

Spring
1988

Interpretation

Michael D Watson
Chief, WASO Division of
Interpretation

Welcome to the first edition of *Interpretation*, an interpretive technical bulletin with a modest amount of informational exchange. Each quarterly issue is devoted to a single topic of interpretive philosophy, methodology, trend, or research. *Interpretation* features professional, original articles designed to stimulate new outlooks, provoke thought on interpretive issues, and even, perhaps, generate some controversy.

Each issue will be devoted to a single theme. Park Service interpreters will contribute most of the material. An editorial board, comprised of two Regional Chiefs of Interpretation or personnel from Washington Division of Interpretation and Harpers Ferry Center, will make the preliminary selection of articles. This issue, "Interpretation from Tilden to Today," was produced by the North Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Regions. Harpers Ferry Center provides final editing and design services.

Future issues will be:
Summer 88-Interpreting Critical Issues (SER/WR),
Fall 88-Bringing Magic into Interpretation (NCR/SWR),
Winter 89-NPS Wolf Education program (RMR/MWR),
Spring 89-Research and Interpretation (AR/PNWR),
Summer 89-Computers and Interpretation (WASO/HFC).

You are invited to contribute your skills and interests to these upcoming editions. Contact the appropriate editor to get involved.

A binder is supplied with this first issue of *Interpretation*. The tabs inside correspond to the five major components of *The Interpretive Challenge*. The editors hope that if *Interpretation* is worth publishing, it is worth keeping. Enough copies and binders are being distributed for each permanent NPS Interpreter to keep a personal copy and for each park district office to place one on file for seasonals and other interested employees to review.

Interpretation is an ambitious project meant to benefit all Interpreters and Interpretation. I hope you agree.



Michael D. Watson

Regional Information Survey

Alaska



Pacific Northwest



Alaska is unique with its logistical-ly demanding vastness and intense resource issues. The few interpretive facilities in the region create an interpretive challenge for park staffs. Interpretive planning for many NPS units in Alaska requires an alternative strategy to the interpretive prospectus and the statement for interpretation. The region's response to this need is an Interim Interpretive Plan--a hybrid of the IP and the SFI. While establishing the themes, goals, and objectives along with a description of the resources and facilities of the area, it focuses on interpretive development, interpretive operations and an action plan for specific tasks. Experience will tell if we have a successful approach to meeting the interpretive needs of our newer areas.

With this opportunity to toot our regional horn, we're not sure what tune to play or whether to use a trumpet or oboe. So, what's new? Well, a bunch of us are. Dave Pugh arrived 9/86 from PORE. Mike Gurling formerly of KLSE has been in the Division (Interp Mgmt Trainee) since 12/86. Our new Secretary (Interp Assist) as of 2/2/88 is Vanessa Gilder. Other changes: John (Doug) Douglas retired. Bill Laitner replaces him at NOCA. Art Hathaway also retired--NEPR--reorganized from I & RM and Marie Myers is Interp. Chief. Kent Taylor left FOVA and is the new Chief at CRLA since 10/86. Dan Hand moved from CODA to EVER last fall. Scott Eckberg moved from KLSE (11/86) to Park Hist., FOCL. Paul Henderson is Chief, I & VS, KLSE. Detlef "Sonny" Wieck from KLSE to SAJH (3/88).

Midwest



This May and June the Midwest Region has planned zone workshops to address the 12-Point Plan and the Interpretive Challenge. The issues and concerns of the Heartland will be addressed among those parks sharing common themes or challenges. Workshops on Presidential Sites will be held in Cincinnati, OH; Great Lakes Parks at Madison, WI; and Prairie Parks at Independence, MO. The participants will include Superintendents, Chief Interpreters, and guests from other agencies. They will explore ways to integrate concessions and interpretive programming; seek ways to stimulate and increase interpretive personal services; discover ways to stress the year of clean air and biological diversity; and develop ideas to combine cultural and natural resources with interpretation.

Western



Western Region has sponsored four Interregional Resources Management/ Interpretation Workshops in the last three years. A primary goal has been to increase the public's understanding of NPS research and resources management through interpretation. Each workshop was developed on the basis of mutual resources management concerns, research, visitor use or impacts and interpretation.

Themes of the four workshops have been: Pacific Coastal Parks, Southwest Desert Parks, Pacific Mountain Parks, and Island Parks. Preliminary planning is now underway for a fifth workshop to be held in September, 1988, at Holbrook, AZ. The theme will be Fossil Area Parks. Nearby Petrified Forest National Park will host this workshop.

Rocky Mountain



Movies, books, music, and art are fighting the sinister images of wolves. Consider *The Journey of Natty Gann*, *Never Cry Wolf*, and *Waylon Jennings' hit "Will the Wolf Survive?"* Now Director Mott has joined the effort. The Wolf Education Task Force, chaired by Lorraine Mintzmyer, is producing a Unigrid folder on wolves, two video tapes (one narrated by Robert Redford, the other featuring storyteller Susan Strauss), an EE package, an art poster, and a traveling exhibit. The task force includes folks from WASO, HFC, Yellowstone, Glacier, and the Regional Office. More on their activities will appear in later issues of *Interpretation*.

Southwest



New Area projects dominate the news for Southwest Region. A number of proposals have or are likely to become a reality.

El Malpais NM & Masau Trail: Established 12/31/87. Jointly managed by NPS, BLM, & USFS. El Malpais is a recent lava flow with many cultural features. The Masau Trail is a unique tourist route connecting various related SW archeological sites. Information center will be opened by May 1 in Grants, NM.

Sante Fe NH Trail: Added to the NTSA in May, 1987, it includes 950 miles of the historic trail. Draft trail plan is being prepared.

Tallgrass Prairie N Preserve: Has been studied and legislation introduced in Congress. Hearings are expected spring of 1988.

Service Center Report

North Atlantic



Change. Transition. These have been the key words of the North Atlantic Regional Office for the past year.

In April Cynthia Kryston became the new Chief of Interpretation for the Region with a staff that consists of David Day, Interpretive Specialist; Ted Fowler, Audiovisual Production Specialist; and Scottee Nista, Division Secretary. A redistribution of duties and establishment of primary park contacts for Division members clarified workloads.

1988 Goals include planning workshops on interpreting the landscape and interpretation in urban areas; a "Computers and Interpretation" workshop; and coordinating joint projects with the Divisions of Science and Cultural Resources Management.

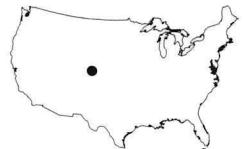
Mid-Atlantic



Independence NHP staff trainers recommend a video based on the book *In Search of Excellence*. The segment investigates the success that Disney World has had in dealing with visitors. For information call FTS 597-7115.

Shenandoah NP's spectacular views have gotten worse because of deteriorating air quality. Interpretation of the views is not new: interpreting poor visibility is, with a new exhibit at Byrd Visitor Center. A transmissometer determines the Standard Visual Range by measuring the amount of light loss between two points. It provides data on Shenandoah's air quality to Fort Collins, CO, every 15 minutes, then sends the information back for visitors to read from the exhibit.

Denver



Interpretive planning answers the questions: what, where, when, and how in relation to interpretive facilities and services. It begins with surveys and ends with a detailed prospectus. A long time gap, a lot of people, and a lot of decisions between beginning and end can result in less than ideal interpretation.

A planning process that answers questions affecting interpretation at the beginning instead of at the end would change that result. GMPs are being planned this way in several areas--Great Basin and Arches are but two. The Interpretive Prospectus is an integral part of the GMP and the interpretive planner a member of the GMP team. The decisions on what, where, when, and how to interpret the park become baseline data for the GMP.

Southeast



Vicksburg National Military Park will commemorate the 125th anniversary of the siege of Vicksburg April 30-July 4. Activities include: bus tours to sites leading up to the siege; living history demonstration and encampment (not a reenactment) with lectures on life during the siege; walking tours of siege related sites; dinner speeches at hotels and conference halls; and tours and period music at the USS Cairo.

In May 1987, Andersonville National Historic Site received accreditation from the American Association of Museums for both its museum and site. Andersonville NHS is the only NPS unit in the Southeast with site accreditation, and apparently only one of three within the National Park Service with that status.

National Capital



TDD's (Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf) are now available at all NCR parks. A hearing-impaired caller converses with a park by typing on a keyboard. Punctuating sentences with words such as "smile" to indicate a pun was understood, lets conversation be "heard" rather than just seen.

"Hooked up" to a phone by placing the phone receiver into a "coupler" in the TDD, TDD's require no phone modifications. Unless a dedicated number, advertise a TDD number with "V/TDD" after it to indicate it is a "VOICE & TDD" number.

Without a TDD the benefit of your services is denied to the deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired. 19.6 million Americans have hearing impairments, 400,000 are deaf.

Harpers Ferry



A new program at Harpers Ferry Center is designed to help parks rehabilitate some of their less complicated media. The program will enable parks to work with HFC term contractors for minor exhibit and waysides rehabilitation, using, with HFC assistance, contracts already established and administered by HFC.

The priority process for developing new media is well along. Joint HFC/DSC cooperation on a major projects is resulting in planning, design, and construction being scheduled and synchronized by both centers.

Major rehab programs of HFC have been scheduled and are being accomplished according to the priority process developed by Regional Directors at their meeting in October 1987.

Interpretation

Dave Dahlen

Stephen T Mather Employee
Development Center
535-6371 ext. 6405

A number of courses are scheduled at the three Employee Development Centers through the balance of the fiscal year. "Interpretive Planning" is scheduled for Mather in September. This course is designed for those with active projects at Harpers Ferry Center or those needing training in the interpretive planning process.

In January revisions were made to the Interpretive Skills program taught on the regional level. "Ranger Skills" underwent a curriculum review at Albright in February and will reflect the recommended changes in courses beginning in October.

The new Service-wide Needs Assessment Process will affect all employees. This new method of designing training programs will focus on employee management needs more directly than the present system. It is important for employees to understand this process fully and work with their supervisors when developing their Employee Development Plans.

Roy Graybill

Volunteers-In-The-Parks
523-5270

As you may have heard, tucked away in the latest fee legislation, which was an amendment to the LCWF Act, was language authorizing volunteers to collect recreational fees. But, the legislation requires that volunteers must be bonded before they can collect those fees. The Service, along with other Federal agencies that use volunteers, is presently analyzing this new situation and investigating bonding options, procedures, etc. We are hoping to find a way to handle the bonding on a service-wide basis. We expect to have the details worked out soon and will let you know when things are ready to go.

Robert Huggins

Private Sector Involvement
523-5270

It has been a busy first quarter for private sector involvement in interpretation. We continue to work closely with the Bicentennial of the Constitution Commission on events affecting National Park areas. Materials regarding the involvement of concessioners in interpretation and visitor services are being developed and will soon be sent to the parks. Working closely with the Conference of National Park Cooperating Associations, we have co-sponsored a "Management and Operations Course for Cooperating Associations" at Albright; will offer another June 20-24; and have slated a "Management for Park Association Coordinators" at Mather August 1-5.

Martha Aikens

Special Initiatives
523-5270

The "Clearing the Air" program, also known as the Acidic Deposition/Air Quality Interpretive Initiative, is well underway. Our objectives are very simple. We want to provide employees with current information on this subject and develop public understanding of air quality issues as they relate to parks. Field interpreters, responding to a questionnaire, made many choices which resulted in the development of the following: slide libraries, video tapes, slide-tape programs, an instructor's workshop, curriculum modules for schools, a notebook of fact sheets and program ideas submitted by other interpreters, and a contract for an automated encyclopedia on acidic deposition and air quality.
WATCH THIS SECTION FOR AVAILABILITY AND DISTRIBUTION.
REMEMBER THE FORMAL PROGRAM EXTENDS FROM FY 87-FY 91.

About This Issue

Interpretation is edited and designed by the staff of Harpers Ferry Center:

General Editor: Julia Holmaas

Technical Editor: J Scott Harmon

Designer: Phillip Musselwhite

Contributing editors for this issue are:

Chester O Harris, Mid-Atlantic Region

Cynthia Kryston, North Atlantic Region

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