



Latest news from Bridging Ages!

Bridging Ages

Bridging Ages is an international organization utilizing nearby history to understand life and society of today, recreating the past in an educational setting. Bridging Ages consists of people from schools, communities, museums, local historic societies and everybody who is interested in the local heritage. People from twenty countries in Europe, America, Africa and Asia are part of the organization.

Historic Environment Education and Time Travels

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.

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. With all your senses you experience the life of a historical time and site in your own neighbourhood.

Historic Environment Education and Time Travels provides a strong educational method to reflect and understand life and society of today by using historical perspectives, historical sites and stories from the past. Historic Environment Education uses historical knowledge to assist communities with the issues of today, like integration, democracy, inequality and reconciliation.

Historical costumes are important in Time Travels



Read about the studio for making historical costumes at Kalmar County Museum...

Historical costumes

At the top floor of Kalmar County Museum the studio for making historical costumes is situated. In this studio we make and take care of all the clothes that are used by learners, adults, tourists and people from different organizations in the Time Travels and historical events.

We have somewhere between 2000 and 3000 historical costumes in the wardrobe, costumes from all time periods: Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Middle Ages, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The latest dresses are from the 1980s and 1990s. Almost all of these costumes have been made in the studio and are used in the educational programs. About 10% of the clothes are gifts or have been bought in second hand shops.



We have costumes for children, youngsters, adults and seniors in different sizes. There are costumes for rich and for poor, for working people and noble men, for queens and beggars.

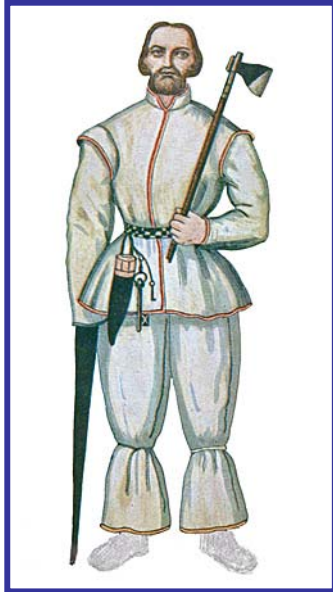
The sewing studio at Kalmar County Museum started in 1996. Before that, between 1986 and 1996, the participants in the Time Travels did not dress up in historical costumes.

A lot of skillful women are working together with me to make and mend the costumes. You have to like sewing by hand. The sewing machine became common in Sweden only in the late 19th century. So all the costumes before 1900 are made completely by hand.

The ladies working in the studio stay from a couple of months until several years, shorter or longer periods. Sometimes they are unemployed or have some kind of handicap. The policy in Sweden is to help people to have something meaningful to do while you are looking for a job or recovering from an illness. We often have interns from schools for tailors, dressmakers and designers, mostly girls but sometimes boys as well.



When there is a need for new costumes from a particular time period I get an order in the Educational Department, for example 20 boys 20 girls age 10-16, 10 women, 10 men, 2 noble men, 1 noble lady, one beggar, let's say from the early 16th century.



I make my research from local finds, books, art, paintings, sculptures etc and talk to other textile experts, archaeologists or historians. When we work with later time periods there could be photos or even patterns. Often I make an illustration and then draw the pattern. Original patterns from the 19th or 20th century I always have to make of a bigger size to fit the people of today.

The material is very important. It has to look good. If there was no cotton at the time of the Time Travel we don't use cotton. In the Stone Age we only have skin and fur and everything is made by hand. In the Bronze Age people in the Nordic countries started to use wool, and in the Iron Age also linen.



In the 18th century cotton was used by noble ladies. But cotton became common only in the late 19th century. Nylon was introduced in the 1950s causing almost a revolution in the way people dressed, "wash and wear".



In the Time Travels staff from the sewing studio often help the participants in old textile techniques, typical of the time period.

Kerstin Lönnberg
Costume Designer
Kalmar County museum

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Kerstin Lönnberg is head of the studio for historical costumes at Kalmar County Museum, Sweden.



What time is this do you think?
If you don't have the correct costume you won't come to the right time in the Time Travel. You will get lost on the way. And maybe never come back to 2010...

The Ostrobothnian Children's Culture Network BARK – Historic Environment Education for a region

How is a regional network in Historic Environment Education organized?

In August 2009 I started working as a coordinator for the Ostrobothnian Children's Culture Network. This network is a part of a national network for children's culture in Finland called "Aladdin's lamp". There are 11 regional networks all around Finland, which all have different development areas, all from music to circus art. In Ostrobothnia, our development area is cultural heritage education. Through this national network the knowledge about the local heritage and Time Travels are spread to a bigger part of the country.

Those of you who visited the Bridging Ages conference in Finland in September 2009 got to see some of the area and the museums I work with. The area consists of 18 municipalities, both cities and rural areas, with different challenges and possibilities concerning cultural heritage. Our target group is children up to 18 years old. That means programs and Time Travels for young children, as well as for teenagers. We do a lot of Time Travels to different time periods and try to include different areas of art and also the local heritage education as part of the curriculum.

The local schools play a big role in my work as well as museum associations and professional museums. For me, who travel around the area a lot, doing Time Travels, the help of the local partners is very important. This past winter my mission has been to travel around the region trying to document and connect the local heritage to education at the schools.

BARK also makes presentations of Historic Environment Education and Time Travels for teachers at study days. It's much easier to sell the idea if people have experienced it themselves! Currently there are several minor projects going on; in Vasa there will be a Time Travel to 1799 in September 2010, in cooperation between the local museum, the city of Vaasa, the open-air museum in Stundars and the local schools. In other areas the Time Travels are about emigration, or dances of the 1940s.



What makes this work exciting is experiencing so many different places and stories connected to them. And of course we all learn a lot working together...

Annina Ylikoski



During a inspirationseminar for teachers and museumpersonnel in January 2010 in Jakobstad we travel back in time to 1943.

Ikageng, a township in Potchefstroom, South Africa Time Travel to 1986



In the Time Travels to 1986 the South African learners are singing freedom songs and shouting slogans like “Down with apartheid”, “Away with bantu education” and “Freedom now”.

The Ikageng Time Travel Committee, the Potchefstroom Museum, Tlokwe City Council and three Secondary Schools in Ikageng – Botoka, Seiphemelo, and Resolofetse together with Kalmar County Museum from Sweden held the first Time Travels on the 16th to 18th of February 2010. Learners grade 10, educators, museum staff and members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Ikageng participated. Making placards and posters, writing poems and making speeches were some of the activities in the Time Travels. The learners were well prepared and they celebrated freedom heroes like Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela by singing freedom songs and shouting slogans of that time. It was almost like twenty years ago when their parents fought against apartheid.

Background

A Living History Project according to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Kronobergs County Council, the Växjö City Council in Sweden and the Tlokwe City Council in South Africa, started in 2008. Ebbe Westergren and colleagues from the Kalmar & Smålands museum introduced the Time Travel educational method as part of Local Historic Environment Education to various stakeholders at a workshop held in Potchefstroom in November 2008. A Working Committee (WC) was established under the chairmanship of Velaphi Fatyela, history teacher of Botoka High School, in order to plan a Time Travel in Ikageng. The working group consists of delegates from high schools in Ikageng, the Tlokwe Heritage Foundation, the Witz University and the Potchefstroom Museum. The Committee was tasked to compile information on the history of Ikageng, align the information with the school's curriculum and write a scenario for a Time Travel.

Workshops, Training, Pilot Time Travel, Reflection

In the two phases of the Time Travel, the pilot exercise (with adults) and the actual Time Travel with learners, workshops played an important role in training community members in the recording of oral history. The pilot phase involved only adults, many of whom were actually present at the meeting in the AME church in 1986. Then already, all participants were impressed by the possibilities of the Time Travel although they also realised that, in this case, real experience of adult participants (the learners/students of 1986) would have to be replaced by proper research and by training (by the present teachers and learners).



Students in 1986 writing placards and making posters for the protest march.

Scenario, A public meeting with the Ikageng Civic Organization in the AME Church in Ikageng, February 1986.

In February 1986 the students of the Tlokwe secondary School gather at the AME church to plan a march to the police station to present a memorandum demanding the release of their fellow students and other people who are held without a trial. People in Ikageng are suffering from the state of Emergency and the Apartheid system. There is a total frustration and a huge anger. In Ikageng as well as in other parts of the country people protest. The idea is to make the country ungovernable. The people in the township are dissatisfied with the poor municipal services, housing, high rents, low wages, bad electricity, bad facilities for the schools etc. There are protest marches, rent boycotts and students boycotts. The situation is very tense as the police could arrive at any time to arrest people and disrupt the meeting.... *How does the apartheid system and the State of Emergency effect us? What are our demands on the local level? What are our demands on the national level? What will be our actions?*



Evaluations learners:

"My mind and my emotions was focusing in 1986. I did the Time Travel with all my heart and all my understanding."

"Taking part in a Time Travel is a good way of understanding."

"I learned something about our future, to take education as our key of success."

"Doing action is where you learn"

"We must include the white people"

"I remember the feeling being united and supporting each other"

Reflections from the Working Committee

Even if history is a sensitive subject in South Africa today, educators, learners and other people who attended the Time Travels, were amused by the talent that was unfolding inside the church through speeches, songs, dancing and reciting of poetry and "toyi toyi"! The evaluations by the learners and adults show the importance of the recording of local history and our local heritage sites. It is so sad that little is recorded about our history.

Way forward

We intend combining the three high schools for a major Time Travel later this year.

We also intend inviting other high schools around Ikageng into the Time Travel Committee. The aim is to introduce them to this pedagogical method to use mutual knowledge and experience to develop Historic Environment education and Time Travels.

Bridging Ages South Africa National Conference in Port Shepstone October 20-21 2010

The topic of the Bridging Ages South Africa's first National Conference in Port Shepstone, October 20 – 21 this year, is "Social Cohesion through Time Travels".

The program focuses on workshops, open discussions and training about Research and Rescent Time Travels using Oral History.

Educators, museum and university staff, students and everyone who are interested in local heritage will be invited.

Organizers are Bridging Ages South Africa, The Port Shepstone Twinning Association and KwaZuluNatal Museum Service.

More information will be published in the beginning of June.

Message from the Vice President

Greetings from sunny New Mexico. I would like to talk about two topics here -- the internationalization of public history and the importance of play in our time travels. I was at a conference last week and served on several panels that wondered how to internationalize public history, that is, how to spread the methodology of public history (which interprets history to the public outside of the classroom) around the globe. From my experiences with Bridging Ages, I was able to share how our organization does just that. I talked about how our network grew into an organization, how we have branches and members in many countries, and most importantly, I stressed how we set up an umbrella organization under which different countries and cultures could do their own thing. I argued against having a rigid international organization and suggested that a flexible one was best for the diversity of our member nations. This flexibility allowed them to do what was best for their public and not for some far away board of directors. I also mentioned the invaluable service that Ebbe does in traveling around to spread the word about Historic Environment Education and the necessity of having someone like Ebbe for an organization to truly internationalize.



Excercise at the battlefield in Oravais, Finland.

As I was listening to the other organizations (including UNESCO and the International Sites of Conscience) who gave advice, I reflected on our success over the last several years in expanding our network. I also pondered how Time Travels and Historic Environment Education fulfills various purposes for the widely diverse people under our umbrella. We are in a globalized world, but we live in a local place. What works in Historic Environment Education in Worcester, South Africa probably will not work the same way in Vaasa, Finland or Smyrna, Turkey, or Tukums, Latvia, or any of the other places we use local resources for history learning. The success of our organization rests with our flexibility as well as with the techniques that we use. We adapt to the local environment, in a Darwinian way, and find niches to use our methods to the best possible advantage.

Back in New Mexico after the conference, I read *Playing Indian* by Phillip Deloria. The main theme of the book explored how the American colonists created new and revolutionary identities out of pretending to be Native Americans at events like the Boston Tea Party. I know this might be too narrowly rooted in U.S. history, but it got me thinking about the importance of play in our Time Travels. In addition to having direct experiences with history in our role playing, we also get an opportunity to assume different identities and perhaps incorporate some aspects of those into who we are today. At the very least, our experienced learning broadens our knowledge of other peoples and historic eras and expands our ability to walk in another person's shoes.

As we struggle to bring history to life in our various schools, museums, and cultural agencies, we are creating a model of internationalization that is attracting attention. We are also impacting the lives of those around us, in our local places, where we live, work, and play. In our globalized world, we are making locally a difference one person at a time.



Jon Hunner

Las Cruces, New Mexico

The Bridging Ages Conference 2010

Welcome to Kalmar, Sweden 17 - 19 November 2010

Applied Cultural Heritage

How telling the past at historic sites benefits society

Researchers and practitioners in the fields of Heritage and Education, from museums, universities, schools and all interested are invited to the conference. Places and stories, in the past and today, are in focus. What sites do we



choose as important? Who's stories do we tell? And how? In what way does it benefit the society of today? The conference will give time for presentations, discussions and reflections. And a Time Travel of course. Local organizers: The Linnaeus University and Kalmar County Museum. Info:



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A detailed invitation will be published in the beginning of June.

The Bridging Ages Conference 2011

Welcome to the Estonian capital Tallinn, 8 - 12 June 2011

Using Time Travels to Explore Turning Points in History

Welcome to Estonia!

Tallinn City Museum invites members and partners of the Bridging Ages to take part in the conference and the medieval festival Old Town Days in the vibrant city of Tallinn. The Tallinn City Museum and its ten branches focuses on various periods and themes of the past, the present and the future.

In 2011 the Estonian capital Tallinn will serve as the European Capital of Culture. Come to Tallinn and take part in presentations, discussions and reflections about how to use Time Travels to explore Turning Points in History. The Time Travel will probably go to the 1980s, a Turning Point in Estonian history.

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