikov Slovenije' in Slovene, or KPTVS for short) connected with colleagues from the Association of Tourist Guides of Slovenia and prepared a diverse set of broadcasts of events from all over the country. We discussed our common aims and came up with a name and theme for this year's event: Interpreting Slovenia!

As part of this, KPTVS wanted to develop a new city tour to mark the occasion. A group of people linked with the api-tourism story got together to produce this. The api-tourism story uses the wandering of bees as an interpretive theme. In the end we decided on a combined virtual and live tour (following all Covid-19 health measures). We were all very excited about the première of this new city tour.

Using existing best practice, we transferred the principle of the Bee Trail from Ljubljana and adapted it for the city of Maribor. Ljubljana's Bee Trail was one of the venues for the IE Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course in November 2018.

Our beekeeping and tourist-guide colleague, Jasmina (also a CIG and api-tourism guide), took us around the city and introduced us to the attractions related to bees in the urban environment of central Maribor: a hive on the city terrace, a shop with candle and gingerbread products, a honey house with a newly emerging garden of honey plants.

At the same time, a team of two KPTVS members broadcast the events to the studio, which provided live broadcasts via one of the internet channels.

The Bee Trail in Maribor is also accessible for people with special needs. For them and everyone else, the beekeeping heritage in the city will be a new challenge for a visit – we hope those visits can start in person as soon as possible!



Gingerbread heart for KPTVS
(Image: Dominika Koritnik Trepel)

In the end, we can say that an interesting guided tour has been created, which through interpretation of locations, events, stories and people creates a new chapter in the tourist offering of the city of Maribor.

Dominika Koritnik Trepel is a tourist guide, api-tourism guide and instructor, and an IE Certified Interpretive Guide. She was a founding member of and is secretary of the Slovenian Professional Guides Association. She lectures about accessible, pilgrimage and api-tourism during specially prepared courses for tourist guides. She can be contacted at: trepel@siol.net.

Project-based learning for heritage tourism

Iva Silla (Croatia)

Is project-based-learning the missing link for thriving heritage tourism professionals? Pro-Youth offers some insight.

The Erasmus+ project, 'Pro-Youth – Strategic cooperation for more efficient international work-based learning schemes in the field of heritage tourism', is in its final stage. Partner organisations from Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy and Romania, led by the German-based European Foundation for Education, are showcasing the project results through national conferences in March.

Since 2018, the Pro-Youth team has been working to offer a solution for both the unemployment of the young, and the lack of qualified personnel in the field of cultural tourism. Research, that was conducted at the beginning of the project, showed that micro companies in this field hesitate to employ young people for their lack of experience and necessary skills. Potential employers don't have the resources they would require to fill in the gaps in the applicants' formal education.

Project-based learning under mentorship in various institutions, following a structured methodology and based on the Pro-Youth manual and training, was tested with a positive outcome. All of the participants have gained new skills depending on the need of their own projects, and learned what it takes to manage a project from scratch.

By empowering the young and helping them gain the necessary skills to work in heritage tourism, Pro-Youth methodology can be a cogwheel for the heritage tourism mechanism to reach its full potential. That's why the project team did not only focus on project management, but also included lessons of respectful and careful heritage management and presentation as an important guideline for potential users.

Several Croatian team members and participants of the project also happen to be members of Interpret Europe. In fact, some of us, including the Pro-Youth team leader for Croatia, Dunja Vuković, met on an IE Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) training course organised by Elizabeta Milanović Glavica, IE's former Tourism Coordinator and the Manager of Central Podravina Tourism Board and Interpret Europe's Tourism Coordinator. It doesn't come as a surprise that such a team bonded over common values and insisted on making meaningful heritage presentation a part of the Pro-Youth training.

We conducted the first Pro-Youth training at the end of 2020 and, despite the obstacles due to a strict lockdown and even a strong earthquake in Croatia that has destroyed the offices of some of our participants, the enthusiasm endured. The training resulted in creative projects inspired by local heritage that have been carried out from an idea to a complete project.

Although the mentorship and the training have shown amazing results, the Pro-Youth workbook is envisioned as a self-guiding tool that can help people without any experience in cultural tourism understand the field and its possibilities, and even manage a project singlehandedly. It is easy to read and follow, with intuitive worksheets to help the creative process.

Through Pro-Youth, we have found an 'ACE up the sleeve' of heritage tourism – an acronym of three important and easy-to-understand elements of a quality heritage-tourism product: Authenticity - Creativity - Engagement. The Croatian Pro-Youth team is currently finishing the national policy recommendations and will include the three elements as crucial in any educational activities or projects related to heritage.

For more information about Pro-Youth in Croatia and the learning materials, contact: Zaklada Znanje na djelu / Foundation Knowledge at Work: dunja.vukovic@znanjenadjelu.hr www.znanjenadjelu.hr

You can see an example worksheet from the project overleaf.

Iva Silla is one of the educators for the Pro-Youth project. She is also the author of Secret Zagreb tours (www.secret-zagreb.com) and the Croatia Underrated blog (www.croatiaunderrated.com), and is an experienced Interpret Europe Certified Interpretive Trainer. Contact her at: iva@secret-zagreb.com.



Pro-Youth participants at event in Stuttgart
(Image: Pro-Youth)

WORKSHEET: AUTENTICHECK-LIST

Is my project/business idea fabricating history? Am I careful about protecting the local heritage and culture of the destination? This worksheet will help answer those and many other questions, clear our vision and bring us back on the right path of quality cultural tourism product.

CHECK A BOX NEXT TO EACH STATEMENT THAT IS TRUE ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

The number of boxes checked indicates the authenticity level.
The ones that are not checked show space for improvement.

PROJECT NAME

Visitors learn something new about the local heritage or culture.

It's a themed project inspired by local heritage.

We researched our topic through books, internet, but also interviewing people.

Most of the intellectual services we use are local.

We don't use a lot of imported material (souvenirs, accessories).

We sometimes spend more just to include local products.

We include or present local products, crafts, designers or artists.

It's easy to understand what's true, and what is imaginary for better experience.

We point to lesser known elements of our town that make it feel like home.

We don't receive complaints or mean looks from the neighbours.

It's not cheaper than similar products in my destination.

We choose ethical partners and employees.

☐
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MY PROJECT ALSO DOES THIS

Other ways my project takes care of local heritage and community.

STEPS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Write down concrete things you can do differently.

Autenticheck-list – an example of a worksheet from the Pro-Youth workbook (Image: Pro-Youth)

Vransko Lake Nature Park – A place you'll always return to

Vlatka Pehar Matić (Croatia)

Direct encounters with nature and opportunities for nature to be your teacher, is also one of the most powerful weapons in maintaining health.

Vransko Lake is the biggest natural lake in Croatia and one of the last Mediterranean wetlands. Its location, between the cities of Zadar and Šibenik in the Dalmatia region, is separated from the Adriatic Sea by a karstic ridge, which provides numerous attractions and rich biodiversity. It is an ornithological heaven and a paradise for wildlife lovers.

The importance of the lake has been recognised internationally. In 1983 its northwestern part was declared a special ornithological reserve as one of the few natural bird habitats with sources of drinking water and an area supporting a wealth of biodiversity. Then in 1999, the Vransko Lake Nature Park was declared. In 2013 it was included in the Ramsar list of world wetland habitats of great importance for many endangered and rare bird species in Europe. Today, the Nature Park is part of the European Natura 2000 network – areas important for the conservation of target habitats and species – and is one of 12 nature parks in Croatia, including eight national parks.

It is a refuge for more than 260 species of bird that nest, overwinter or rest here during spring and autumn migrations. Over 100,000 waterfowl overwinter in the ornithological reserve. The lake's importance has been valued throughout history. There are archaeological finds in its vicinity from the time of the Liburnians, Romans, Ottomans and Venetians. Today it is an oasis for sport fishermen and all nature lovers, especially birdwatchers. In a relatively small area, there are different types of habitats – from the lake and its wetland to rocky pastures, macchia, and the coast, which all give visitors a unique experience.



The Vransko Lake Nature Park has held several European projects for some years now and the project, 'Revitalization and connection of attractions of Vransko Lake Nature Park' is particularly interesting. This project has been successfully implemented for the fourth year now with finance from European Structural and Investment Funds, within the Operational Program Competitiveness and Cohesion. Through this project, the visitor infrastructure has been heavily invested in and improved and numerous equipment for visitors has been procured to help engage people with the natural and cultural heritage of the Park.

The first tourist electric train in Croatia was introduced here along with ways for visitors to get active in the landscape and watch the wildlife: kayaks and a range of bicycles (electric and MTB) are now available to rent, as well as telescopes and binoculars for bird watching – and the boardwalk educational trail in the ornithological reserve was extended. An adrenaline park, suitable for families, was set up for those wanting more high-energy activity. Solar boats will soon be introduced on the lake, which will require no fuel for the engines, so will not pollute the water or make a noise to disturb the wildlife. Enjoying the view of the entire lake from the Kamenjak viewpoint allows people to take in a landscape-scale impression and the beautiful sunsets over the Kornati National Park archipelago can have a profound effect on you. Local delicacies can also be enjoyed at tavern Kamenjak to experience the full local culture.



Active tourism around the lake (above)
(Image: Goran Šafarek)
Bird reserve (left) (Image: Iva Rogić)

To improve communication, a new promotional film was created and a new Info Centre was opened in 2020 at Biograd na Moru in order to further recognise, protect and preserve this Park's heritage. The Info Centre holds different promotional events on sustainable development and nature protection. Various biological research is conducted through the project, as well as educational programmes for children of local schools, the public and also

employees of the Park. The aim of the project is to connect the attractions of the Vransko Lake Nature Park and the sustainable use of natural heritage sites and educational facilities.

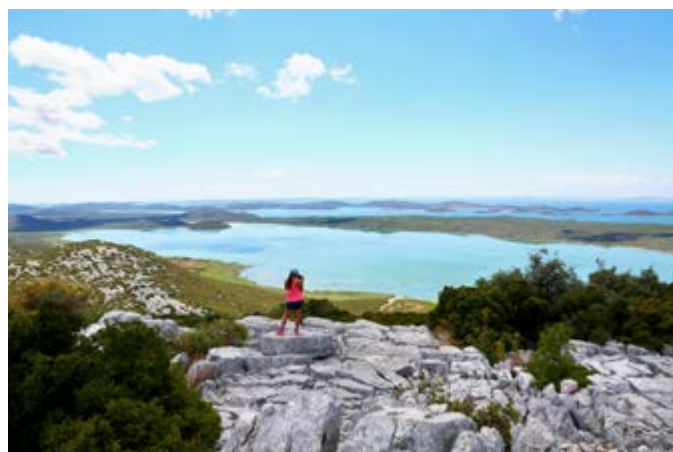
The Nature Park can be visited throughout the year with the now three info centres open from spring to late October. The picturesque port of Prosika is a favourite location of sport fishermen and nature lovers. Throughout the Park visitors can explore nature all year round, exploring the hiking trails and more than 50km of panoramic bike trails around the lake, that require good fitness to complete. For all those who wish to observe birds, it is possible to organise programmes for individuals or small groups with the professional services of the Vransko Lake Nature Park expert associates.

Vransko Lake Nature Park is a place of direct encounter with nature and provides many opportunities for nature to be your teacher, as one of the most powerful weapons in maintaining health and wellbeing.

Vlatka Pehar Matić has been a member of Interpret Europe since 2020. She has experience working in agencies and has worked as a licensed tourist guide in Croatian, English, German and Italian. She is currently employed as an expert associate for promotion and presentation in the Vransko Lake Nature Park. She can be contacted at: vlatka.pehar.matic@pp-vransko-jezero.hr.



Active tourism on the lake (Image: Goran Šafarek)



Kamenjak viewpoint (Image: Iva Rogić)

Traditional costume as a family treasure

Elizabeta Milanović Glavica (Croatia)

Finding out more about a vanishing culture preserved in the memory of our elders – and connecting with our heritage.

Tradition is one of the essential features of culture and includes the transmission of knowledge, customs and procedures from generation to generation. Today, a vanishing culture is preserved in the memory of the older generations. For this reason, it is very important to talk to locals who nurture love for their homeland and culture in order for it to be preserved for the future.

To learn more about the traditional clothes of the village of Virje in Croatia, I went to visit a couple of retired hairdressers, Marija Plemenčić and Marija Šklebar, who shared their memories and also showed me their rich collection of clothing worn traditionally in Virje.

Women's underwear consisted of petticoats and undershirts sewn from homemade linen, often adorned along the hem with handmade or machine-made cotton lace. The petticoat was richly pleated at the waist, and often had a hidden pocket that was used for field work and, during the war, for defence.

The skirts worn in Virje were very wide, with many tiny pleats. They were pleated by the more skilled seamstresses with the help of hand tools and took a lot of patience. In order for the pleated skirts to retain their shape, the skirts were carefully matched and placed under the mattress on which they slept.

The blouses were cut very wide and decorated with a little lace or tiny buttons. A black silk apron was worn over the skirt, and one made of linen was used for every day. Married women covered their heads with scarves of various colours, matching the colour of their skirts, which was the most different aspect of the clothing compared to that of the women in the city. Combing and covering the hair with a scarf was a long process that took several hours to make everything look perfect.

The ceremonial costume took three years to sew: from sowing their own hemp or flax seeds, then spinning the thread, weaving the cloth, crocheting, sewing, folding and making buttons. With so much effort and love invested in one formal dress, it was worn with pride because it was a reflection of the skill or status of the person wearing it.



Folding skirts for storage (top)
Old shoes (Images: Elizabeta Milanović Glavica)

During the last decades of the last century, younger women gradually stopped wearing traditional costumes, keeping them only for special occasions such as church feasts, weddings or for the needs of cultural society. But even though they no longer dress that way, they have retained a sense of obligation to preserve these clothing items and a knowledge about them, as an expression of respect for past generations and one way of preserving their own cultural heritage.

By getting to know the love for the local heritage of a certain area, we can connect with it and its inhabitants.

Elizabeta Milanović Glavica is a university specialist in tourism and hospitality management. She works for the Central Podravina Tourist Board (tzp-sredisnja-podravina.hr). She is a member of Interpret Croatia and is an IE Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG). She can be contacted at: elizabeta.milanovic@interpret-europe.net.

Virtual hands-on – How corona challenged me as a trainer

Janja Sivec (Slovenia)

Adapting to online training provided a lot of challenges, but also some learning experiences. Can we highlight some opportunities from this?

Last year was challenging for all! But challenges also seek solutions and my job as a trainer changed dramatically over night. I/we had to adapt from the full hands-on approach that I use all the time (thanks to my IE training) to a new virtual reality. So how did it go for me?

My main work in heritage interpretation is delivering workshops and training for people in heritage and the tourism sector. If corona stopped our activities in the field, it did not actually stop the projects and it showed how quickly people can adapt. A lot of organisations moved their activities online. Some of them being workshops to which I was invited as a trainer. But how can I still keep the spirit of the hands-on approach if we are not together in person?

A big recognition goes to the IE conference team who arranged our online conference in May 2020. During this, I got to know, as a helping hand, apps like Zoom quite closely and sort of lost the fear of the unknown. Also learning from people who have obviously done this before, like Nina Simon, or just very innovative people, like our 'fun director' Athina Tsekoura, who really opened my eyes to the 'fun' usage of online tools.

So, when the first invitation to deliver an online workshop came, I said, why not? And over the next few months I gained some experience in leading online workshops that I would like to share with you.

Pros:

- Less time consuming; as a trainer you travel a lot and doing online workshops removed the time for travelling.
- More efficient; when you are online the activities you do go much quicker because (especially Zoom) allows you to assign participants to a room and limit the time they have per activity. I realised that this way we need less time than when I say, "Please split into groups" and then there is a lot of chairs moving around the place.
- More accessible; I had invitations from abroad last year that I probably would not get under 'normal' circumstances since in this way the trainer's cost is reduced quite a lot.

Cons:

- No personal contact; sure, that is a BIG problem in this case, especially when you are doing an interactive workshop. The lack of responses is really difficult for the trainer. Also, there is no first-hand experience with heritage, which we normally use as a basis for exercises.
- Technical aspect; if you are dependent on good organisation and the weather at heritage sites, you are dependent (a lot) on the technical gods or demons when doing online workshops. The other problem is also the potential inexperience of participants in using online apps and its features or lack of technical equipment.
- Less time; in general, online workshops are much shorter than in person. So as a trainer you have to decide if less is still enough for you. My personal mantra is not to think of what I cannot do but focus on what I can do in a shorter time.

A few suggestions on how to tackle some of the issues mentioned above:

- Lack of heritage; the first activity I normally do is either make them draw a map of their place and write in different heritage sites or we do a treasure hunt, where they search for objects within their surroundings. The objects then serve as the basis for further exercises.
- Less time; working in groups is really something I practice a lot. This way people can actually talk to each other and feel a bit more connected. If the group is smaller, group work can serve as a starting point for general discussion.
- Focus; sometimes we allow our minds to wander off when we attend a lecture or a workshop. This happens even faster when you are online and your e-mails are opened. So I try to have small exercises that include people standing up, leaving the room or just doing something different than looking at my shared screen to limit the opportunities for sneaking a look at something else online instead of our workshop.

For example: Look out of the window and describe the action you want to take based on what you see. (This relates to the stewardship quality standard of heritage interpretation.)

I am sure that some aspects of the last year will linger and profoundly change the way things are done in the future, as well as the way we learn and teach. Hopefully, we will take forward only the positive changes!

Janja Sivec works as a freelancer and is an IE Certified Interpretive Trainer. You can reach her at: janja.sivec@dlegende.com.

What's going on elsewhere

Sharing stories: The 8 Billion project

Gordon McLellan (UK)

Two international projects bring together environment, heritage, arts and faith groups to share support and experiences through films and stories.

CelebrationEarth! has been a project based on hope. Despite all the environmental crises, despite the anger and despair, we wanted to remind people that there is still so much beauty in this world and that there are a lot of successes in environmental causes. CelebrationEarth! reminds us that we live in a world worth celebrating and works on the principle that for environmental change to really take root and to become sustainable it needs to be anchored in love and hope rather than anger. Funded by WWF-UK and FaithInvest, CelebrationEarth! set out to encourage a new recognition of inspiration: that people learn best from other people, by working together, listening to other people's stories and that inspiration comes from faith, passion and creativity as much as from science and debate.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2020, CelebrationEarth! worked towards a weekend event at St Albans Cathedral where groups could share experiences, find new partners to work with and new inspirations to act from. We gathered groups and supporting activities (including the Bradwell Abbey Mystery Play) from widely different perspectives. There were faith communities, museums, artists and environmental organisations ranging from church congregations and mosque communities to local drama groups to county wildlife trusts and specialist organisations. With plans changing every couple of weeks due to the ongoing pandemic, by September we accepted that we could not assemble the company we had hoped for and that even a small gathering might put participants at risk. We changed direction. Representatives of our key partners were interviewed and the film company Off The Fence put together a remarkable series of films exploring the relationships between different faiths, creativity, nature and environmental action. Films introduced Cambodian Buddhist monks, Anglican churches and puppeteers in the woods of Derbyshire. Tanya Steele, the CEO of WWF-UK, talked about 8 Billion, a new initiative inviting anyone anywhere to share their own environmental story.

Now, as CelebrationEarth! possibly draws to a close, the 8 Billion project and another, the Faith Long Term Plans, are picking up those threads of hope and celebration and encouraging a continued dialogue between conservation (and heritage) organisations, artists and faith groups. 8 Billion (with funding from various sources, including several WWF national organisations, FaithInvest and the Resilient Foundation) is creating a new film platform where community-generated films explore a group's relationship with nature. Those relationships might be practical, creative, faith-based, come from places of social change and climate justice... the project is open to possibilities. Aiming to be more than just another social media platform; by encouraging conversation, 8 Billion will offer possibilities for making connections so that groups sharing issues, problems or solutions, can make contact, offer support, or simply share their story and have it heard.

The heart of this is storytelling: distilling a project down to its simplest essence and then telling that story in three or four minutes: finding the emotional thread that runs through a project: the people, the sense of hope, or fear, or optimism, even failure. Tell the story. Everything else can follow but it's the storyline that captures imaginations.



Milton Keynes Mystery Play, City Discovery Centre, 2020
(Image: Gordon McLellan)

8 Billion is not an exclusively 'environmental' project. The principle is how do people relate to/ work with/ work for the world around them. Groups might bring films from a conservation perspective but similar themes might also be filmed as social change or as religious practice. Organisations from nature reserves and wildlife trusts to museums and art galleries can all find their place. As international faiths become more involved, the relationships between people and place invite new discussions. There are conversations to have here around what inspires people to act, how we can support each other, learn from each other and how we can share our stories. 8 Billion might not hold the answers to those questions but it will become a place where stories can be seen and conversations held.

Follow the links below to find out more.

CelebrationEarth!

- Website: <https://www.celebrationearth.org/>
- Blog: <https://www.celebrationearth.org/blog>
- Vimeo channel: <https://vimeo.com/channels/1654403>

Faith Long Term plans: <https://incrworld.org/>

8 Billion

In February 2021, the 8 Billion web platforms are still in development. The CelebrationEarth! sites will be posting news and links as sites open up.



To register interest or discuss a film idea, talk to Gordon on creepingtoad@btinternet.com.

Gordon MacLellan is a zoologist, artist and storyteller working with environmental themes. Better known as Creeping Toad (creepingtoad.blogspot.com) he has worked in environmental and heritage education and interpretation for more than 35 years. He is the arts coordinator for CelebrationEarth! and arts advisor for 8 Billion. He can be contacted at: creepingtoad@btinternet.com.



Tree puppet and filming, Buxton, UK, 2020
(Images: A Rhode)

Discovering wooden treasure in the heart of Croatia

Sanja Lončar (Croatia)

Recent earthquakes in central Croatia have drawn attention to valuable wooden architecture that has proven resilient to earthquakes.

Traditional wooden architecture is characteristic for the wider area of central Croatia. However, the largest concentration of the most valuable wooden architecture is located in the micro-regions of Banovina/Banija, Pokuplje, Turopolje and Posavina. Here the local oak or chestnut wood is used for building a variety of buildings, such as residential buildings, buildings for housing animals (barns, piggeries, chicken coops), buildings for storing cereals and animal feed, mills and religious buildings – chapels.

These wooden buildings were mostly built in the second half of the 19th and through the first half of the 20th century, and rarely, in the first half of the 19th or in the 18th century. A number of buildings have been destroyed over time due to deterioration of materials, fires, abandonment of certain buildings, war activities, etc. Also, a number of buildings have been altered thanks to the possibility of dismantling and moving. Situations like this occurred when families moved or when they split up. For example, a large wooden house for a cooperative family could be 'converted' into two smaller houses, in order to provide new married couples with living space. This is a great example of how people have adapted to changes in family and housing needs.

Traditional architecture is always the result and reflection of a specific mix of local natural features (climate, terrain configuration, and natural resources), human activities and human knowledge, skills and abilities. Thus, traditional architecture is unique and unreplicable. Every building, garden and village settlement can teach us a lot about the way of life in the area. Also, in villages and architecture we recognise the connection and coexistence of man and nature.

Local natural materials were used in the construction, and the activities that people were engaged in – livestock, farming, fruit growing – contributed to the sustainable use of resources and the preservation of the natural environment, as well as the existence of cultivated areas such as flower beds, vegetable gardens, orchards, vineyards, arable land and pastures.



Traditional wooden house found in Goricka Region Banovina or Banija (Image: Sanja Lončar)

Unique values and specifics of space, architecture and ambience in the regions of Banovina/Banija, Pokuplje, Turopolje and Posavina deserve our attention. Today wooden buildings are used for housing but are also being converted into office spaces, exhibition spaces or tourist accommodation. Recent earthquakes and epidemics encourage us to rethink the way we live and the quality of our lives, as well as the (dis)advantages of rural and urban areas. Wooden buildings have responded well to earthquakes and have once again proven the incredible value of the knowledge and skills possessed by our ancestors, which we insufficiently acknowledge and use.

Sanja Lončar is an art historian and ethnologist working as an Assistant Professor at the University of Zagreb, Croatia. You can get in touch with her at: sloncar@ffzg.hr.



Traditional wooden houses found in Gornja Oraovica Region Banovina or Banija (Image: Sanja Lončar)

Heritage and our sustainable future

News Team

Recordings and reading material from this conference supported by UNESCO, focusing on preserving the past for the future, are available online.

Amongst the vast amount of online content available in the past year, the virtual conference, Heritage and our Sustainable Future, hosted by Praxis (University of Leeds) and the UK National Commission for UNESCO, stood out from the crowd and was well attended.

The conference was based on the recognition of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that unite 193 governments with the shared aim of leaving our planet and societies on a more sustainable footing for future generations. It brought together professionals and practitioners from different countries, sectors and disciplines to share case studies and methodologies through presentations, workshops, panel debates and conversations.

The programme was split into thirteen sessions, many of which were relevant to our heritage interpretation profession, including topics such as:

- Biocultural heritage and landscapes: Linking nature and culture;
- Cultural heritage for climate action;
- Reducing inequalities: People-centred approaches;
- Decolonising heritage practices;
- Inclusive development for sustainable cities;
- Creative industries and tourism beyond economic development; and
- Heritage, mental health and wellbeing.



If you missed it, the good news is that the recordings of the sessions are available on the website here:

<https://nomadit.co.uk/heritage-and-our-sustainable-future/index>

A reading list of useful resources is also included on this page:

<https://nomadit.co.uk/heritage-and-our-sustainable-future/prep#day-one>

One of the interesting features of the conference was a live illustrator working to sum up key points during the final closing session. You can see some of the results of that here:

<https://nomadit.co.uk/heritage-and-our-sustainable-future/about>

It's an amazingly quick-thinking, organised, artistic brain that can manage to interpret and visualise these points so neatly during a live session!

Marie Banks is IE's News Coordinator. When not volunteering for IE, she runs her own interpretation and proofreading business, www.zebraproof.uk. She can be contacted at: marie.banks@interpret-europe.net.

The European Cultural Foundation and the Allianz Kulturstiftung for Europe invite you to imagine European philanthropy for a common future.

Interpret Europe is represented in the European Commission Expert Group on Cultural Heritage (Cultural Heritage Forum) and the study, Imagine Philanthropy for Europe, was shared with us in January. It is published by the [European Cultural Foundation](#) and the [Allianz Kulturstiftung for Europe](#) and invites discussion on the proposal of European philanthropy for a common future.

There is a lack of philanthropy with a Europe-wide purpose. Private money for public good does play a huge role in supporting projects, to an estimated 60 billion euros annually, with the aim of enabling greater European solidarity. However, much of this is at a national, regional or even just local level, despite the fact that some benefactors and large organisations providing funding say they have a European (or even global) reach.

This study looked at ways we could imagine philanthropy for a European purpose, to bring about better European-wide integration. It includes a set of ideas for discussion, based on a literature review and 20 interviews with cultural activists, policy makers, academic experts, leading foundation staff and representatives of philanthropic umbrella organisations. These ideas will form the basis of a follow-up exercise to develop a blueprint with more concrete instruments for the future.

Some aspects of the study are related to points we highlighted in our 2017 publication, 'Engaging citizens with cultural heritage', which was our award-winning contribution to the European Year of Cultural Heritage. It's great to see that some of the ideas we strongly believe in are becoming more widely adopted.

The study can be downloaded from this link and the European Cultural Foundation invites comment:

<https://culturalfoundation.eu/stories/imagine-philanthropy-for-europe>

Marie Banks is IE's News Coordinator. When not volunteering for IE, she runs her own interpretation and proofreading business, www.zebraproof.uk. She can be contacted at: marie.banks@interpret-europe.net.



Cultural heritage as a catalyst for positive change

News Team

A 'green paper' aims to put Europe's shared heritage at the heart of the European Green Deal and is linked to the New European Bauhaus initiative.

The European Cultural Heritage Green Paper (published 22 March 2021) was developed by Europa Nostra, ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) and the Climate Heritage Network, with input from members of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3, of which Interpret Europe is a member. The concepts explored share common values with the New European Bauhaus initiative recently launched by the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, which recognises cultural heritage as an intrinsic and indispensable component in growing sustainable communities.

The green paper shows that cultural heritage is closely linked to the European Green Deal and highlights the importance of the EU's commitment to place the Green Deal at the heart of Europe's socioeconomic recovery following the coronavirus pandemic.

Herman Parzinger, Executive President of Europa Nostra, says: "This paper makes a convincing plea that our cultural and natural heritage are key to achieving the ambitions of the European Green Deal and ensuring its lasting positive impact on Europe's society and environment. ... Moreover, cultural heritage can be a catalyst for positive change, as it has the power to connect people to places, encourage a sense of belonging and foster social inclusion."

We couldn't agree more!

The executive summary of the report can be downloaded from this link:

https://issuu.com/europanostra/docs/20210322_european_cultural_heritage_green-paper_ex?fbclid=IwAR2ZiZYHb4LzBNPn6oyiCrIWJOHDBko7-70Dd1FnknA_wr_4PiQzAi3IXa4



The New European Bauhaus movement invites you to join the conversation – because "our conversations will shape our tomorrow". You can find more here: https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/index_en



Marie Banks is IE's News Coordinator. When not volunteering for IE, she runs her own interpretation and proofreading business, www.zebraproof.uk. She can be contacted at: marie.banks@interpret-europe.net.

EU Funding for Culture 2021-2027

News Team

There are 13 EU programmes for culture and the creative sector with funding opportunities to help with covid-recovery.

Culture is considered an important pillar of the EU as it significantly contributes to social cohesion, building a common sense of belonging and promoting shared values and cultural diversity. The Treaty of the Functioning of the EU defines culture as a cross-cutting area that builds bridges and synergies to other policy areas. As a result, a wide range of European funding opportunities are open for cultural and creative projects and this complements the support that is provided by Creative Europe, the EU's main programme addressing the cultural, creative and audiovisual sector across Europe.

Against this backdrop, a new publication [https://kultur.creative-europe-desk.de/fileadmin/9_Infodesk/EU-funding-for-culture2021-2027_CEDKultur2020.pdf] intends to provide a first glance on the new generation of EU funding programmes 2021-2027 that are accessible for the cultural and creative sector. Apart from Creative Europe, insights into 13 programmes are presented.

The publication is a result of the 'Infodesk Corona', a project implemented by the German Creative Europe Desk KULTUR and supported by the German Minister of State for Culture and the Media in the light of the German EU Council Presidency. The 'Infodesk Corona' aims to provide insights into current and future EU support measures for the cultural and creative sector.

You can find out more about it here:

<https://kultur.creative-europe-desk.de/service/infodesk-corona.html>.

If you have a project in mind and apply for funding in support of it, we wish you the best of luck.



Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation: Call for papers

Nuria Mohedano (Spain)

When the pandemic comes to an end, there will be a need for new ideas in tourism. What role can heritage interpretation play in this?

'Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation' is the title of our next Interpret Europe Conference (#iecon21) that is due to take place 1-4 October 2021 in Sigüenza, Spain. Only in May will we be able to decide whether we can follow this plan, or whether this conference needs to be turned into another web conference. In any case, it is time to call for your papers.

Experiencing heritage should bring an added value to people's lives. Encouraging more meaningful experiences can lead to more mindfulness among visitors as well as among local people. Can interpretation support communities around heritage sites to re-launch tourism in a more sustainable way?

In many countries and regions, tourism contributes to the development of heritage communities. Over the last year, the tourism ecosystem has been greatly impacted by the global pandemic, which has meant a forced shift – into a more resilient, sustainable and interconnected direction?

There is a need to rethink tourism's success, both at the destination and visitor level, by encouraging heritage interpretation. Closer cooperation between tourism and heritage interpretation could lead to new approaches from which especially smaller communities might benefit.

Our 2021 conference aims to share and exchange the theory and practice of interpretive approaches to the development of tourism and to rethink the role heritage interpretation plays in tourism and in community development at tourist destinations.

Questions

When you prepare your proposal, please consider questions such as:

- Why is heritage interpretation a suitable tool to recreate tourism after the crisis?
- Can heritage interpretation empower communities and make them more resilient?
- Can heritage interpretation also lead to more sustainable tourism?
- How can heritage interpretation help to foster human values as defined by UNESCO?
- How can heritage interpretation make tourists and local people more mindful towards our common future?

Apart from dealing with these questions, we also welcome presentations and workshops that focus on the theory and practice of heritage interpretation as a discipline. Besides theoretical essays, descriptions of case studies of outstanding sites, or remarkable practices may also fulfil the requirements.

Format

Interpret Europe conferences attract up to 200 attendees from as many as 40 countries. Besides four keynote addresses in the plenary, 60-80 workshops and presentations are run over four days in parallel, in different strands. The call refers to these parallel sessions.

Presentations can be 25 or 55 minutes long, including ten minutes for exchanges of views. We generally recommend keeping presentations as short and as inspiring as possible. Workshops can be 55 or 85 minutes long and need to be differentiated by ensuring the active involvement of the participants.



Sigüenza, Spain, with the conference venue shown on the left (Image: Antonio Negro)

Selection

A dedicated Review Team will consider all paper abstracts and decide whether they are a sufficient basis for a workshop or presentation.

Submissions

Please submit an abstract of your presentation or interactive workshop by 1 July 2021 using the template on www.interpreteuropeconference.net/call-for-papers. You will find all information about requirements for this abstract there.

Proceedings

Conference proceedings will be published on the IE website from the day that the conference begins. They will have their own ISBN and include all full papers received by 3 September 2021.

Delivering a full paper is not mandatory for giving a presentation or workshop. Either can also be based on the paper abstract. Paper abstracts are published as part of the proceedings.

Contact

Our IE Conference, 'Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation', will be organised by our institutional member, Travindy Spain.

If you have any questions, please contact the Conference Manager, Ángela Rodríguez from Travindy:
management@interpreteuropeconference.net.

Nuria Mohedano is IE's Events Coordinator. She can be contacted at: nuria.mohedano@interpret-europe.net.



Local culture awaits you in Sigüenza
(Images: Antonio Negro)

Opportunities to support IE

Want to help organise IE conferences?

IE conferences are among the most exciting events that hold anticipation for many members throughout the year. The Events Team organised last year's web conference and is now gearing up for our next conference, which will be held from 1-4 October 2021.

If you have experience in event management and organisation, if you are good at website editing (WordPress), communication with registrants and attendees, or you imagine you could contribute in any other way to the dynamic backstage happenings, please drop me a line at: nuria.mohedano@interpret-europe.net.

Nuria Mohedano (Events Coordinator)

Are you passionate about natural heritage?

Do you get goosebumps from the words of John Muir: "I'll interpret the rocks, learn the language of flood, storm and the avalanche. I'll acquaint myself with the glaciers and wild gardens and get as near to the heart of the world as I can"? If the answer is yes, you should probably join IE's Natural Heritage Team!

Our goals are to explore vast possibilities of natural heritage interpretation as a powerful tool of nature protection, as well as to educate and encourage protected areas to make greater use of heritage interpretation in their parks; to interpret natural heritage outside of protected areas, and cherish it as even more meaningful to people who are living surrounded by it; to strengthen connections with other associations and initiatives in the field (such as Europarc Federation, Climate Heritage Network, etc.), and contribute to common projects with our ideas and our approach to HI.

There are already some ideas on concrete actions to realise these goals and further ideas will be developed by the team. If you feel like answering this call and think you can realistically contribute up to three hours per month to support the team, why not join us?

For further questions, or to express your interest in becoming a team member, please email vida.ungar@interpret-europe.net.

Vida Ungar (Natural Heritage Coordinator)

Do you tweet?

Do you like your content only a scroll away? The latest news from your favourite organisations, events and news you feel passionate about all in one place? You are the kind of person for us!

The Social Media Team invites people who would like to support IE social media content by creating or searching for latest news stories about heritage interpretation and related topics. Do you like tweeting? Could you help us?

We would also like to explore how we can say everything there is to say about Interpret Europe and heritage interpretation in short videos and individuals who would like to dive into the world of podcasts would also be welcome in the team.

If you are not sure whether you are the right media enthusiast, why not send me a message to: janja.sivec@interpret-europe.net, and we can chat more.

Janja Sivec (Social Media Coordinator)

Our newsletters need you!

We can always accept extra help from members to help provide exciting content for our quarterly newsletter.

Could you be a story searcher? Either in your geographic region or a subject area of interest to you, could you help to gather stories that might be of interest to other members? We particularly want to know about:

- News from cultural and natural fields
- New developments in heritage interpretation
- Reviews of events

Are you great at finding funding? If you regularly search for EU funding opportunities and would be willing to share any opportunities you find with other members, please let us know. We're looking for someone to add opportunities to the funding section of the newsletter.

If you can help with any of the above, or have any other suggestions for what you would like to see in your newsletter, please get in touch: marie.banks@interpret-europe.net.

Marie Banks (News Coordinator)

Media library: Show us your photos!

A quick reminder about our ongoing call to help us fill the IE media library with images that can be used in newsletters, brochures, on our website and social media, etc.

If you have photos from past IE events and conferences, training courses, have taken photos showing examples of best practice interpretation or have some beautiful images of heritage and/or people gaining a deeper meaning through heritage interpretation, please contact us to find out how to upload your images or follow the instructions here if you have a Google account:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdWplFGgqhDnN4f64hks72JPv8U8qd3DIKcm5myJ1fWQmv0PQ/formResponse>.

Please note that we need your assurance that you own the copyright to the images and that anyone who features prominently in any photos has given their consent to be published.

We're looking forward to seeing your photos – and sharing them with our wider network. Thanks to those who have already contributed.

news@interpret-europe.net

Welcome to our new members

Institutional members

Makedonida Foundation, North Macedonia
Public Institution Nature of Šibenik-Knin County,
Croatia

Individual members (full)

Maja Bilušić, Croatia
Graham Black, UK
Tanja Božić, Croatia
Elena Chalganova, Bulgaria
Ioanna Damanaki, Greece
Luisa De Marco, Italy
Gergana Hristova, Bulgaria
Leanard Juma, Kenya
Francesca Laganà, Italy
Dara Lynne Lenehan, Ireland
Sónia Manso, Portugal
Nataša Mihajlović, Croatia
Nada Mišulin, Croatia
Dijana Posavec, Croatia
Vito Prtenjača, Croatia
Ole Roehnebaek, Norway

Individual members (entry level)

Ivy Adamakopoulou, Greece
Irene Aguado Campo, Spain
Ana Aleksova Tutkovska, North Macedonia
Lea Altarac, Croatia
Árpád Bayer, Hungary
Jordi Bosch Janer, Spain
Boris Bouquet, Switzerland
Núria Canal Periel, Spain
Victoria Eugenia Cava Chilla, Spain
Federico Chiodaroli, Italy
Monika Cindrić, Croatia
Júlia Csáky, Hungary
Petra Cukrov Ćurčija, Croatia
Bernat Cutchet Mercader, Spain
Vid Dorić, Croatia
Kristina Dujlovic, Croatia
Sandro Dujmovic, Croatia
Darija Dunjko, Croatia
Michał Dziedzic, Poland
Sandra Isabel Fernández Moreno, Spain
Sabina Fucic, Croatia
Paweł Góralczyk, Poland
Mirna Grgurić Ličina, Croatia
Florian Holzschuh, Germany
Ivana Horvat, Croatia
Mateja Horvat, Croatia
Ines Hudobec, Croatia
Leticia Huete Rastrojo, Spain
Martina Hukavec, Croatia
Sara Janković, Croatia
Bonita Jurman, Croatia

Individual members (entry level) (continued)

Mia Kirinčić, Croatia
Marija Konjevic, Montenegro
Anna Naemi Krauss, Germany
Magdalena Kulka, Poland
Iwona Kuś Donatowicz, Poland
Cornelia Laux, Germany
Agnieszka Lisowska Woś, Poland
Szilárd Magyar, Hungary
Tea Matijas Pereza, Croatia
Nikola Medved, Croatia
Anita Membrini, Italy
Vedrana Mermis, Croatia
Jelena Mičić, Croatia
Jasminka Mihoci, Croatia
Svetlana Milivojević, Croatia
Andrej Mišan, Croatia
Ina Nikolic, Croatia
Karolina Nowak, Poland
Danijela Odobašić, Croatia
Maja Ordulj, Croatia
Réka Pálóczi, Hungary
Boško Papić, Croatia
Dorotea Pečarić, Croatia
Adina Popa, Romania
Iva Popijač Meštrović, Croatia
Malgorzata Porebska, Poland
Patricia Pósa, Hungary
Anđela Pranjić, Croatia
Jadwiga Prokop, Poland
Gisela Punsola Ligero, Spain
Luisa Quien, Croatia
Nikolina Radmilo Pivčević, Croatia
Robert Radović, Croatia
Sanja Raskovic, Croatia
Rita Rezneki, Hungary
Noelia Rial, Spain
Branimir Romac, Croatia
Aina Rossinyol Fernández, Spain
Marijana Šarić, Croatia
Mikolaj Schabowski, Poland
Adrienn Scheitler, Hungary
Berit Schulz, Germany
Jasmina Simić Peccolo, Croatia
Ivica Škriljevečki, Croatia
Marcin Sloczynski, Poland
Krzysztof Sojka, Poland
Sara Srša, Croatia
Marija Štoković, Croatia
Barbara Struys, Belgium
Ivan Švacov, Croatia
Nino Švonja, Croatia
Paulina Szelerewicz Gladysz, Poland
Dóra Szontaghné Mosoni, Hungary
Hrvoje Telišman, Croatia

Individual members (entry level) (continued)

Renata Tešija, Croatia
Deni Tojčić, Croatia
Ozren Totić, Croatia
Nila Tudor, Croatia
James Williamson Venner, Spain
Jeroen Van Vaerenbergh, Belgium
Senka Vlahović, Croatia

Magdalena Vrbanec, Croatia
Sandra Vudrić, Croatia
Maja Vurnek, Croatia
Piotr Woś, Poland
Daniela Zelić, Croatia
Žilbert Zubenica, Croatia

**We currently have no members from the following countries: Cyprus, Iceland and Moldova.
Do you have any personal contacts in these countries who would benefit from being a part of IE?
If so, introduce them!**

Welcome to our new coordinators



Tourism Coordinator
Zoe Korre (Greece)

My experience of childhood in a rural area has been and still is my greatest motivation to connect with everyday life using senses and imagination. Business tools, the human aspect of law and the psychological methods of understanding, encouraged me even more to approach nature, cultural heritage and local communities, seeking unique ways to share my passion for them. For the last ten years I have been working in the Greek and Spanish tourism industry, designing and implementing experiences for children, families, people with disabilities, students, special interest groups, conference committees and local communities. With my company, Pace Odyssey, I design and implement cultural hiking tours and other conceptual outdoor and culture oriented programmes with a direct return for the local economy.

Heritage interpretation, through Interpret Europe, came as a catalyst giving 'flesh and blood' not only to the way I work but also to my vision of sharing this structure and these tools of providing experiences with other people.

Zoe can be contacted at: zoe.korre@interpret-europe.net.



Natural Heritage Coordinator
Vida Ungar (Croatia)

I have been immersed in nature all of my life. I made my first steps in the hills and mountains of Croatia. In the city, my natural oasis was the Zagreb Botanical Garden, where Grandma worked as managing director. She was a botanist who knew everything about plants and Grandpa was a landscape architect born to be a storyteller. Their home was a romantic cottage inside the garden gates. Owning the key to those gates felt like being privileged to enter a magical portal where the world of nature and the world of humans met in harmony. That led me to choose landscape architecture as my major. Botany remained my first love and my garden expanded to the vast mountains and plains, rocks and caves, rivers and seas ... And so, I found myself 'translating' the language of trees and rocks. Only years later I learned that it was called interpretation: natural heritage interpretation.

As a nature guide, I started interpreting natural heritage in 2004, gradually broadening my views and scope of work through education and experience. Over the years, I've been working as a freelance expert on various heritage interpretation projects, collaborating with national and nature parks and the Croatian National Tourist Board, as well as regional and local tourist boards. In 2019, my passion for interpretation and learning led me to the Interpret Europe CIG training course, and I was immediately

hooked. The IE approach to heritage interpretation has perfectly resonated with my personal intuition and I decided to start my own company dedicated to heritage interpretation. I strongly believe that heritage interpretation can be a very powerful tool for nature protection and for re-creating a world where humans and nature can live in harmony.

Vida can be contacted at: vida.ungar@interpret-europe.net.

Further details and all of IE's subject coordinators can be found here:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/feet/home/interpret-europe/our-structure/executive-management/subject-coordinators/>



Country Coordinator Belgium
Laila DeBruyne

I hold a master's in history and master's in cultural management, as well as an educational diploma, which gave me the skills and knowledge to give young people the opportunity to learn about history. But I wasn't convinced the classroom was the only or the perfect environment to learn so I started to explore the heritage sector from the inside.

Stories about places, buildings and objects have always fascinated me and so I was thrilled to use my enthusiasm at The National Trust of Flanders, Herita. I sharpened my skills on all kinds of projects: from heritage event coordination and supporting heritage educational projects to the creation of knowledge-sharing products like videos, articles, websites and conferences on heritage. I was Conference Manager for IE's conference in Mechelen in 2016. A whole new perspective on informal learning and on the profession of heritage interpretation opened up for me and has held me ever since.

Together with my best friend, I founded Allez, Chantez!, which is a movement to let people sing together and build stronger communities. We place the people of a community in the centre and use a bottom-up approach to build stronger communities in society, through accessible cultural initiatives like singing (because everybody can use their voices) and through heritage. I am convinced that contributing

to projects which give natural and cultural heritage a deeper meaning is how I can serve society and how I can build stronger communities.

Laila can be contacted at: laila.debruyne@interpret-europe.net.



Country Coordinator Bosnia and Herzegovina
Edo Mešić

I live in Sarajevo and studied art at the University of Sarajevo where I got my BA and master's diploma. I received a BiHERIT Tempus scholarship, financed by the EU with the aim of reforming the heritage sciences in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This led to a student exchange at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Ljubljana where he studied archaeology.

I have worked as a volunteer in the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the pedagogical department, and as a museum guide in the archeological department. Together with my fellow students, I am coauthor of an exhibition dedicated to the famous Bosnian archeologist, Đuro Basler. During my studies, I was involved in numerous archeological work on national protected sites, which took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Slovenia. I also worked with the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina on promoting 2013's International day of Archeology in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Edo can be contacted at: edo.mesic@interpret-europe.net.

Further details and all of IE's country coordinators can be found here:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/feet/home/interpret-europe/our-structure/executive-management/country-coordinators/>

Dates for your diaries

We have become more active recently in offering ways to engage with IE and each other so here's a handy reminder of some events coming up.

For the webinars, look out for the newsmails with links to register in advance and find more details on the IE website. Contact: webinar@interpret-europe.net with any questions.

For the thematic tables online chat, you can either register to take an active part in the Zoom discussion or follow it in the members' Facebook group, where the recording of the event will remain live for one week. Look out for the newsmails with details of the Zoom links and find more details on the IE website. Contact: janja.sivec@interpret-europe.net with any questions.

Every Monday a new presentation is released on IE's YouTube channel so also keep an eye there for fresh content:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDbwylo-tJugfsKXIEI21fQ>

Wednesday 31 March 18:00CEST

Webinar: Mindful interpretation

Wednesday 7 April 17:00CEST

Thematic table: The interpretive brief

Saturday 10 April 17:00CEST

General Assembly

Please remember to register by 2 April at:

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYocuChqDgrG9Sb4PVongQ9BXBIJf_ShgkO ?

Thursday 22 April 18:00CEST

Webinar: Interpretation for children – Exploring Cornell's approach of sharing nature in relation to IE quality standards

Wednesday 5 May 17:00CEST

Thematic table: Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation

Thursday 20 May

Webinar: Seeking the universal in the "outstanding universal value" at World Heritage Sites

Wednesday 2 June 17:00CEST

Thematic table: Safe spaces or ...? The role of cultural interpreters as advocates for audiences vs political activism

Friday 18 June

Webinar: Covid-19: Cultural heritage as a saviour of the soul

Thursday 8 July

Webinar: Novi Vinodolski Round Dance as an important guardian of heritage

Other announcements

Upcoming events

For up to date information on upcoming events in Europe and the rest of the world, keep an eye on the events page of the IE website:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/events/all-upcoming-events.html>

**** Events may be subject to last minute changes.
Please check individual event websites ****

Key events of heritage interpretation associations

01-04/10/2021

IE Conference 'Recreating tourism through heritage interpretation'

Sigüenza (Spain)

<https://interpreteuropeconference.net/>

10-13/11/2020

NAI Conference 'Shifting sands of interpretation'

Palm Springs (USA)

<https://nai2020.pathable.co/>

International events of other organisations in Europe

12-13/05/2021

Museums and Heritage Show

London (UK)

<https://show.museumsandheritage.com/>

17-19/05/2021

UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development

Berlin (Germany) with online participation

<https://en.unesco.org/events/ESDfor2030>

27-28/05/2021

Future for Religious Heritage Conference

Barcelona (Spain)

<https://www.frh-europe.org/events/frh-conference-2020-europes-living-religious-heritage/>

04-09/07/2021

World Archeological Congress

Prague (Czech Republic)

<https://www.wac-9.org/>

04-08/10/2021

Europarc Conference 'Tribute to our landscape'

Leeuwarden (Netherlands)

<https://www.europarc2021.nl/>

International events of other organisations in Europe (continued)

22-24/10/2021

IMTAL Europe Conference 'Communicating the past'

Athens (Greece)

<https://www.imtal-europe.org/compast>

17-19/11/2021

EXPONATEC Trade Fair for Museums, Conservation and Heritage

Cologne (Germany)

<https://www.exponatec.com/>

24-26/11/2021

MUTEC Trade Fair for Museums and Exhibition Technology

Leipzig (Germany)

<http://www.mutec.de/en/?language=en>

09-12/02/2022

25th East Mediterranean International Tourism & Travel Exhibition

Istanbul (Turkey)

<https://emittistanbul.com/Home>

And finally...

Thank you for your contributions.

Sunny springtime greetings from your IE News Team. We hope you all remain safe and well, wherever you are.

Marie Banks (UK) – News Coordinator, supported by Anna Carlemalm (Sweden), Jacquie MacIntyre (UK), Abby McSherry (Ireland), Elisabeth Nübel-Reidbach (Germany), Sarah Wendl (Austria) and Ivana Zrilić (Croatia).

Any news, projects, thoughts or adventures in interpretation that you want to share?

Send a report and some photos to:
news@interpret-europe.net.

Please consider that we like to promote best practice examples in the field of heritage interpretation and follow the guidelines for newsletter authors:

<http://www.interpret-europe.net/top/news/guidelines-for-authors.html>

Deadline for contributions for the summer 2021 edition: Monday 31 May 2021

The articles, news items and event announcements reflect the views and opinions of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent those of Interpret Europe or other organisations.

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Are you following us on social media? Please also engage with us on Facebook and LinkedIn and subscribe to our YouTube channel for regular content



<https://www.facebook.com/interpreteurope>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/1227939/>



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDbwylo-tJugfsKXIEI21fQ>

As a member you can also join our [closed Facebook group](#) or our Facebook country groups for more regular, informal interpretation chat.

Albania: [Interpret Europe Albania](#)

Bosnia & Herzegovina: [Interpret Europe Bosnia & Herzegovina](#)

Croatia: [Interpret Europe Croatia](#)

Greece: [Interpret Europe Greece](#)

Italy: [Interpret Europe Italy](#)

Kosovo: [Interpret Europe Kosovo](#)

North Macedonia:

[Interpret Europe North Macedonia](#)

Poland: [Interpret Europe Poland](#)

Scandinavia: [Interpret Europe Scandinavia](#)

Slovenia: [Interpret Europe Slovenia](#)

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**Serving all who use first-hand experiences
to give natural and cultural heritage a deeper meaning**

