

# Heritage Interpretation facilities for Cultural Tourism

**CHRISTA**  
Interreg Europe



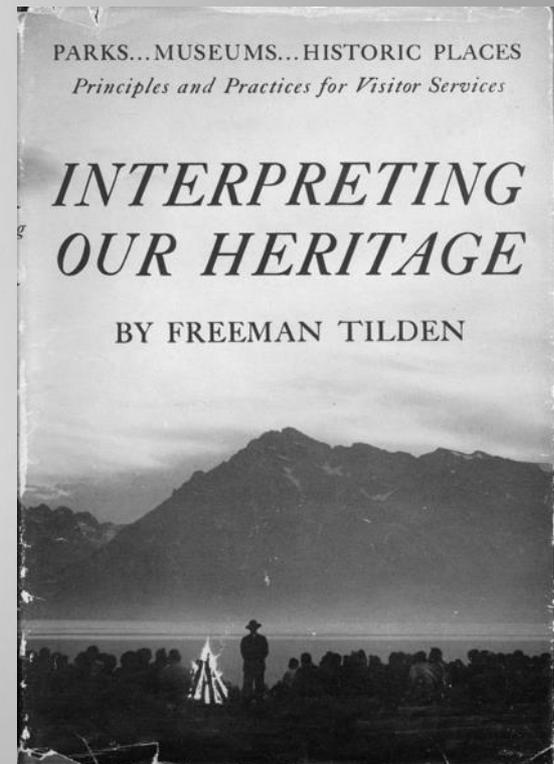
European Union  
European Regional  
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# What is Heritage Interpretation?

- ▶ Heritage interpretation is a structured approach to non-formal learning specialised in communicating significant ideas about a place to people on leisure. It establishes a link between visitors and what they can discover at heritage sites such as a nature reserve, a historic site or a museum
  - ▶ Interpret Europe

# Definition of Interpretation, 1957

- ▶ Heritage interpretation was first defined in 1957 as:
- ▶ “an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information”.
- ▶ In his book *Interpreting our Heritage*, Freeman Tilden sets this definition in the context of the over-riding aim of revealing the significance of a site to non-expert visitors



# What do we understand by Interpretation?

From a sign  
or a board

To a visitor  
centre

# What is Heritage Interpretation does?

- ❑ **it provokes visitors' curiosity and interest in what may be an unfamiliar topic or theme**
- ❑ **it relates the site or objects to visitors' own knowledge, experience, background and values**
- ❑ **it reveals the significance of the site or objects which visitors can understand and appreciate, and**
- ❑ **it helps people to enjoy a satisfying experience**

# What is Interpretation?

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Interpretation is primarily a communication process that helps people make sense of, and understand more about, your site, collection or event.

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Association for Heritage Interpretation

# What is Interpretation?

The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

Freeman Tilden

# Planning for Interpretation

## Planning

- ▶ **Why** is interpretation needed?
- ▶ **Who** is it for?
- ▶ **What** are you going to interpret?
- ▶ **How** are you going to do it?
  
- ▶ **What is the impact on tourism?**

# Why are you doing it?

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It can be part of heritage management, tourism and community development (for example)

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Define your aims at the start and agree on them

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For example, visitor management aims may be about where you encourage people to go, at what time, and what services they will find there

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Don't forget there must be something of interest though!

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To attract more visitors

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To enhance the visitor experience

# What has your site got to offer?

## Your visitors

- ▶ What do they want to know/do/see?
- ▶ What will strike them on your site
- ▶ What senses can you use?
- ▶ What can they see that's new to them?
- ▶ What can they hear?
- ▶ Get them to touch things – tree bark, soft moss, find something hard and cold...
- ▶ Can you find something for them to smell?
- ▶ What about eating something? If it's safe of course!

# How will you do it?

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Theme: helps to organise your interpretation. For example: When people leave they will know that...

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Objectives: SMART ones

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Media: techniques you could use

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Means: your budget and resources

# Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe

## Key finding No 4



... aim of interpreting historic environments and buildings and making them accessible to citizen and VISITORS

# UNWTO IYSTD

## Key action 4

# Cultural values, diversity and heritage



2017  
INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
FOR DEVELOPMENT

### ► Priority:

Improving interpretation at  
heritage sites

# CHRISTA Project tasks:



- ▶ How to deploy Heritage Interpretation facilities for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism development and promotion in partner regions?
- ▶ How to improve policy instruments?

# Thank you !

**CHRISTA**  
Interreg Europe



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund

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