



The Song Festival in Tukums 1928 and 2007

The song festival was part of the Bridging Ages conference in Tukums, Latvia - a Time Travel back to a sunny day in 1928, when hundreds of song festival participants come to Tukums. In October 2007 more than hundred people came to the Durbe Manor House in Tukums to make a Time Travel to a year when democracy was young in Latvia and there was much talk about traditional or modern values. The motto was: to think together and to sing together. Before the singing there were a lot of preparations: make the banners, find a modern hairstyle, prepare the meal and of course rehearse the songs. A procession led to the site of the concert, where the big choir sang some beautiful Latvian songs. The host of the song festival was the poet Janis Rainis played by Janis Garjans, head of the State Authority of Museums in Latvia.



Time Travels

Innovative and Creative Methods of Historic Environment Education Conference in Tukums, Latvia, October 2007

The conference was arranged by the Bridging Ages Network, Tukums museum, State Authority of Museums in Latvia and Kalmar läns museum, Sweden, and was held at the Durbe Manor House. Presentations were from Minnesota, New Mexico, Reykjavik, Jämtland, Kalmar län, Österbotten and Latvia and also of theoretical approaches to time travelling as an educational method. The presentations were followed by workshops of how to implement Historic Environment Education and Time Travels in museums and schools.

Presentations from the conference in Tukums



**Sigurborg Hilmarsdottir, Reykjavik City Museum, Iceland– How did children play in "the old days"?
The settlement period of Iceland, 871 +-2**

The remains of a longhouse from 871 AD were found in the middle of Reykjavik. It was excavated and an exhibition was made on the site. How did people live in the house? Were they the first Icelanders? How did the children play? Sigurborg showed some toys from the house, including a "Vala", a sheep's ankle but also a fortune-teller. She talked about the educational programs they have in the new museum on the site.

**Nina Clark, American Swedish Institute, Minneapolis, USA
– Sharing Stories, Past and Present**

Students from Wellstone International High School in Minneapolis met volunteers, mostly old people, from the American Swedish Institute. The students were from different countries and had not English as their first language. The volunteers and the students shared stories from their lives, but also artefacts, music and food. There were interesting discussions, reflections and of course dancing.

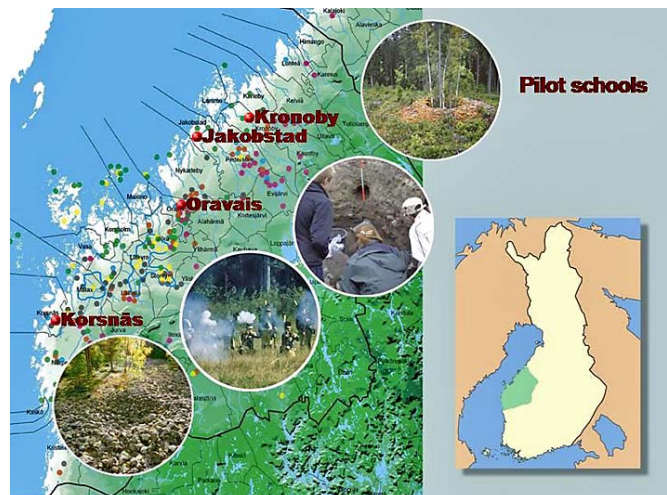


**Britt-Marie Borgström, Jämtlands läns museum, Sweden
– Time Travel and disabled children and youngsters – is it possible?**

In Östersund they have a project with Time travels for deaf or mentally disabled children. The time travels were very concrete, many activities, singing and dancing. But no hurry. It is important to see every child as a unique person.

Lillian Pettersson Smeds, Eva-Marie Backnäs, Österbotten Antiquarian Society, Finland

– International Heritage and Local Knowledge
Four pilot schools in Österbotten study their local heritage with the help from the Österbotten Antiquarian Society. The schools have picked different time periods and different historical sites, from the Stone Age to the 20th century. Lillian and Eva-Marie support the schools with historical knowledge and methods to teach local history. They've started to do time travels at some of the sites.





Lars-Åke Andersson, Ing-Marie Fransson, Frödinge school, Sweden – In the Days of Poverty

“Long ago, in the days of poverty” is the beginning of a book by Astrid Lindgren, the Swedish author of children’s book. The stories take place in the nineteenth century. One of the stories “The red bird”, the students in the Frödinge school have turned into a film. The students learnt a lot about the time period, both on a local and general level, by reading the story and making the film. The 27 minutes long film was shown at the conference and engaged everyone.

Ebbe Westergren – Holy Cow! Time Travels and Historic Environment Education as methods for understanding, knowledge, reconciliation and fun

“Wisdom sits in places” is an expression from the apaches in New Mexico. The meaning of a place and the knowledge about the people that lived there is the core of Historic Environment Education and Time Travels. How do we find this wisdom of sites and places?

Ebbe suggested 7 steps for schools and museums: Choose a site- do research about the site-read the landscape at the site-training days –teaching in the school-a time travel at the site-evaluation. After a time travel at a site in Cape Winelands, South Africa, one of the teachers expressed: “Now this site has a meaning”.

“Wisdom sits in places”



Jon Hunner, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, USA – Historic Environment Education. Making History come alive

Jon talked about “the zone of proximal development”. In Historic Environment Education you start with what is familiar, your comfort zone. From that you can expand and develop. Time Travels make us grow beyond our knowledge.

Time is a cultural marker that is used in Time Travels. Jon gave us four examples from Time Travels in Las Cruces: 1776 and life on El Camino Real (the royal road), 1887 and the Wild West, 1937 and the Great Depression and 1912, when New Mexico became a state.



Time Travel to the Great Depression in New Mexico 1937.

Lena Fritzén, Växjö University, Sweden – Time Travelling as an arena for schools and museums

Lena and a colleague of hers have studied the time travels that Kalmar läns museum does at Eketorp on southern Öland. Using these experiences they have made an analysis of the meeting between a school and a museum in a time travel. If the school views learning as a relational process, i.e. something that happens when people meet, time travels play an important role. Time travels are processes where pupils, museum pedagogues and teachers meet and new meanings emerge.



Delicious food in the Time Travel to 1928 at the Durbe Manor

Agrita Ozola, Tukums museum, Latvia – Time Travels. Method of Historic Environment Education and the Implementation of the Social role of the Museum.

The role of museums has changed in recent years. Museums in Latvia have undergone accreditation and the museums take the chance to form their mission and goals. But more needs to be done in the educational work. The Time Travel method is appropriate in the development of interactive activities. It leads to full participation and cooperation. And it encourages the development of new models for education in accordance with the needs and wishes of the visitors.

Workshops

How to implement Historic Environment Education and Time Travels in museums and schools

The participants at the conference were divided into seven groups to discuss Historic Environment Education and Time Travels. Some ideas:

- Start with time travels on a small scale.
- You can work well together in a time travel even if you speak different languages (experience from the time travel at the conference).
- How do we cope with the dark sides of history? War, slavery, apartheid, dictatorship...

Bridging Ages. A new organisation is created!

About 25 people from the Bridging Ages Network had a meeting in Tukums and decided to make the network into a formal organisation. A committee, elected in Rome last year, presented a proposal of vision, mission and bylaws that was thoroughly discussed. After two hours of discussion the bylaws of the Bridging Ages Organisation was accepted and a board of seven members was elected. Champagne bottles were opened and everyone toasted for the new organisation.



Bridging Ages. International Organisation of Historic Environment Education and Time Travels Vision

Bridging Ages is an international organisation utilizing nearby history to understand life and society of today by bridging the past with the present towards the future.

Mission

Bridging Ages is an international organisation supporting and inspiring institutions such as museums, school and heritage organisations in the development of Historic Environment Education and Time Travels.

The board

President.	Ebbe Westergren, Kalmar läns museum, Sweden
Vice President.	Jon Hunner, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, USA
Secretary.	Nina Clark., American Swedish Institute, Minneapolis, USA
Members:	Agrita Ozola, Tukums museum, Latvia
	Gunilla Sand, Stundars open-air museum, Finland
	Eugenia Bolognesi, Associazione Palatina-Istanbul, Rome, Italy
	Leen Joesoo, Tallinn, Estonia

What is?

Historic Environment Education

Historic Environment Education uses local historic sites and nearby history as an active way of learning and inspiring today's people and communities about the past.

What is?

Time Travels

Time Travels is an educational method where the participants research and take part in the life of another historical time period in order to learn about themselves and their society.

New book!

**Time Travels. Innovative and Creative Methods of Historic environment Education in Modern Museums
Celojums laika. Inovatīvas un radasas kultūrvēsturiskas vides izglītības metodes mūsdienu muzejos**

The book, which is both in English and Latvian, consists of four articles about Time Travels by Agrita Ozola, Lena Fritzén/Birgitta Gustafsson, Jon Hunner and Ebbe Westergren. The book was presented at the conference in Tukums. Please contact Agrita Ozola if you want to order a copy of the book.



Next conference in South Africa!

Bridging Ages will hold its next conference in Western Cape, South Africa. The Western Cape Museum Service and the Worcester museum in conjunction with the South African Museums Association invite to an exciting conference in the end of September 2008. Museums and schools in Western Cape have started a fascinating cooperation using Time Travels "as a way of enabling the people of the Western Cape in finding its roots to work together, as one united people. The unfolding of local history that this teaching method explores, will make the understanding of our diversity easier and will bring people together, enabling us to create a South African identity as one nation with many cultures in the Western Cape, a province that strives to be a home for all." (Tizzie Mangiagalli, Manager of Worcester Museum).

Be prepared to go to South Africa. Invitation will be delivered in the beginning of 2008.



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