

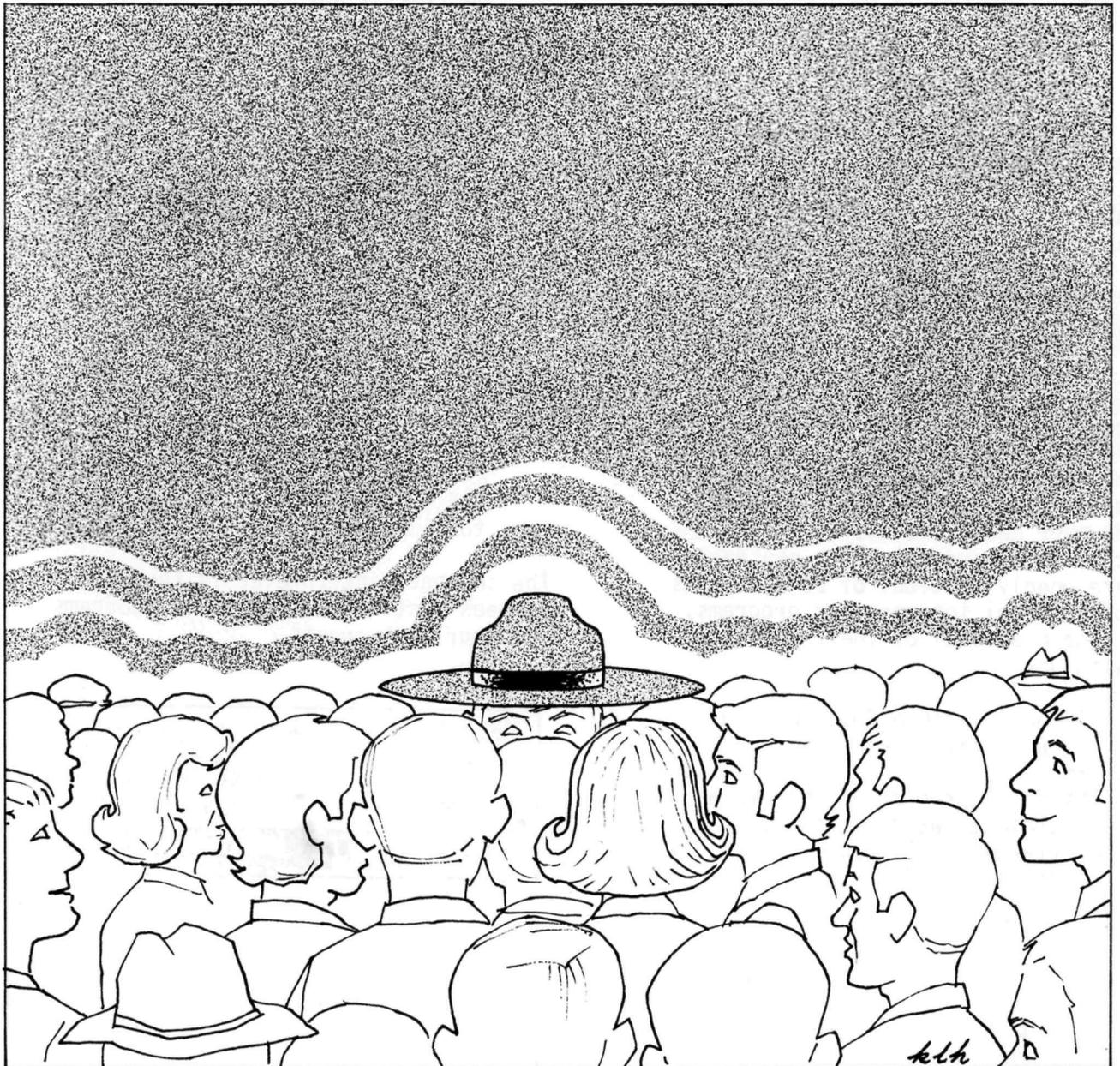
interpreters
information
exchange

IN TOUCH

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

Number Two

June 1974



LOOKING IN

I am familiar with three evaluations of interpretation that have been conducted in the last twelve years (1962 - Lee Study, 1972 - Risk Report, and 1973 - Everhart Report). I commend the Service for being willing to take these objective looks at itself. I find it very unfortunate that some criticisms are repetitive:

- *Poor interpretive quality,
- *Ineffective or insufficient seasonal training programs, and
- *Lack of supervision

I see many crisis-response actions underway now as a result of the Everhart Report (and other less obvious factors) which I believe are excellent. My hope is that this is not just another swing of the pendulum, but a realization that the interpretive program gives meaning to your guests' park experiences.

I prepare students for seasonal and career experience in interpretation. Almost all of these students would prefer NPS careers and they see possibilities improving slightly. However desirable they view the NPS, those who have served as seasonals are openly critical of some aspects of seasonal interpretive programs. I share several of their comments with you:

"I had less than four hours of interpretive training."

"My first program was before an audience with no chance to practice. It was my first day on the job."

"We were all assigned to the same task for the entire summer."

"There wasn't sufficient resource information to handle common visitor questions."

"All they stressed in our interpretive training was to move the people through."

"Our tapes were very impersonal. We finally got to use them as supplementals and narrate most of the tour ourselves."

"I knew I was recommended for rehire but there was no sign of a change in work assignment."

"I was only monitored once during the summer and no evaluation session followed."

"Park personnel discouraged me from career employment. I know its rough to get in, but I'd appreciate encouragement to try."

"I enjoyed opportunities for roving interpretation and informal programs. Most of the activity was too impersonal."

The seasonal interpreter is the link between most NPS interpretive programs and your park guests.

<i>Vol. 1</i>	<i>No. 2</i>
<i>Guest Editor</i>	<i>Pete Shedd</i>
<i>Design</i>	<i>Keith Hoofnagle</i>
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<i>Published every other month by NPS</i>	
<i>Division of Interpretation, WASO</i>	

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES
WHO DOES WHAT IN W A S O

They establish the quality of these interpretive programs. You are responsible for the training and supervision of these interpreters. They are the nucleus of future career intakes--give them the full benefit of your experience and their opportunity. If interpretive quality is to be improved, it will be through their enthusiasm, our training, and your supervision.

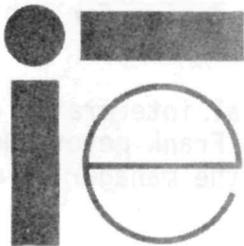
John W. Hanna

Dr. Hanna is Assistant Professor of Environmental Interpretation, Department of Recreation and Parks, Texas A&M University. He has served as an NPS seasonal interpreter for several years and this summer will be working in the Southern Utah Group. His job is to train and counsel both permanent and seasonal interpreters in communications skills. John's views, and those of his students, come at a particularly appropriate time, even though they don't leave us with that warm glow we get from being told how great we are. Since you folks out there in interpretation land are at least as smart as your guest editor, if not more so, we will resist the temptation to point out the obvious and will permit you to draw your own conclusions from the comments by John and his students.

The newly created Interpretation Division has two basic responsibilities: to represent at the Washington level all permanent and seasonal interpretive rangers, naturalists, historians and archeologists and interpretive technicians and to develop national policies and priorities for interpretive services conducted throughout the system.

To achieve this, here is the lineup of our modest staff.

Bill Dunmire -
Chief
Steve Lewis -
Assistant Chief
Bicentennial Coordinator
Roy Graybill -
In Touch
Packaged Interpretive Training
Stan Lock
Environmental Education
Jim Murfin
Cooperating Associations
Audrey Dixon
NEED Program



This is the insignia for the Interpreters Information Exchange In Touch. It doesn't have symbolic meaning of an esoteric or profound nature and very likely will not replace the arrowhead on your shoulder or the buffalo on your badge. There are no plans for it to appear on a postage stamp. When you see it you will probably be looking at a copy of In Touch, because at present we have no intention of using it elsewhere.

THOUGHTS ON A RETIRING PERSONALITY

The reference in the title is to Frank Barnes, who, on May 11, retired as Chief of Interpretation for the Mid-Atlantic Region. It is impossible for us to think about Frank without recalling the puns that were his trademark.

The first issue of In Touch announced that the publication would "not devote page after page to profiles of the Most Venerated Saints of Interpretation." This feature does not violate that promise. Frank was no Saint, and he had thoughts about interpretation that did not always conform to the gospel. A dedicated nonconformist, he had the curious idea that all interpretive wisdom did not repose in Washington and Harpers Ferry.

Mild, almost diffident in appearance, Frank was a formidable opponent in the free-style debate which was his favorite indoor sport. Arms flailing, he seemed to grab at invisible butterflies while firing a verbal barrage that left his dazed opponents wondering what the point of discussion had been in the first place. And then the vehement protest, "Really, I'm not trying to be difficult, but you won't see my point."

Frank is a Connecticut Yankee, possessing in full measure the traditional New England virtues of a nagging conscience, a passion for hard work and a candor that can sting at distances up to a mile. In a society which functions on polite evasion, small talk and compromise, Frank marches to a different fiddler. (He happens to be violinist of professional skill.)

He abhors superficiality in interpretation and what he feels is a lack of respect by interpreters for the substance of history. Because of his concern, and goaded by that New England conscience, he involved himself in all matters involving interpretation in his Region, from the design of a million dollar exhibit series to the metalphoto copy for a nature trail. This resulted in a Mt. McKinley of paper which threatened to bury him at his desk, but it gave him the chance to put his mark on every facet of interpretation.

Frank is the individualist's individualist. Even his pun-filled and curiously punctuated literary (prose) style (method!;!;) is, to speak "Frankly," readily identifiable "upon" first glance . . . ! (?). But as many of us who have read them know, he could write thoughtful essays marked by their clarity and persuasiveness. Unlike most documents ground out by the bureaucratic mill to serve the needs of the moment, some of Frank's position papers have survived the years, offering philosophical guideposts to succeeding generations of interpreters.

Although nearly all of his career was spent as a Regional Historian and Regional Chief of Interpretation, Frank identified with and deeply respected the park interpreter. He was as quick to praise as he was to criticize, and he did both without inhibition. But there never was a personal motive, beyond an intense desire for a high quality of interpretation.

As a professional interpreter convinced of his mission, Frank never succumbed to the lure of the managerial mystique.

For him, interpretation had its own career challenges and rewards. He was perfectly willing for someone else to be the Captain of the Ship, as long as he could explain to the passengers where they had been, where they were going, and why they were making the voyage.

Frank's view of history is humanistic. His respect for individual worth and dignity is reflected in his insistence that interpretation is successful only to the degree that it shows each visitors how his or her life is directly affected by the facts of the park story. He practiced and preached "relevant interpretation" long before that term became chic--and overworked.

In truth, Frank is one of the greats of Park Service interpretation. For more than twenty-five years he has set for himself and others the highest standards of scholarship and integrity in interpretation. He has guided and encouraged new interpreters and, through his writing and personal involvement in individual park programs, has left a lasting mark on Service interpretation and those who practice it.

Because he cared so much, he fought hard for what he believed in. Compromise did not come easy and no one ever accused Frank of being a grateful loser. Perhaps only now, with the smoke of old battles blowing away, and the heat of past controversies growing cold, can some of us fully recognize the lasting contribution Frank made to NPS interpretation. Our bet is that his uncompromising integrity, high standards of scholarship,

and his insistence that interpretation must give each visitor an understanding of the park story in the context of his own life will influence National Park Service interpretation for years to come. Thanks for that legacy, Frank. Yours will be a tough act to follow.

Bill Everhart



Born 1917 in Hartford, Connecticut; received a B.S. degree from Trinity College, Hartford, in 1939. Served in the United States Army, 1941 to 1945, entering as a Private and discharged as a Captain. Wounded on the Normandy beachhead during the invasion of France in 1944. Received an M.S. degree in history from Columbia University in 1949 and studied violin at the Julliard School of Music). Entered civilian Government service, 1947, with the War Department as Historian at Ft. Slocum, New York. Joined NPS as Historian at Ft. Sumter in 1949. After assignment to the old Region One Office in Richmond, Virginia, moved to the old Region Five Office in Philadelphia in 1955, serving there as Regional Historian, Interpretive Specialist, and Regional Chief of Interpretation. Frank retired on May 11, 1974.

SO THAT TWAINS SHALL MEET

The river pulls sluggishly along as a man stands watching the road to the bridge. Morning is crisp, even though spring is early this year. But this man has other things on his mind. What he studies is not his fields edging into green, but a swaying red column of marching troops. Suddenly, muskets cracked the air. Puffs of smoke. Stillness.

Leaves turned--again and again. Another time, a man--a child in sneakers at his side--shuffles down the road. The bridge--a foot-path now--soaks up the sun. The child climbs around the monument now there. The man stands and looks-- wonders. What brings me here? What is it all about?

The gap is time. The scene is changed. Can these "twains" of time and place, history and nature meet? Who and what make the connection? Interpretation? Interpretation bridges the gap. Interpreters personalize that bridge.

Interpretation is first born in a place, one valued in itself for some outstanding natural feature or one valued because of man's interaction with it, a human history. For what is history but man's use of place, whether he settled by the water and farmed or fought a battle because a hill held an advantage for him? His art is a response to his surroundings, his economics is his use of a multitude of resources to survive.

Interpretation is born, not just in facts, but in the themes that revolve around a place, a park. It is fostered, not in isolation, but in

relationships. A battle is part of a war, the birthplace of a man, a reflection of his society. The interpreter knows a park is not the world, but only part of it.

An interpreter must reflect more deeply than the average visitor on the meaning of the park, the "why" without which it wouldn't be. But how does s/he convey this understanding?

Knowledge begins understanding. An interpreter knows his/her resource. S/he must be accurate and objective. What else must s/he know?

What about the visitors? Can we define them--politically, economically, or educationally? Rarely do we fully know why they come to us. How then can we relate? What is the common ground?

The visitor is a human being, a person, who has feelings and senses as we do. Since interpretation is using the familiar to reach the unfamiliar, what more basic level is one acquainted with than oneself. The visitor must be coaxed to touch the resource emotionally--awe at the architecture of a cliff or a Cape Cod house surviving a beating surf, experience fascination at a 19th century supermarket in the fields outside a farmhouse door, wonder at new-born birds schooled in a parent's nest and children facing a modern classroom. These are universals, feelings, all can understand. Visitors must be transported into interpretation through the use of their senses. Let them taste and smell and see. Use silence, use sound.

Just as a sand dune is a product of growth so also is a person. Both

are natural processes, both have their pasts, presents, and futures, whether they exist in a community called a city or a community called an ecosystem.

An interplay of people--park staff, seasonals, VIP's, visitors--that's also interpretation. A mutual experience, a defining of a park's values together. The interpreter doesn't spout facts, but shares understandings, evokes emotions, shares values. Facts are not interpretation and eloquence is not understanding. What is it you want to leave with the visitor? Is it wonder at fragile life surviving on a tundra, appreciation of the infinite usefulness of a particular plant, or admiration for men motivated by principles? Purpose, meaning, are what it's all about.

Purpose, for example, is crucial to living history, or the program flounders back into its century. What is the purpose of each activity? How does it relate to the people of the time? What does it show about their life style or beliefs?

Appropriate living history can people the past before the visitor's eyes. In an historic setting it grips the past with the most basic form of communication--people to people--for history is ultimately people living facts. We cannot completely recreate the people of the past but we can use the interpretive "I" to advantage. Perhaps causing visitors to think; challenging their way of life --not for argument but for reflection.

At Minute Man, we use the enthusiasm of 1,600 volunteers. Every community is a continuing historical process, the repository of historical values as they have been interpreted and pummeled and kneaded through history to today. We canvassed our community and found experience there--a retired teacher to help with school programs, an artist who could construct an exhibit, and handicapped persons who had ideas for guided tours. We involved children. Their vitality and questions keep alive these interpretive "why's." They undertook projects for us. (One school near Minute Man prepared a catalogue of 18th century farming tools for the Park's library.) We talked with volunteers; they gave us their perspectives. We challenged them and they challenged us. We make our library available, prepare authentic clothing patterns they can trace with fact sheets on colors, materials, hair styles, jewelry, send them briefing sheets on the Park's history, and audit their programs.

Interpreters, paid or unpaid, filter the Park's values to the visitor. Feedback is the visitor's interpretation of these values back to you. Criticism, evaluation, change, should be a built-in process of any program. It is the capstone of interpretive planning for it begins the interpretive cycle once again. We are this bridge between time and place, visitor and resource. Resources do speak without us--the power of a river, the richness of a costume--but interpretation is the way we fill in the intangibles.

Understanding is the way the "twains touch."

Cynthia E. Kryston
Supervisory Park Historian
Minute Man Nat'l Historical Park



INTERPRETING NOAH'S PARK

In August 1971, the National Park Service acquired a piece of historical property that was a marked departure from what is normally associated with the Park Service. This site has no trees or grass, is less than one acre in area, but managed to log over 87,000 visitor hours during FY73. Curious? It is a steel, 133 foot ex-Coast Guard lightship; her hull configuration not unlike that of Captain Hook's pirate ship. For you sandcrabs, a lightship is a floating aid to navigation, the name Chesapeake signifies her duty station--off the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay for over 20 years.

If you're wondering what the Park Service is doing in the ship business, she was acquired to develop a series of programs in ecology, education, recreation and history. One of her many successful programs is serving as an environmental education facility to promote further understanding of water as a precious natural resource. Her red hull and beacon--formerly a welcome sight to sea captains--now serve to warn that man's fragile environment is being threatened by pollution.

Badly in need of repair when she was acquired, the Lightship's first year was spent at the Washington Navy Yard where Park Service personnel, with the aid of Sea Explorers whom they trained, carried out the refurbishing. It included the replacement of over seven miles of water pipe and electrical cable. With the sound of chipping hammers and the smell of fresh paint in the background teachers, professional people and Park Service interpreters began to develop the

direction of the educational program. With the assistance of volunteers and the use of surplus and donated materials, the majority of the ship's remodeling as an environmental platform was completed, and in the fall of 1972, she moved under her own power to her permanent mooring facility on the Washington Channel side of Haines Point.

Twenty-three Explorers, ages 14-21, are aboard on weekends and school vacations to serve as her crew. Their training spans such diverse areas as navigation and seamanship, electronics, small craft piloting, engineering and welding. When the Lightship is opened for the general public (Saturday and Sunday 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.) she is an interesting part of American history as the Explorers carry out their duty assignments interpreting the lives and jobs of the original crew--keeping her a living historical monument.

The Lightship environmental studies program for urban 5th and 6th grade students from the District of Columbia began in December 1971, while still at the Navy Yard. Following the move to Haines Point an additional day was opened to suburban Maryland and Virginia students. Since that wintery December, over 8,000 students have spent a day learning about the ecology of the Potomac and having fun being shipboard. The visit to the ship is an exciting one and teachers prepare students for it for weeks in advance with material received at workshops held at the ship the start of each semester. The resource manual received at this workshop is the combined effort of teachers, Park Service personnel, and other professional people. In preparation the students may discuss the use of the ships compass as

compared to driving with a road map; they might examine the terminology of the hydrological cycle, or convert fathoms to feet. The week prior to the class visit, Rangers Robert Bragan and Robert Hickman take a slide presentation about the ship to the school and prepare the students visually for their shipboard adventure.

As the children board the ship at 1000 they are immediately aware of the difference between a land and ship

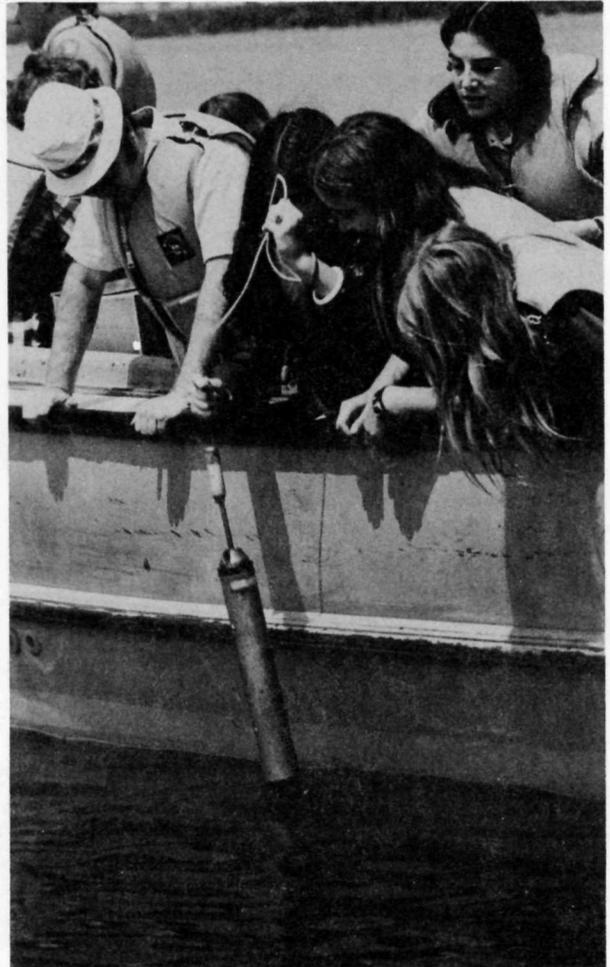
environment; the walls and overhead are steel, the decks slant, and the ladder (not stairs!) descend at an 80° angle, so watch your head. They assemble in the port passageway -- the mess deck area -- where the class is welcomed by Captain Joseph Murray, a Navy man for over 20 years and now the Lightship's Commanding Officer. The Captain sets the stage for the day's activities as he stresses safety and encourages the students to ask questions, "There's no such thing as a stupid question aboard the Lightship."



While aboard the students will visit the pilot house and wonder who polishes the brass equipment (it's the Explorers); and study aquatic food chains and animal relationships in the ship's aquarium installed in the crew's rec area. Inhabitants of the aquarium are former residents of the Potomac River and include such notables as catfish, gar, eel, snapping turtle; plus there is a 270 gallon tank depicting the Chesapeake Bay estuary with blue crab, oysters, hog choker, and horseshoe crab.

The highlight of the visit to the Lightship is when the students board the Wood Duck (a Navy Liberty Launch, part of the surplus acquisition) and ride to the tip of Haines Point -- a perfect vantage point from which to view the city of Washington. For the majority of the students, this will be their first personal acquaintanceship with the river since the Potomac, like the majority of water systems, suffers some form of pollution, and the children have been alienated from it. Many are mortified that the Potomac is the source of their drinking water. As the students learn to orient themselves on the river with large maps and a compass they mark where they are in relation to the Atlantic Ocean, Chesapeake Bay and the Anacostia River. They discuss how man has effected the historical change of the river and suddenly the Potomac becomes an important natural resource -- vital to their existence. Ranger Walton Shaw discusses the recreational potential, "It's a long process to make the Potomac clean enough to swim in; but wouldn't it be great if we could, rather than driving three hours to the ocean."

While aboard the Wood Duck they will measure weather parameters, take a water sample to be analyzed in the ship's laboratory and while returning, take a plankton tow. During a recent visit when the children had returned from the Wood Duck, the director casually asked if they had caught any fish. One young man spoke up, "No sir, but we caught a paramecium!" For the remainder of the day, in addition to study in the aquarium, the students will do microscope work, do a simple water quality test with Hach Kits, and study the source of water. They disembark the ship at 1400.



The idea for the Lightship Chesapeake program was originated by Thomas N. McFadden, currently the director for the program. Learning that the ship was to be decommissioned by the Coast Guard he proposed that it be transferred to the Park Service because he felt it would provide a unique learning resource for urban students. Visiting children and adults could be given an opportunity to increase their understanding of environmental problems directly related to their city. "We feel that this program is a small step in the direction of proving that learning can be fun," says McFadden." When the learning process is made as exciting as possible, everyone benefits -- students, teachers, and all others interested in the environment. A water-oriented experience gives students a new vantage point from which to view their environment, it helps them make better use of their senses."

The effectiveness of the program can be seen in letters received from students who experienced a day on board. "I want to thank you for a wonderful time," or "I enjoyed my visit," or "I had fun..." Perhaps the most important information they have taken with them is that learning can be fun, enjoyable, wonderful. Due to demands on the Lightship's schedule it is impossible for the class to visit again, but students are encouraged to visit the ship with their parents and friends during the hours it is open for public tours. Several have returned in programs currently offered to upper grade levels, and an Explorer crew member.

The elementary program discussed in this article is just one of the many

facets of the environmental awareness program offered at Noah's Park, as the Lightship has been dubbed by a local radio station. Other aspects of the program include water safety and small craft instruction in canoeing and sailing; a high school river study program which monitors the Potomac River at seven different environment study areas, internship for which graduate students earn credit; a Summer Fun Trip in cooperation with the National Capital Parks-West, Summer in the Parks operation.

The Lightship could not maintain the current program level without the service of Volunteers in the Park who have donated over 8,000 service hours this fiscal year.

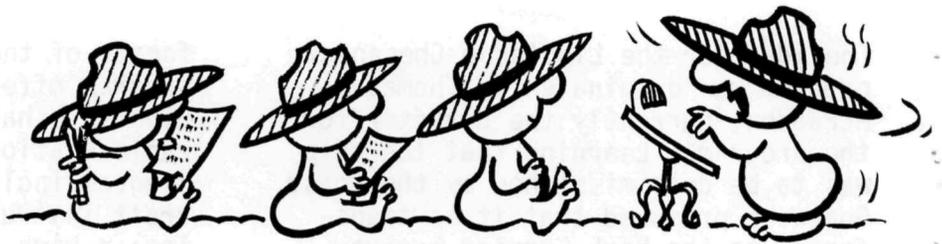
What is the Park Service doing with a ship? The answer is PLENTY! The Lightship Chesapeake operates a seven day week, twenty-four hour day, and it's just getting started. The concern for the program by Lightship staff interpreters is beautifully summed by a letter to Mr. Shaw:

"It was fun to come aboard a ship and find people who are friendly nice, and a person who knows how to talk to kids. I thank you for your interest in us. In your latter years maybe you will see or hear of our names in the papers, saying that we have found a way to end pollution."

The future of our Park System looks bright, indeed.

Vicki Glenn
Program Coordinator
Lightship Chesapeake

FORUM



LIVING HISTORY: HOW FAR IS TOO FAR?

In the past decade, "Living history" has become a hallmark of the National Park Service interpretive program. It has been imaginatively conceived, enthusiastically conducted, and enormously well received by park visitors. Public applause has stimulated ever greater efforts. It is time to ask whether we have gone too far. I think we have, and I hope my observations may provoke further discussion in these columns.

My principal concern is with preservation. Historic sites and structures and historic artifacts are irreplaceable treasures of our national heritage, to be passed on to future generations as intact as possible. These elements of our patrimony are to be enjoyed by this generation, not used. Use connotes consumption, and what we consume we cannot pass on. The 1916 act creating the National Park Service speaks chiefly to preservation and enjoyment, not preservation and use.

The manmade fabric and objects of our past are not toys for the National Park Service to play with, or stage props for the dramatization of our history. They are a reason for our existence, to be served by interpretation rather than to serve interpretation. Significant historic buildings should never be modified to accommodate interpretation in ways that cause mutilation of original

materials and workmanship and denial of original intent. Original weapons, uniforms, and other artifacts should not be used in demonstrations, for that will inevitably cause wear and deterioration and increase the danger of loss through accident or theft.

That brings us to the question of replicas and reconstructions. I have no strong feelings about the use of replica costumes or weapons or other objects in living history demonstrations. But I am opposed to most full-scale reconstructions of buildings or structures. Here we must distinguish between two kinds of reconstruction -- one, the reconstruction in form and detail, on the original site, of a particular vanished structure; the other, "typical" or suggestive representations of a general class of structures, such as barns or log cabins.

Reconstructions of vanished historic structures are permitted by our administrative policies if three criteria are met: original or appropriate site, sufficient data to permit a high degree of accuracy, and a judgment that reconstruction is essential to public understanding of the area (i. e., in no other way can it be interpreted). Very rarely are all three conditions present, and even where they are a reconstruction is of dubious justification so long as we have any genuine original material anywhere that is not being properly cared for. Bear in mind that, once

completed, a reconstruction must be maintained by the same costly methods as apply to the real thing.

Reconstructions (if that is not a misnomer) of buildings that never existed, even though also permitted under certain circumstances by our administrative policies, do not seem justifiable to me. In recent years we have become afflicted by a passion for living historical farms, pioneer villages, and other such counterfeit "historic" structures. These are used chiefly as settings for living history programs. There are several objections to such facilities. First, they purport to be accurate portrayals of a past architecture but in fact almost never are. Second, no matter how often and clearly told, visitors still tend to regard them as the genuine article (as indeed they do the other kind of reconstruction too). Third, though perhaps simply misleading in a natural area, in a historical area, or a historic zone of a natural area, they are an offensive intrusion on a historic setting in which they never existed.

My final concern is two-fold: for historical accuracy and appropriateness. We have pursued accuracy with intensity. So far as accuracy is attainable in such objective manifestations as costumes, equipment, and utensils, we probably cannot be seriously faulted. But we know that by their very nature living history programs do not recapture the whole scene. We do not include offensive sounds, odors, dirt, gore, and human misery. If we could, would we really want to? If we

can't or won't, are we presenting simply a schmaltzy romance of history such as one may see at the "historical theme parks" proliferating around the country or, indeed, on television nightly? I have not made up my own mind on this issue but believe it could be profitably ventilated in this publication.

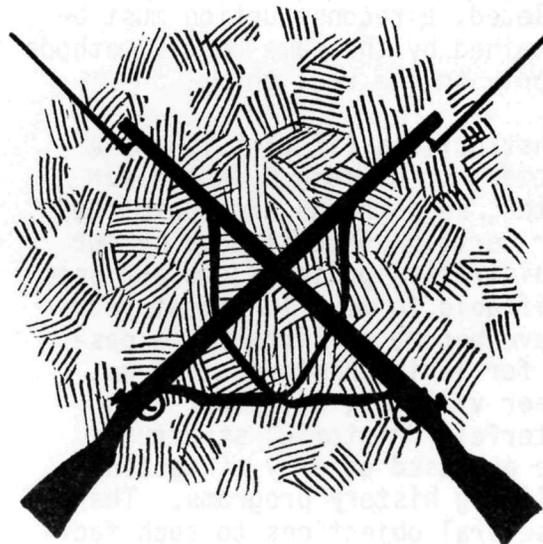
I am more certain about appropriateness. I fear that we have let the public's enthusiasm for living history push us from interpretation of the park's features and values into productions that, however entertaining, do not directly support the central park themes. The interpretive goals of any historical park focus on certain basic perceptions, understandings, and appreciations that one hopes the visitor will gain during his visit. Living history programs that sharpen this focus are appropriate; those that blur it, as many now do, are inappropriate.

Inappropriate living history, moreover, is not merely harmless diversion. The more "living" it is, the more likely it is to give the visitor his strongest impression, and memory, of his park experience. Thus a program that is not unusually supportive of key interpretive objectives may be correspondingly distracting if not actually subversive. We are obsessed with showing what everyday life was like in the past, surely a valid purpose. But most of our historic places are not preserved because of the everyday life that occurred there. The visitor whose fascination with "living" portrayals of everyday activity inhibits his understanding and appreciation of the momentous significance of Lee's surrender to Grant, or the progress and consequences of the Battle of Saratoga, has not been well served by our interpretive program, no matter how well

conceived and presented.

If living history is to continue as a valid interpretive technique-- and I think it should--we must learn to recognize that point where accurate, appropriate interpretation becomes mere entertainment.

Robert M. Utley
Assistant Director,
Park Historic Preservation



Living Interpretation has aroused controversy ever since its modest introduction into the Service in the 1960's. There is disagreement among interpreters, themselves, on the merit of this technique, as witnessed by the forceful and cautionary paper on Living Interpretation delivered by Frank Barnes at Mather Training Center in April 1973. We know, too, that our colleagues in the research and preservation disciplines are disturbed by what they consider the misguided enthusiasms, the insensitivity to park resources, and even poor taste, displayed in Living Interpretation. We are grateful to Bob Utley for contributing his comments to In Touch because he puts the issue right on the line. As Bob suggests, the Forum is a good place in which to explore the faults and virtues of Living Interpretation. The debate (if there is one) could have substantial implications for the future of this form of interpretation.



WHY ART?

What is more important--birds or people? How often have we, as Interpreters, been asked that question? How often have we then questioned ourselves as to how an Interpreter could best respond? To answer these questions, we must first see that a case can be made that there is not Interpretation in the National Parks--but rather, a collection of Interpreters, each Interpreter offering an experience which falls somewhere along a continuum extending between two different points of view.

The first (and I believe the prevalent) point of view is that of the scientific Interpreter--the person who attempts to present INFORMATION which shows that man's physical survival depends on nature. Not just that man has so squandered the natural resources which fuel his economics that the limits of growth are now within view, but also that many of the supplies flowing into any manufacturing process are not listed as raw materials. We hope that most people know that the oxygen which allows for the burning of fuels to power machines is produced by living plants. But probably few know that these plants have seeds which are primarily moved by birds--500 on the muddy feet of one duck (study by Darwin); 40 on the wing of one pheasant (research by author). Plants then nursed to maturity by other birds --10 pounds of insect-eating birds in a typical summer nesting season will consume 220 pounds of insects--insects which could destroy our forests. (Welty, The Life of Birds)
With our forests gone, our watersheds

would become barren. We would have intermittent streams in place of the perpetual rivers which now cool the machinery of our economies. These Interpreters then say man cannot survive physically without nature--and they may be right.

On the other end of the continuum is the Interpreter who deals not in information, but in experiences, because a case can be made that physical survival is not the essence of humanity. For example: imagine a slave state where the responsibility of each person was only to gather food and praise the dictator--no art, music, drama, wildernesses. Imagine that into this asphalt world a Christ was born. What desert would afford him forty days of contemplation? Or, where could a Moses go to receive the commandments. After all, is humanity not more than mere physical survival? Humanity is "Rocky Mountain Highs", "Grand Canyon Suites", "Swingers of Birches", and many other appreciative experiences which mold a people as much as do economic realities. A community without culture is a community, not of man, but apes. Those who wish to go forward towards a sterile, man-centered earth are not only self-defeating, physically, but also they are destroying the essence of humanity. They are the ones who wish to set the clock back until once again we are brutes.

Unfortunately, too often the Scientist Interpreter criticizes the Artist interpreter for not presenting the "environmental message" in walks, talks, and demonstrations. It is time that the Scientist Interpreter refrains from saying that the Artist Interpreter is failing his responsibilities by not

continually discussing the ultimate doom of mankind, our physical destruction, if we destroy nature. For we who attempt to give the visitor an enjoyable experience are fighting an equally frightening specter--the specter--that man will survive while humanity and nature perish together.

Keith Bennett
Everglades National Park

Memorandum

To: Guest Editor, In Touch
From: Admin. Clk. Walnut Canyon
Subject: Reply to a letter in first edition, In Touch

I would like to respond to Steven Sandell's letter in the April 15 issue of In Touch, in which he expressed concern of the use of Technician vs. Professional Interpreters.

I completely agree that interpreters should come from within the ranks-- but I would not limit that to Technicians. As we all know, there are many persons doing a tremendous job of interpretation who are working in areas of responsibility supposedly far removed from the interpretive division. Admittedly the Technician series was originally designed to provide local continuity in both interpretation and resources management; admittedly many of the good people employed have become frustrated in their jobs and don't want to stay in one place. Admittedly

this series had a tendency to define jobs as "professional" and "non professional", thus creating a class society of upper vs. lower. Unfortunately the problems with personnel management and the technician series are a long way from being solved. But this does not in turn deal with the problem of good interpretation.

Frankly, I think that the problem is not in hiring interpreters from within the ranks. I identify the problem as lack of awareness and sensitivity: (1) we do not recognize the personal needs of our employees - their motivation for advancement, their need for praise, their needs to either stay or transfer; (2) we do not recognize that field interpretation is done by persons who are often not managers, and thus are persons normally not mobile; (3) we do not recognize that persons outside the identified field of "interpreter" often do the most and best interpretation; and (4) we do not recognize that these people not only need access to training but want contact with interpreters. The second half of our problem is the term "professional" and our hangups about it.

I feel that the Service needs to do several things: (1) acknowledge the needs of our good people, and recognize that they may not be handled if we stick with rule-book, policy-determined decisions; (2) provide interpretive training and attendance at interpretive meetings for anyone doing the work, irrespective of their job description; (3) change the policy that mobility is required for those promotion-potential positions (thus enabling employees who do wish to provide local continuity do have some chance for advancement); (4) recognize that others outside the inter-

pretive division are doing good interpretive work; (5) work through why we are so hung-up on the term "professional", and why class distinction is made between persons doing the work of visitor services with the same motivation, but who happen to have different pay schedules.

Marion J. Durham (Mrs.)



INTERPRETATION BY MAINTENANCE STAFF

As many of us realize there is one group of employees who make as many visitor contacts in the field as any other group, and that is the maintenance people. They are found in all areas of the parks and many times are performing tasks that are naturally interesting to the visitor. Because of this and other reasons these maintenance people are asked many questions about the area, the work they are doing, etc. At this point they become an interpreter, on a one-to-one, person-to-person basis. Luckily many of these people are very knowledgeable about their areas and can in one way or another give

an acceptable answer (sometimes very in-depth and with an interesting colloquial slant) to most visitor questions. But, being able to answer "most" of their questions is probably not enough. Any employee, especially if he is displaying the N.P.S. arrow-ear on his shoulder, is immediately a park authority to the visitor and is expected to be able to answer their questions adequately.

There are many ways for maintenance employees to improve on their knowledge of an area and for the interpreters to gain valuable information from the experiences of the maintenance staff. One way might possibly be a seasonally or periodically scheduled session, not a one-way training session, but rather an exchange of ideas and facts between the two groups (better yet, all employees). Or it could be as simple as asking for ideas or suggestions during coffee breaks, whatever works for each area, as long as it does work and improvements are realized.

Because maintenance employees do make many visitor contacts, they must know some facts or information that would be of benefit to the interpretive program, but many interpretive projects are discussed, planned, and the decision made without any input from maintenance people, even on the physical mechanics of the project. Why? I don't think it is from a lack of respect or willingness on either parties behalf. I feel it gets back to the one thing we in the Park Service constantly preach about but consistantly fail to accomplish (in all phases), and that is communication. Not basic communication, but in-depth mutual communication at all levels without defensive or possessive

attitudes. If we can accomplish this among our own people, our visitor services programs will improve as will the visitors' park experience.

Communication cannot be taken for granted, it must be a goal that we continually remind ourselves of and constantly work toward betterment of.

Cal Myers
Maintenance Foreman
Canyon de Chelly National Monument

The above contributions from Marion Durham and Cal Myers make some excellent points. And they are particularly welcome as evidence of interest in and concern for interpretation by our associates in other fields of park operations. While we have said that In Touch is primarily for Park Interpreters, its pages are open to all NPS employees, as well as readers outside the Service, who are interested in interpretation. Interpreters are accused of provincialism in that they talk, write, plan, and produce mostly to impress each other. We reject this snide slander, but hope that our Service colleagues will share with us ideas, suggestions, and criticisms that will help In Touch perform a better service to interpretation and interpreters.

PLAIN TALK FROM TRUTHFUL JAMES

Memorandum

To: Chief of Interpretation,
Mid-Atlantic Region
Through: Supt., Colonial NHP

From: Chief Park Historian

Subject: Seminar on Bicentennial,
National Park Service
Interpreters

The announcement that we were to have a seminar designed to bring all interpreters in the National Park Service into the main stream of the Bicentennial celebration generated considerable thought on my part. This dealt with the several varied meetings which I have attended during the last year or so. A goodly percentage of the presentations given were either totally ignorant of what an interpreter does or offensive in that he was considered unable to perform any but the most mediocre of activities. Couple this with continuing presentations which give little or no time for interplay of ideas and you have a situation capable of producing apathy at best and antagonism at the worst. Considering that I have seen interpreters (particularly the younger ones) at as many as three meetings without their having sufficient opportunity to make any contribution makes me question the effectiveness of such a gathering. Webster says that a seminar is "a course for a group of students doing research or advanced studies."

A meeting of Chief and Assistant Chief Interpreters from all the parks, reinforced with Regional Service Center,

Harpers Ferry and Washington personnel, will create a gathering of literally hundreds of individuals. This means both an extraordinarily large group and great expenditure of money. It also means that the front line supervisors who often do the work of training and encouraging the front line interpreters will not be there! It has been my experience that the more levels that enthusiasm has to be sifted through the less reaches its goal, in our case, the Park visitor!

While I personally would like such a trip and I am sure that others would also, I believe that this should be carefully thought out. The old method undertaken several years ago of gathering all the interpreters from one state might have much to recommend! This small group with a group leader carefully schooled and well equipped with back-up materials could in one or two days create an environment typified by a meaningful exchange of ideas coupled with a local group purpose which the other could not. This group leader could be reinforced wherever possible by someone from this area who was "getting with the Bicentennial" and doing so in a local context. Where the interpreters will be dealing with local county or regional historical societies and relatively small events, the enthusiastic young lady from Boston 200 would be somewhat out of context!

I believe strongly that this should include every interpretive supervisor and if possible every permanent interpreter, particularly our Technicians who are on the line leading and providing stability to the Parks' interpretive efforts.

The ultimate expenditure would be less than that of bringing highly graded people long distances and those who ultimately have the responsibility for making this program work would know that their efforts are expected and will be appreciated!

(Signed)

James N. Haskett

The "announcement" Jim Haskett is referring to was a proposal made at a recent meeting of Interpreters from designated Bicentennial Parks in Annapolis, Maryland. Jim makes some telling points about mass meetings in general and about the tentative "Bicentennial Seminar" specifically. Steve Lewis and a small band of interpreters are wrestling with the whole matter of spreading the Bicentennial word beyond the few designated Bicentennial parks. The Forum strikes us as an appropriate place for interpreters (and others involved) to express their views. Jim Haskett's memo makes a number of suggestions. Let In Touch have your thoughts on this. It will help Steve Lewis and, ultimately, you!

COOPERATING ASSOCIATIONS



COOPERATING ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS AWARDS

In our eagerness to upgrade or improve cooperating association publications, it is all too easy to imply that associations are not producing good work, when, in fact, just the opposite is true. Over the past few years there has been a steady stream of outstanding books coming from various associations, but with virtually no recognition. This office feels that credit is long overdue and is pleased to announce the establishment of annual Cooperating Association Publications Awards to be presented in various categories.

Complete details will be announced in a future issue of this newsletter but here are a few things to chew on through the weeks ahead:

The contest is open only to NPS Cooperating Associations.

Categories will include interpretive books, guides, posters, and maps, among others.

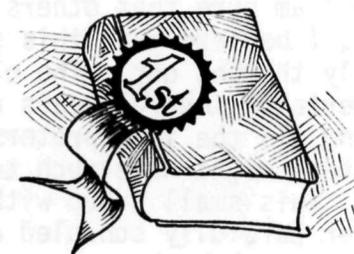
Entries will be limited to publications production solely by an association within the current fiscal year.

Deadline for entries will be September 30.

A panel of judges will be comprised of non-NPS artists, designers, editors, printers, and publications experts.

Awards will be presented at the Conference of Executive Secretaries in Denver in November.

Think about it!



RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPROVAL OF SALES ITEMS

The Guidelines clearly charge the Superintendent of a park with the responsibility for the approval of all items his association sells in his visitor center. This has long been an accepted practice and only rarely has it presented any problems. In light of current reviews and outside interest in association activities, however, this guideline needs to be tightened. Effective with the beginning of the 1975 fiscal year, October 1, 1974, each association and/or agency will carry in its files a complete list of all sales items and their current prices (a regular inventory sheet will suffice). Attached to this list will be a statement signed by the superintendent indicating that he has reviewed and approved the sale of each item on the list. Subsequent new items will be similarly

documented--an easy and acceptable way to do this is to file a copy of the original purchase order signed by the superintendent. It is not necessary to include this statement with your annual report. It is essential, however, that you have it in your files and available for discussion at anytime after October 1.

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BICENTENNIAL PUBLICATION

A number of associations and agencies have requested information on available American Revolution publications to feature during the forthcoming Bicentennial. This will be a regular subject in the newsletter beginning with a complete survey of all GPO publications. Future issues will discuss commercial books with reviews on quality by NPS historians and consultants. (Quoted prices below reflect recent changes.)

<u>Handbooks</u>	<u>Price</u>
Artillery Through the Ages Cat.No. I29.52:3	90¢
George Washington Birthplace Cat.No. I29.58:26	65¢
Guilford Courthouse Cat.No. I29.58:30	65¢
Independence Hall Cat.No. I29.58:17	80¢
Kings Mountain Cat.No. I29.58:22	70¢
Saratoga Cat.No. I29.58:4	60¢

Yorktown and the Siege of 1781 Cat. No. I29.58:14	70¢
Yorktown, Climax of the Revolution Cat.No. I29.50:1	45¢

Booklets

Congress Hall Cat.No. I29.21:C76	40¢
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Folders

Carpenters' Hall Cat.No. I29.21:In21/3	25¢
Federal Hall National Memorial Cat.No. I29.21:F31	25¢
Hamilton Grange National Memorial Cat.No. I29.21:H18/2	25¢
Minuteman National Historic Park Cat.No. I29.21:M66	25¢
Yorktown Battlefield Cat.No. I29.21:c71/10	25¢

Hardbound Books

Colonials and Patriots Cat.No. I29.2:H62/9/V6	\$5.55
Signers of the Declaration of Independence (new) Cat.No. I29.2:H62/9/V18	\$5.65

Posters

Morristown 42 x 28in. (3 colors) Cat.No. I29.20/2:M83	55¢
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And a brand new handbook size publication specifically keyed to the Bicentennial and produced by the Division of Publications, entitled National Park Service Guide to the Historic Places of the American Revolution.
Cat.No. I29.9/2:Am3 \$2.75.

COMMERCIAL PUBLISHERS

The coordinator's office has on file the addresses and trade discount schedules of all major publishing firms. If you have problems or need information from any commercial house drop us a note. You are free to write to these people on your own, but this office is prepared to help.

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REPRINT POSSIBILITIES

If you have had a particularly good selling, commercially published book (hard bound or paperback) and it is now out of print, do not despair. There is hope. Two regional publishing houses associated with Balantine are looking for past good-sellers to reprint in paperback form. They are more interested in regional sales than national distribution, thus making possible small print runs. Get in touch with the coordinator's office for advice or contact one of the two following addresses (depending on your section of the country):

For eastern subjects--

John Egle
Mockingbird Books
130 W. Wieuca Rd. NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30342
(404-255-2202)

For western subjects--

Richard Gould
Comstock Editions
3030 Ridgeway Blvd
Sausalito, California 94965
(415-332-3216)

Be sure and request catalogs of current titles from each of the above.

REPRINTS AND REMAINERS

Publisher's Central Bureau and Outlet Book Company are your sources for reprinted, and sometimes remaindered, hard bound books. No doubt you have seen their catalogs in your home mail. Well, they wholesale also and at a discount off the reprint price. This means that you can get a \$12.95 book at \$4.95 less a 40% discount. Although sometimes reprint quality is not quite as good as the original, more often than not you can get some excellent bargains. Write to the following addresses requesting catalogs and discount schedules:

Publisher's Central Bureau
33-20 Hunter's Point Ave.
Long Island City, New York 11101

Outlet Book Company, Inc.
419 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

NOTE TO CIVIL WAR AREAS

E.P. Dutton is considering reprinting Alice Cromie's TOUR GUIDE TO THE CIVIL WAR. In order to better establish a reasonable price for a paperback edition and possible press-runs, Dutton needs to know how many copies might be purchased for resale at our battlefields. Based on retail price of \$2.95, please

forward to the coordinator's office your estimated purchases for a one year supply. As you well know this is a very good guide and one that has sold well in the parks in past years.

* * * * *

Of interest to Civil War areas: Virgil Carrington Jones' Gray Ghost and Rebel Raiders has been published by Mockingbird in two paperback volumes. More on this next issue.

GPO PUBLICATION PRICING

Everything at GPO is going up in price. So far as this office can determine, there are no exceptions. If you have not discovered this already, you will on your next order. Some items have tripled in price since the last printing, while some have increased only by 10%. If there is a formula or pattern, it is not being revealed--not that this office was aware of GPO pricing techniques before. If you are ready to place an order and would like a check on your handbook or poster price, give us a call and we will run it down. The only firm statement to come from the Superintendent of Documents on this matter is that henceforth and forevermore there will be no publication priced under 25¢. There go your 10¢ sales folders.

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NEW SALE ITEMS

This section of cooperating association news will regularly feature information on new potential sales items covering a broad theme as related to a number of parks. Items of interest to individual associations will be com-

municated directly from the coordinator's office.

The well known military miniature firm of Imrie-Risley has recently marketed A Coloring Book of Soldiers From the American Revolution, with a suggested retail price of \$2.98. The book consists of 26 highly detailed and technically correct illustrations of various units that served during the war, done in the style of the Company of Military Historians plates. With the book comes detailed instructions as to coloring and technique. In spite of its title, the book is obviously designed for the adult military enthusiast as the relative intricacies of the coloring are beyond the skills normally associated with children of "coloring book age." This fact, combined with the relatively high price, may well limit sales, but we feel that the publication has sufficient merit to necessitate our calling it to your attention as a potential sales item. Discounts are offered on a sliding scale up to 55% for bulk orders, and additional information can be obtained from Imrie Rislie Miniatures, Inc., 425-A Oak Street, Copiague, Long Island, New York 11726.

Several years ago, Nancy Hutzky and Lucy Meuse, Park Service wives, prepared A Coloring Book of the American Revolution. This historically accurate, 32 page booklet sold quite well in several revolutionary war battlefield parks. There is some thought to reprinting again for the bicentennial. Sample copies are available from this office. If you are interested in a reprint, let us know. Originally prices (retail) at 50¢, reprint prices may run slightly higher depending on quantity.

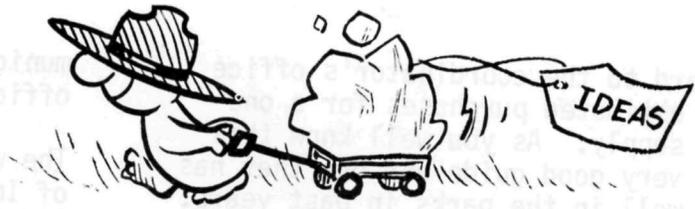
RAP UP

A NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

It is already apparent that in the two-month interval between issues. In Touch will receive more material than can be used in the next issue. So, depending on the type of material, there may be one or more issues before a contribution is published. In some cases it may be impossible for us to use a contribution at all, and we'll let you know. In the confusion of getting out the first couple of issues, we have failed to acknowledge all contributions. For this we apologize. In the future all contributions will be promptly acknowledged.

A word about length of contributions. Thirty-two pages makes a lot of reading, and yet we want a fair cross section of contributors and ideas represented in each issue. Please help us keep the size of future issues of In Touch within reason, while allowing more people to be heard, by keeping conciseness, as well as the broad range of readers, in mind as you write.

One further word is about writing style, which is brought to mind by some of the contributed material we could not use. When you write for In Touch, please be yourself. Use your personal style and don't hesitate to inject your own personality into whatever you write. In Touch should reflect the flesh and blood people who make up NPS interpretation. It should not add to the deadly bureaucratic prose that we have to wade through every day. Write for In Touch as you would for your friends and visitors, and forget about finalizing your parameters meaningfully in utilizing relevant conceptualizations of our commitment to dialogue.



THE SEVEN PILLAGERS OF WISDOM

During a skull session at Mather Training Center a few years ago, Ray Nelson asked me to state in one sentence the real story of the park where I was then assigned. I replied that I might be able to do that for a park about which I knew next to nothing, but that, having been on my current assignment over a year, I was powerless to make a statement about it.

I'm sure many park interpreters feel this sense of helplessness at getting a handle on the story. Our visitors are in our clutches for a very brief period. Even when reconciled to the fact that we are not going to get "the whole story" across, we would at least like to introduce visitors to some of the facets of the park's resource. Sorting them out creates an agony of omission. Deciding what has the widest appeal, without diluting the park story, is another struggle. In such matters, it is helpful to have someone around who brings a certain creative ignorance to the task.

That's where interpretive planning comes in.

While interpretive input is an extremely important part of master planning, the document that gets things done for your program is the interpretive prospectus. The planning team that produces an interpretive prospectus is an amalgam of minds which know a resource,

perhaps too well to know quite what to do with it, and minds which have some knowledge of how to convey a message but are unencumbered by facts.

The seven interpretive planners at the Denver Service Center (names available on request) have about 104 years of applicable experience, including 24 years of planning, 28 years exhibit and curatorial duties, 13 years of art, illustration, photography, and broadcasting, 26 years of ranger operations (including naturalist and historian functions) 9 years miscellaneous public contact, 4 years as training instructors, and an undisclosed amount of time lancing cigarette butts on trails (names withheld).

In addition to our own motley background, we call upon media experts at Harpers Ferry to help us bring voluminous fact and inspired mumbling into congruent focus and translate the result into interpretive hardware.

Although an interpretive prospectus is the basic framework for programming funds for interpretive facilities (a noteworthy fact), many things arise that were not anticipated in previous planning. At the same time, it is not always necessary to unlimber the full machinery in order to dress up an impoverished program or to get something going in an area not ready for a full prospectus. Some consideration of ultimate goals at every step is necessary, however, to avoid a piecemeal and patchwork effect. Even the decision to function in the absence of a formal plan constitutes a plan. If you are wondering whether you need a new or revised plan, or have a specific problem, the interpretive planners at the Denver Service Center are prepared

to assist at any stage of the game. At the very least, we can direct you to someone from whom we have lifted an idea in the course of our 104 years.

L. Clifford Soubier
Denver Service Center



(Ed. Note: The seven are Jean Swearingen, Charlie Clapper, Don Follows, Cliff Soubier, Jim Massey, Nan Rickey, and trainee Pan LaRocque. Their "unlisted" telephone is 303-234-2538.)

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ORIENTEERING?

"Orienteering" is an old activity with a new name and growing following in America, especially among families and the college-age set. Basically, it's the practice of navigating cross-country on foot using map, compass and understanding of environment. Parks are likely to be hearing more about orienteering as organized groups want to try their sport on our terrain. A few parks already are experimenting with how-to-do-it orienteering sessions in their interpretive activities as another approach toward understanding environment. Further information on orienteering is available from the American Orienteering Service, 308 West Filmore Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80907.



A FAMILY APPROACH TO AWARENESS

Is there a way to instill in our visitors a deeper, more sensitive feeling for natural things? At Yosemite we feel that an important part of the answer lies in dealing with visitors in the family group. We have always offered programs oriented for adults and oriented for children, and programs that seem to be oriented for everyone, but there still seems to be a gap. Is there a way that families can learn to discover the natural world together--on their own? We believe that there is a way, and out of this idea grew the "Family Plan."

On selected guided walks, the Family Plan emphasizes the family approach to awareness. The Naturalist working primarily with the children opens up whole new worlds for the kids and the parents. A most important concept involved is that parents need not know the names of animals and plants to discover with their children many things about the natural world. Looking at nature from new perspectives leading to many fascinating questions. The group may choose a handy log on which to sit for a rest break. To most people it is just an old log on the floor of the forest--but it is the center of the universe to animals who live in that log. What kinds of animals can we find living there? What are they doing? What does their world consist of? Does the forest exist to these

animals? What things exist for these animals that we do not notice?

Touch is one of our least-used senses. On a guided trip children are especially inhibited about touching things since they are so seldom allowed to do so. Passing natural objects around and discussing shapes and textures is a very new experience for most families--and is a very vivid demonstration of the diversity of living things.



Parents often become frustrated because their children do not seem to be impressed with the magnificent rock forms of Yosemite Valley. Adults fail to realize, however, that huge cliffs may be too large to be important from a child's perspective. The child is busy with smaller things--insects, flowers, birds, and squirrels. By letting the children set the tone of the nature walk, new perspectives are opened to the parents. They begin to learn of what excites the kids. Watching parents begin to discover the wonder of natural things through the eyes of their children is a most exciting aspect of the Family Plan. If we can encourage this kind of open sensitivity between adult and child, hopefully we can create an awareness that will remain with them when they return to their homes and to their daily lives. The parents now know the things that really stimulate their children about nature and, they begin to explore and learn, together.

Marilyn Hof
Yosemite NP

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INTERPRETATION: WHAT'S IN A WORD?

The Tram rides at Shark Valley in the Everglades are characterized by the abundance as well as the unpredictability of sight and sound. Such a situation provides ample material for a continuous commentary by the naturalist on board. Names, descriptions, explanations, and environmental messages, all fall upon the ears of receptive listeners.

But, I find it valuable to step back

and remind myself, and the visitors as well, that all words are just symbols. They are intelligible symbols only because of common usage. For the word is never the actual thing. The name is not the named, nor the description the described.

If that were the case, when we went into a restaurant, we would eat the menu instead of the meal. But, we don't! After looking at the menu, we put it aside and sit down to the enjoying of the meal. As with the menu, there is a time to use words and a time to put them aside.

On my two hour tram trips, I dedicate the last several minutes to one of the most rare and endangered "animals"--silence. What do I expect the visitor to do with it? Well, actually, nothing at all. I do not say: "Now, here is their chance to think about all I've said, to formulate what you've seen or heard". Do we "formulate" our meals? a glass of wine? a loved one? No, not unless the relationship is cold and sterile, rather than warm and vibrant.

There is understanding far beyond the half-step of intellection. That phrase sounds profound but this actual capacity is commonly enjoyed and simply expressed. By offering a little silence, I hope only to facilitate the use of that capacity, the putting aside of the menu.

I do not accept the idea that the only way the visitor can appreciate the natural area is through my words--through me, i.e., indirectly. Isn't interpretation more than translating symbols, as if to aliens on a visit to a foreign land. Rather, it is a welcoming home.

Frank Brions
Everglades NP

BLIND VISITORS NOW ABLE TO "SEE" MUIR WOODS

In today's society many are becoming more and more aware of their environment. Often, this new awaking and personal interest is fostered by an encounter with some aspect of the natural world. For a long time, the national parks have offered opportunities for such an experience; however, even in the parks, it is often much more difficult for a blind person to perceive many of the subtleties of the world about him. This has been remedied somewhat in Muir Woods National Monument with the installation of a new interpretive device designed to help the blind and visually handicapped visitor better understand and enjoy the mysteries and beauty of a redwood forest community. Using the senses of touch and smell, the unsighted visitor can now discover a redwood forest by taking a short 100-yard Braille Trail through the woods.

Located one-eighth of a mile from the park entrance, this loop trail, composed of twenty stops containing Braille plates and aluminum photo plates with the same information as the Braille plates in large, bold type, weaves the story of the area's natural and human history. The posts

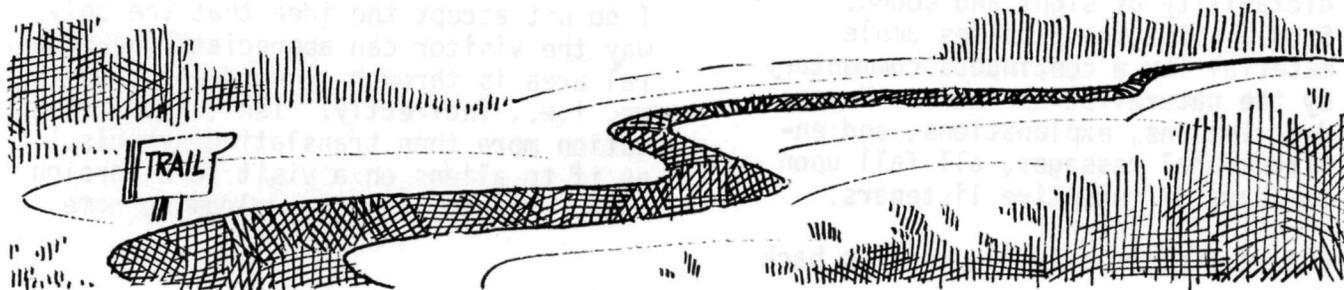
on which the plates are mounted are connected by a rope with wooden indications placed one foot from each post in order that the user will know a stop is imminent. Weather resistant string leads from some of the stops to objects being discussed. At the end of the trail, a large bench provides a resting spot ideal for pausing and reflecting amid the babble of Redwood Creek and the raucous cry of the Steller's jay.

Letters have been mailed to all agencies that deal with visually handicapped persons in the Bay Area informing them that this facility is available in the monument. It is our hope that blind visitors will arrive en masse to enjoy the trail!

For you interpreters who perhaps are contemplating a similar venture in your park, feel free to contact Muir Woods for additional information on cost, source of materials, and installation procedures.

Richard G. Danielsen,
Chief Park Naturalist

Robert E. Jordan
Interpretive Specialist
Muir Woods NM



TOWN

MEETING

TONIGHT



Why do men revolt? Why did they do so in 1775? Minute Man searches these "why's" by exploring one of history's "what's"-- the New England town meeting.

History needs to be touched to be understood. Although no park interpreter or visitor can ever really relive the moments and decisions of the past, they can try to understand them.

In this reach for understanding Minute Man National Historical Park has introduced a new interpretive program. We are re-enacting the traditional New England Town meeting, in which visitors, through their own imaginations and participation, "touch" the moods, the questions, the spirit of an 18th century town meeting. January 10, 1774, is the date, and tea, committees of correspondence, and education are the topics. Members of the Park's own staff, as well as VIP's in 18th century

dress, mingle with the audience. Tories and Whigs, pros and cons, debate the ideas, move the issues as visitors and VIP's voice opinions and vote.

Started in the summer of 1973, the town meeting was chosen because of its significance in the American Revolution. The English Parliament's curtailment of the meetings through the Intolerable Acts of 1774 was a prime catalyst in Massachusetts taking to arms. As interpretation, the re-enactments do not attempt to recreate history but, rather, to relate modern people to it by demonstrating the importance of a political process that drew revolution out of everyday life.

Cindy Kryston
Minute Man NHS

CURATORS' CORNER

Starting with this issue, In Touch will carry Curators' Corner as a regular feature in Rap Up. It will be handled by Art Allen and his folks in Museum Services. But we still want to hear from our readers if they have curatorial problems or solutions that would be of general interest to interpreters.



Alligators and Muskets

Did you ever stop to think of the similarities between the natural and historical resources found in the National Park System? Sure, there is a big difference between an alligator and a flintlock musket, but there are striking parallels in how we must relate to each of them.

Both are irreplaceable. Both have intangible values. Both depend upon a quality environment for their survival; an environment which man somehow determines. Both have been considered important enough to our culture to have park areas established for their preservation. Both require a commitment of money and manpower to insure their survival; we staff parks to prevent poaching and to provide methods which will prevent theft of

historical objects.

Ah, there's the rub! It is my belief that we have not recognized our responsibility toward historical objects to the same degree that we have toward preservation of natural resources. A forest fire threatening our tree resource bears a close analogy to rust and/or mold slowly destroying an important collection of historical artifacts. Although we unhesitatingly will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to extinguish the fire, we find it difficult to budget even small amounts of the time or money to protect our historical artifacts. A southern Pine Beetle infestation in a forest brings forth an army of experts with bulging checkbooks to the battle, but Dermestid beetles in a collection of American Indian artifacts hardly brings on a raised eyebrow.

When a natural park is established, we irrevocably commit ourselves to the continuation of the ecosystem were entrusted to protect. Likewise, when the Service accepts either a historical park or a single historical artifact we have committed ourselves to its perpetual care.

So come all you curators, historicans, and interpreters who have responsibilities for managing our museum collections; speak up loudly when you see your collections being neglected. After all, you bear the same responsibility to the museum collection that the firefighter does to the forest. Speak up to have adequate funds programmed that will give you the necessary storage equipment to properly house your collection. Speak up so that your managers will be aware of your minimum staffing needs to properly management your collection, and

so he can plan and budget appropriately. Read the NPS Activity Standards as they pertain to the management of your museum collections; you will be surprised to learn how well we are supposed to manage our collections in order to be considered adequate!! Learn to fill out Form 10-238's asking for improvements for your museum collection. Finally don't be bashful, let's look to the day we can unashamedly ask for money and manpower to take care of our museum collections on the same basis as any other manager of any other resource.

Arthur C. Allen
Chief, Division of Museum Services

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THAT OTHER IN TOUCH

While browsing at our local newsstand the other evening, we were startled to discover the June (and first) issue of a new magazine entitled In Touch. Feeling duty-bound to shop the competition, we furtively flipped through its pages, which were devoted mostly to photos of bountifully endowed young ladies in full color and not much else. Now, our first In Touch came out in April so we've got top claim on the title. And if we don't have the visual appeal of that other In Touch (which costs a buck) just remember we are free, and worth every cent of it.

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UPGRADING A SLIDE SYSTEM

After many years with no workable system, Everglades National Park has developed and implemented a system with definite procedures for acquiring, organizing, using, and replacing slides. With quality as the guiding principle, slides are accepted for consideration from park personnel and others. Those judged to be of good quality and of a subject pertinent for use within the interpretive programs are given a catalog number and accessioned into the park's collection. These slides become the "masters" from which duplicates will be made for projected use. The five or more duplicates made are filed with the identical number as the master from which they were made in a separate file. One duplicate is filed in a viewing file and arranged by subject for easy location.

Anyone desiring a slide or slides simply goes to the catalog viewing file and notes the numbers of the slides that he wants. He then proceeds to the duplicate files and locates the same slides by catalog number and pulls them for his own use. These slides are then listed and checked out with the slide curator as the need presents itself.

Through implementation of this system, poor quality slides have been totally eliminated from the park files, and interpreters with Everglades National Park have been given another important resource from which to draw material.

Art Kidwell, Seasonal Naturalist
Everglades National Park

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The Interpretation Training Package, for use in field interpretation training situations, has been completed and should be in use or available for use in your park by this time. Each kit contains 25 different interpretive program examples, or work units, on tape, arranged in thirteen volumes. The examples include guided walks and tours, historical talks, evening programs, living history, children's programs and information and orientation talks, all recorded in NPS field areas. Included with the tapes is a manual with suggested study plans for each tape.

The kit is designed to be used either in a formal training program or in an individual study type situation. While the manual suggests ways to use the tapes, we encourage you to be imaginative in applying this resource to your own interpretive and personal development needs. And please let us know, through your supervisor or Regional Chief of Interpretation, what you think of this type of training resource.

Roy Graybill



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