Future Directions: Connecting People to their Heritage.

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Connecting people to their heritage is the goal of the Puke Ariki, New Plymouth museum, New Zealand.

1.0 SUMMARY

This paper is built around the proposition that the most important future direction for those working in heritage is to put much more emphasis on work that will better connect people to their heritage. It provides a tool box of actions to be considered as an integral part of the action plan for restoring your site. This work is equally as important as the traditional focus on researching the stories and stabilising the fabric. The tool box is based on these six core concepts: foundation, media profile, partnerships, wow visitor experience, celebration opportunities and measure benefits.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

We all know what’s wrong with heritage, it needs more money. Right? Wrong.

The biggest problem with heritage is a people problem not a technical problem. Looking to the future, the burning issue and new direction is to get the people side of heritage right. I work in a Government heritage agency, an environment which doesn’t help develop an appreciation of the important relationship of people to heritage. We get our salaries regardless as sites deteriorate and hardly anyone visits them. We believe the problem is that we don’t get enough money to restore the sites.

A directly linked aspect is all the interesting historical stories and photos we collect in the course of our work. We hardly share this material with anyone. As one consultant said to me recently “your Department has the most amazing stories but they are all locked away in filing cabinets”. Our staff can be adamant that they are too busy with their core heritage work to find time to share stories with the public.

The ICOMOS model for cultural heritage can be simplified into three core components:

- Fabric – the sites and things
- History – the stories
- Culture – how people today engage

For the history of engineering, issues relate to preserving archives, collecting oral history, writing scholarly histories, and boutique publishing opportunities. Modern electronic formats offer a way forward, but at the same time archive repositories will come under increasing pressure to be selective and recover costs.

For fabric conservation, advances in preservation technology may decrease costs. However the deterioration of many abandoned structures, that have survived for decades with an undetermined future, may reach a critical condition. Museums will come under increasing pressure to be selective and recover costs.

We have to work on all three components, but to make real progress we have to get much better at working on the cultural side, the people side. Three recent experiences have reinforced for me the importance of this change to the way we work:

- DOC Conservation with Communities Strategy
- Preserving Ormondville railway station
- MOT Cultural Tourism Research project

DOC is a government department with a legislative mandate ‘to conserve New Zealand’s natural and cultural heritage’. The physical reality is that the job is far too big for DOC to do alone, and so DOC must also nourish a range of effective community partnerships to sustain progress. The political reality is that, in this ideological era of devolution of government services, such a Department must always be positively connected to the community and supported by it. A range of methods to implement these concepts is set out in a ‘Conservation with Communities Strategy’. More information: Web link

My interest in engineering heritage led to personal involvement in establishing and long-term sustaining a rail heritage group, the Ormondville Rail Preservation Group. When formed in 1991, this community project pioneered a new concept, the conservation of a railway station complex located on the working railway system. It was a valuable exercise for me as a government employee to start up a community heritage project from scratch. I did not live in the Ormondville
community (three hours away) and most locals couldn’t care less about saving their station. The approach I adopted was to build the people side and build the profile of the project, not build the fabric. Over time this approach led to the fabric being conserved as a consequence. More information: Web link

In 2003 the Ministry of Tourism completed a major research project into cultural tourism in New Zealand. The scope included heritage sites and local as well as international tourism. One important outcome of this research was the concept of the ‘interactive traveller’ as a target visitor group to which you can do cost-effective marketing to attract to your heritage site. For example the interactive traveller has money to spend, seeks authenticity, and uses the internet. The interactive traveller uses the internet for holiday planning and to communicate with friends while on holiday and tell them about their ‘wow’ experiences. Marketing heritage is always a difficult activity and this is a valuable concept. More information: Web link

Heritage only works when people are connected to it. At present, too few people are connected. That is why heritage gets such little funding. If we can connect more people we will be connecting the funders, the visitors, and the volunteers that will actively help. This paper provides a toolbox of techniques to assist with this transformation in the way we work.

3.0 FOUNDATION

To connect people to their heritage the first step is to gather basic ideas, stories and photos that might trigger their interest. This section is ‘Raising Profile 101’, the core tools in the tool box:

- Core Information
- Point of Difference
- Marketing Shot
- Web Information

3.1 The Right Stuff: Core Information

Before you connect other people to their heritage, please connect yourself. Core information is the minimum required to understand the site and its stories. DOC manages 656 key sites and, to achieve economies of scale, has developed a quality and quantity standard for core information. This is a minimum standard; at important sites we would expect a higher standard.

The information quality standard is one A4 page based around five quality concepts that form the core of the academic discipline of history. It is not comprehensive, but aims to achieve a significant step-up in the quality of history that DOC collects and makes available. It highlights the importance of recording the sources found and of undertaking analysis to determine significance.

The information quantity standard highlights the importance of undertaking a sufficient amount of research so that management and the public are adequately informed. This standard is based on the J. S. Kerr Australian model for conservation plans. Research effort must encompass history, fabric and cultural connections. The standard includes a very thorough identification of sources; those consulted, not consulted, destroyed, and an analysis of key information gaps.

Images of the site in former times are essential. Usually these are old photos, and show people and activities. Where key images are not available they should be recreated.

References:
- DOC; Getting It Right: Standards for History; WGNRO-5550
- DOC; Knowing Enough: Heritage Inventory Guideline; WGNRO-19999

Example: Sheridan Creek bush tram, 1928, Otaki Forks, Wellington district. This timber industry heritage site initially attracted attention because of the unusually high quality of the heritage fabric that survived. It included a complete sequence of site types from the 1920’s; steam log hauler, bush tram route, sawmill machinery site. The themes deduced from the fabric were ‘timber industry technology’ and ‘logging in extreme conditions’.

The absence of documentary sources meant that the history was unknown. Clearly we didn’t know enough to get the best out of this site! Then amazingly two former bushmen, who worked at the Forks as teenagers, were found alive and keen to talk, both aged 93. Their harrowing recollections widened the whole thematic view of the site to include ‘surviving the Depression’ and ‘dangerous workplaces’. These social themes are more powerful hooks for most visitors than the technological ones. The old boys also provided 1930’s photos of the site, and these too are a powerful hook. More information: DOC WGNRO-23784 heritage fact sheet.

3.2 Point of Difference

The point of difference is the (compelling) unique concept that makes you decide to take action. In exceptional cases there will be more that one point of difference. In the case of heritage, it is the factor that makes you resolve to visit the site. It is a foundation of
travel industry marketing, the concept that this is ‘the only location’ or ‘the best location’ for something special. The point of difference is also a key tool for marketing heritage. The point of difference is something that no other site is able to compete with. The point of difference should be the opening statement in most literature produced on a site. It needs to be a carefully crafted statement.

Example: Karangahake Mines, 1882, DOC, Waikato district, New Zealand. DOC actively manages 52 gold mining heritage sites throughout New Zealand, but this site is the most strongly promoted on its points of difference. Our visitor information states that, of all the gold mine sites in New Zealand, ‘this is one of the most productive mines, set in the most spectacular location and offering visitors the most exciting experience’. We are also scoping providing an audiovisual underground in the mine, that will add a third point of difference. More information: DOC WGNRO-24755 heritage fact sheet

3.3 Heritage Listing

Heritage listing is an essential foundation step because it is an independent assurance of the heritage value of the site by leading heritage agencies. This assurance will be important to regulatory and funding agencies. When developing your case for listing, try to identify a national context, some reason why it is the best in the country. This will gain your site the highest status.

3.4 Marketing Shot

The marketing shot(s) is the (compelling) photo that makes you decide to take action. It is a foundation of travel industry marketing, the photo that makes you want to experience and participate in the scene depicted. The marketing shot is a key tool for raising the profile of heritage.

Example: Mansion House Kawau Island, 1852, DOC Auckland district. A helicopter was hired to take the marketing shot. Most people seeing the shot will want to visit. A single shot captures the essence of a complex heritage site; the colonial mansion, the jetty and yachts, the beach front location, the exotic garden setting.

You may invest several thousand dollars in the marketing shot of your site. At minimum you will need a professional photographer, a strategic briefing, ideal light conditions, and an unbeatable shooting location. This location may not normally be accessible; you may require scaffolding or even a helicopter.

A great marketing shot is like a great art work, it is of such enduring quality that it is hard to overexpose. It becomes the brand for your site and can be used over and over again without loss of impact.

3.5 Web Information

To market heritage sites to the interactive traveller, DOC aims to have core information on our 656 actively managed sites available on the internet by 2010. A Heritage Inventory Report (see core information section) provides information that is sufficient and reliable to underpin the web project. A pragmatic, minimalist approach has been adopted to this upgrade project. The two key features are:

[1] For each site, a simple HTML format ‘introduction’. The target is a general audience. It contains around 100 words of text, a regional location map, the ‘marketing shot’ ‘makes you want to go there’ photo, and hyperlinks to more information. The style of words is very much marketing and not technical. The aim is to entice readers, of both specialist and general interest, to click on the information links and then to physically visit the site. The text contains just the highlights of why the site is special, what visitors can expect to enjoy, and future plans.

[2] For each site, a PDF format ‘heritage fact sheet’ of at least two A4 sides. This is essentially the Heritage Inventory Report, required for management, presented in PDF format. The target is a heritage audience. This valuable document has nine other uses additional to the web, including a visitor hand-out on site and an accompaniment to press releases. A standard writing style is adopted that has a heritage focus without being too technical.

Ideally some great visitor information should be available, and this will be the target of a second phase of web upgrade. For great examples of visitor information see on the Parks Victoria and NSW Parks & Wildlife websites.


4.0 MEDIA PROFILE

4.1 The Hook

The hook is the concept that makes the media decide to cover your story because it will attract or entertain their audience. The hook can be a combination of these four elements and you should try very hard to be able to offer all four:

• A compelling story
• Special event or opportunity
Hook outline for North Head Fortifications opening (see opening celebrations):

- Compelling story: A big coastal defence gun, installed in 1884 to fend off a Russian invasion, has recently been restored.
- Special opportunity: This gun will be fired for the first time in 100 years at a celebration to mark the completion of a major phase of restoration work at the fort.
- Special guests: The pyrotechnics for the gun firing done by the Lord of the Rings team. The Prime Minister will pull the trigger.
- Visual opportunity: Gun, bang, flames, smoke. The background is a commanding view of Auckland harbour and city that most Aucklanders won't have seen.

The media loves good stories. Your old story, your history, can be made into news if it is told in a fresh way. You have already identified some key stories about your site in (a) the heritage listing case, and (b) the points of difference for marketing. Those that are relevant should come through in your media story.

A great shot can get you on the front page of a newspaper or on television, which is your ultimate goal. The media always seek to include a human interest dimension in their photos. Who can you include that will have audience appeal? If you have a great photo idea you might like to send the media a concept shot to help win them over. Try to devise a gimmick to give the photo a spark. See the section on celebrations for some specific hook ideas.

*Example:* Sheridan Creek bush tramway, 1928, Otaki Forks, Wellington district. This remote bush site has already been noted in the *core information* section. We tracked down Frank Pond, a talkative old guy who aged 93 worked there with his dad as a teenager during the depression in the 1930’s. Frank told gripping stories of workplace dangers and two horrific accidents to colleagues. These made them invalids but created under-age employment opportunities for Frank. He even had a great photo of himself on the job. Frank was so afraid of losing his job that he once jumped on a runaway train to try to stop it. Here was a hook: ‘Frank ...the only driver to ever jump ON a runaway train’. The media love this human interest stuff.

To make the most of Frank in the media, we would have ideally taken him back on site for a media interview and photo, but this was not possible. To get a modern day photo hook with human interest, we posed a group of volunteers standing in front of their just-completed work of restoring the railway track at the site of Frank’s runaway train. *More information:* DOC WGNRO-18954; heritage fact sheet.

### 4.2 Creating opportunities

For heritage projects generally the media won’t come to you, you will have to go to them. To develop a profile you will need repeated media exposure, three or four times a year ideally, projected a number of years forward. To do this you should develop a media plan, in which you identify specific opportunities for media coverage, generally on the basis of the story being news. For each of these opportunities you will have to try to maximise the hook.

*Example:* in 1991 Ormondville railway station faced demolition. These were 22 of the local media story opportunities generated over the five years it took to save an restore the station: station closes after 111 years, high heritage value, demolition threat, dire need for repairs, public meeting, heritage group formed, restoration work scoped, archival research completed, oral history research completed, staff reunion held, heritage listing announced, restoration plan approved, funding secured, contractor identified, work begins, progress reports, unexpected finds, work completed, first heritage award won, opening celebration, accommodation business commences, second heritage award won. This is averages one story every two months.

### 4.3 Which media?

It is useful to differentiate between different sorts of media and which to target. Equally important is when to target them.

The news media, television and newspapers, is principally interested in news, as it happens, on the day. You should contact them well in advance with your news offer. It is useful to develop a working relationship with the reporter assigned to your type of news. Your news offer should be based on the hooks you have identified. The newspaper will prefer a weeks notice, television a month. You will then need to work up a news release, drafted beforehand and issued on the day.

Magazine articles do not have to be news, but they usually have to be timely, within months of the event. Many newspapers publish weekend magazines and they are often hungry for material over the summer holiday break. Special interest magazines provide an opportunity for you to reach target audiences. Engineers can be reached through their professional magazines. Even industry based magazines may be interested in heritage, for example timber industry magazines will publish articles on the heritage sites of their industry.
5.0 PARTNERSHIPS

This section reviews these partnership options:

- Funding Agencies
- District or City Council
- Regional Tourism Organisation
- Community Groups
- Concessionaires
- Volunteers
- Other

Your project is too big to achieve on your own, so to succeed, you will have to get partners on board. The more partners you have, the more profile your site will gain, including political profile, which is important. The partners list above is for New Zealand, but the generic principles are more widely applicable.

5.1 Funding Agencies

Funding agencies are not just sources of money. They are partners. They want something back! Generally to qualify for funding your site will need to be listed as significant heritage by a leading heritage agency. You will also have to have your basic organisational framework in place.

Funding agencies will want to see their contribution profiled in the media. See the media section. They will appreciate being hosted and honoured at a completion celebration, and especially if you include other VIP guests.

The topic of partnerships with funding agencies is dealt with more fully in my partner paper ‘Saving the Un-Saveable’.

5.2 District or City Council

Many councils will have regulatory heritage responsibilities and policies fostering heritage protection. They may be interested in the economic and social benefits, sometimes the regional identity benefits. Your site may have a point of difference that contributes to regional identity, such as the Art Deco architecture of Napier City.

Councils may prefer to support in kind rather than in money. At one NZ battle site the council contribution will be tar sealing the 4km connecting road. They have just moved it up their schedule by 8 years. At Karangahake Mines the Council came on board in a big way and provided an 80 car park, interpretation, toilets, landscaping, and a site access bridge, total value $650,000.

5.3 Regional Tourism Organisation

Can your site get some recognised status as a key regional attraction? Five New Zealand Regional Tourism Organisations have developed cultural tourism strategies, that identify key regional themes and sites. Get your site included in these strategies. You can then demonstrate that the tourism industry supports your project. You need to try to find the funding contribute to their regional publicity initiatives.

5.4 Community Groups

Local community groups can help you in a range of ways including: help raise profile, contribute materially, increase your membership, and visit your site as a group.

You can address community groups at their regular meetings to help build profile for your project. Other heritage groups are a good starting point. You may encourage them to visit your site as a group, and you must be on site yourself to host them and create the best possible visitor experience.

Service groups such as Lions or Rotary may contribute to materially your project, and they usually prefer to make a specific contribution that gets them media recognition. On the Rimutaka rail trail, a local Rotary club is funding the construction of a viewing platform, see the Brag Shot section.

Ormondville railway station invites other rail groups in the region to participate in a work weekend once a year, on a specific project, usually painting. This is successful socially in bringing together regionally people with a shared interest, and we host a barbeque and other entertainment. A successful mix of work and play.

5.5 Business Alliances:

These are partnerships with people who:

- can make money from your site, and also
- your site can make money from.

If your site attracts visitors, then local bars, cafes, shops and motels benefit from the local spending of those have come to visit your site. If you focus on inviting visitors in groups, you can then arrange local catering for their lunch. For a bus of 40 visitors this could create a turnover of $500 or more on food, which will be greatly appreciated.

There may be operators in your district who already run businesses taking groups on outings. A significant market segment is retired people. You can generate revenue by getting these operators to include your site in their itinerary. You will need to work hard to
provide the best possible visitor experience to get repeat visitation, see *Wow visitor experience*.

5.6 Volunteers:
Setting up and managing volunteers is a significant commitment, but they can make a significant sustained contribution to the project. Some one has to stay ahead of the game and identify suitable work tasks and plan all the materials, equipment and safety requirements. Volunteers can also be invaluable as site interpreters, providing interpersonal interpretation which can be most effective with visitors.

6.0 WOW VISITOR EXPERIENCE

This section includes these tools:
- Interpretation
- Brag Shot
- Friendly local guides
- Other Values
- Volunteers

6.1 Interpretation
In terms of attracting most of your visitors you should consider your site as part of the entertainment industry. You are competing with other entertainment attractions for visitors leisure time and dollars. This section is about planning how will your visitors be entertained. Interpretation is telling stories on site so that visitors appreciate its value. The more variety on offer, the longer they will stay, the more they will understand, and the more likely you are to succeed in your goal of providing a wow visitor experience that they will recommend to their friends. More information: DOC Interpretation guideline and Standard 2005 Web Link.

Site Panels
The most common interpretation medium is on-site interpretation panels. They are common because they are affordable and durable. However there is a limit to the amount of time that visitors will devote to reading panels. Thus it is very important to make a careful selection of which stories are told on panels. You may hold 30 hours of fascinating history reading, but it should be carried over into a publication.

You should select the most powerful ‘hook’ stories that will engage the visitor to support your objective of increasing public appreciation for the place. The hook stories should wherever possible be constructed around a human interest theme. The popular media uses the human interest approach and understands its power. These stories should be supported by ‘hook’ images; photos, ‘recreations’, diagrams and maps. It is well worth investing in new art work for key images to fill image gaps.

If you engage a professional site panel designer, they may offer a concept that seems to trivialise your site. They will rightly focus on featuring just the very best hook stories. You may feel that your specialist visitors, who may be potential members, volunteers or sponsors, will be unimpressed. This is a valid concern, and a compromise is to specify ‘two tier’ interpretation. For example, key technical information can consistently be placed in a text box on the right hand side of panels, in a distinctive format, providing the visitor with an easy choice of read or ignore.

Example: Kauaeranga Valley, DOC, Coromandel district. For 80 years the Coromandel district was a hub of the high-value kauri timber industry. Bush activity in the Kauaeranga in the 1920’s was particularly well recorded by photos and later enhanced with oral history interviews. The uncommon richness of photos and stories made it possible to develop an audiovisual program for visitors, who were predominantly school groups. At the premiere, some interpretation specialists criticised the 25 minute length of the audiovisual, but it has proved them wrong by successfully engaged audiences since 1987. This is due to the human interest ‘hook’ developed for a logging story: a 1920’s teenage romance set in the remote bush camps. The quiet dashingly handsome boy and precocious vivacious girl first met aged 14 and later teamed up to share 65 years of marriage. This is a human interest story that today’s teenage audience can engage with. More information: Visitor brochure.

Walk, ride
Providing a walk or ride adds to the variety of the visitor experience. An extra dimension is added and stories can be told at exactly the right place.

Example: A very effective example is at the Wonthaggi coal mine site managed by Parks Victoria. Visitors climb into coal skips and are then slowly lowered down an incline railway into the underground workings. They arrive at a specially redeveloped underground section. Here even the air feels different, light is low, and there is a faint background of unfamiliar noises. Some key mining scenes have been recreated using mannequins, and the guide tells stories on the spot. To the visitor it the experience is unfamiliar but unforgettable. Unfortunately at present underground visits are suspended due to safety issues. More information: Web link.

Guides
This aspect of interpretation is so important it has its own section following, under the heading friendly local guides.
Models
Models serve a range of communication roles including recreating lost elements of a site, recreating past events, or providing visitors physical overview normally only seen by birds.

Example: Tawhiti museum, Hawera, Taranaki District, New Zealand. This privately owned museum in a country district has the finest offering of models and dioramas in New Zealand. The museum collection strength is farm technology, including around 50 tractors, yet the clever use of mannequins, especially children, provides numerous captivating human interest hooks. If you want to know more about the power of models, visit Tawhiti. More information: Web link

Audiovisual
Consider this contrast. Some studies of site visitor behaviour report that the average time of engagement with panels is only five minutes. In contrast, most people are happy to repeatedly spend 120 minutes totally engrossed in a compelling movie. An audiovisual offers the opportunity to tell the story of your site in sufficient depth.

The role of the guide can be greatly enhanced by integrating with an audiovisual. This enables the core site information to be repeated automatically as often as required. The site guide, freed from the routine, stays fresh to engage with the special interests of the visitors.

Example: Lyttelton Timeball Station, 1864, Historic Places Trust, Christchurch City, New Zealand. A 12-minute audiovisual explains the fundamental role that knowledge of the correct time played in ship navigation, and how the timeball worked. The curator then engages with visitors. The curator reports that the visitors now gain a much better appreciation of the site, and stays much fresher in the role. More information: Web link

Animation
Animation is now an affordable and cost-effective mainstream communication tool to add to audiovisuais. In is an alternative to models; recreating lost elements, showing how things work, re-enacting past events, and providing additional site views. It can hook many young visitors who already enjoy a regular diet of animation as an entertainment medium. Using animation you can now recreate virtually any story that you want.

Example: North Head Fortifications, 1886, Auckland City, DOC. This fort once defended Auckland harbour but the last guns were removed in 1958, leaving much to the imagination of the visitor. A 12-minute audiovisual by includes several fly-through animation sequences totalling four minutes. The animation shows how the fort looked and operated when it in a commission, and hooks the visitors aged under 25 … and other young at heart. More information: DOC web link; animator web link

Variety
All around the world interpreters are creating new communication ideas. Visit sites comparable to yours, talk to people, search the web.

Example: Mount Egmont Branch Railway, 1912, Taranaki district, DOC. This rail route includes the site of workers accommodation barracks, a human interest location but with the buildings gone. The outline of the buildings has been recreated using lengths of timber supported 100mm above the ground, simple and very effective. More information: WGNRO-18734 heritage fact sheet

Your story too
If you desperately want to build support for your project; to attract members, volunteer workers and funding sponsors, you need to make your visitors aware in a positive way of the needs of your project. Tell them how they can participate, how this will be valued, and what they will get in return. Interpretation should set out your vision, your track record, and provide examples of opportunities to participate.

Combinations
One of the most powerful methods of interpretation is a combination of many methods; with variety visitors attention span stays fresh for longer.

Example: Ormondville railway station, 1880, Hawkes Bay district, community group. Visiting groups are entertained by an audiovisual, personal guide, interpretation panels and a train ride. A model is planned showing the station and township in its heyday. More information: Web site link

6.2 Brag Shot
Brag shots are the photos your visitors take and show to their friends to make the friends feel envious that they weren’t there too. Brag shots are one of the most powerful marketing tools available for your site. They are the shots that survive the cut and make it into the personal highlights category. Brag shots may be emailed 'on the day' from an Internet Café 'look at this wow place I saw today'. On the return home, brag shots make the final selection of holiday highlights to ‘show and tell’ with friends and are printed and kept in the album. Brag shots are powerful marketing because they are accompanied by the personal recommendation of the visitor.

It is obvious that you want every visitor to be able to take a brag shot. Your visitor information must direct visitors to the site where the brag shot can be taken.
This may required constructing a special facility, such as a walkway or raised platform.

The brag shot may be different from the marketing shot. It will not always be possible for visitors to reach the marketing shot location, for example, if a helicopter was used.

Example: Rimutaka Rail Trail, Wellington region, New Zealand. This 22km trail is very popular because it traverses a natural area close to Wellington city. It was not possible for walkers to take a ‘wow’ photo from the route itself. A review of some spectacular photos of steam in action on the line showed that the old photographers had found a great viewpoint out to one side of the line. This location was rediscovered, and a side track and viewing platform will be constructed in 2005. From there visitors can take a great shot that includes their friends in the foreground and the trail winding its way through some attractive bush-clad hills. Furthermore, signs and visitor information will encourage visitors who can’t make full trail distance, to walk as far as the brag shot viewpoint. And furthermore, the $12,000 extra cost for this facility is being funded by a local service group, who understand the marketing benefits this great brag shot will generate. More information: DOC WGNRO-24905 heritage fact sheet.

6.3 Friendly Local Guides

The New Zealand Ministry of Tourism research into cultural tourism identified friendly locals as one of the most important cultural values appreciated by tourists. For heritage sites, this translates into using friendly local guides for site interpretation.

Guides can be the most powerful form of interpretation, if they perform well. They need to be trained and committed. On some sites, the first generation of guides can be people directly associated with the place, which is especially powerful.

Your site may not be able to sustain guides on a regular basis. A strategy is to target visitation by pre-arranged groups, especially bus loads of 40. You may then find it possible to provide guides.

Example: At Wonthaggi coal mine, the first generation of guides included former coal miners. Steps were later taken to impart their first-hand knowledge into the training of the next generation of guides.

6.4 Other Values

If a site has other values, in addition to visitor values, then these may form a major part of the visitor attraction. Research into New Zealand tourism shows that the primary attraction is scenery. Other significant attractions are adventure experiences and friendly locals. Some heritage sites can offer all these attractions.

Example: The Karangahake mines site occupies a spectacular gorge setting. In places the track is cut into the cliff face, and other sections are underground, making the walk around this site an adventure experience. If someone starts guided visits, that will add the friendly locals element. More information: DOC WGNRO-24755 heritage fact sheet.

6.5 Volunteers

Volunteer workers have the opportunity to experience a site more intimately than casual visitors. They may enjoy parts of the site not seen by visitors. They also get to enjoy the company of other people who love the site, a social benefit. Consider marketing a volunteer opportunity as a high quality visitor experience. Volunteers can assist on a range of tasks; restore fabric, research history or act as site interpreters.

Example: The DOC Southland conservancy runs an annual fully subscribed volunteer program, where the volunteers pay a fee to cover all their costs. More information: Web site link

7.0 CELEBRATION OPPORTUNITIES

Celebrations are customised events that are a valuable opportunity to raise the profile of your site, and include:

- Major restoration completion
- Significant event anniversary
- Annual heritage events
- Partnering other celebrations

The tourism industry calls this events tourism, and for some towns it is their core business opportunity.

7.1 Completion Celebrations

These events celebrate and officially open your recently competed major upgrade work, often both heritage restoration and visitor enhancements. They provide a unique opportunity to showcase your site and attract special visitors that would not normally come:

- National media attention including TV
- VIP’s including politicians and funders
- Communities of interest
- Unusually high visitor numbers

To attract these three special categories of visitor, you need a hook. A hook helps you catch a big fish; and it is baited with something attractive or novel that will
only happen that day. The attendance of the three visitor categories is inter-dependent. The media will be interested in attending if there will be VIP’s, a hook, and a crowd. The politicians will be interested in attending if there will be media, a hook, and a crowd.

Once you have developed the hook you need to clearly market it to the three target groups. For example, TV will be swayed to attend if they are confident they can get a ‘wow’ shot. You may need to send bait; some sample site shots or a video clip.

Example: North Head Fortifications, 1885, DOC, Auckland City, New Zealand: 2004 celebration. The aim was to attract our prime minister and national TV. The hook was have the first ‘firing’ of a huge old coastal defence gun that hadn’t fired for 100 years. Pyrotechnics were used, set up by the company that did pyrotechnics for the Lord of the Rings movie. The hook for the national TV was footage of the prime minister firing the gun, a hook for the children was the Rings connection. A community of interest target group invited were the military. More information: DOC WGNRO-23786 web site page

Example: Arrowtown Chinese Settlement, 1882, DOC, Central Otago district, New Zealand: 2004 celebration. This was an old Chinese gold miners settlement. The aim was to attract our Prime Minister and national TV. The hook to get the Prime Minister was to the link the event to recent government initiatives to support cultural minorities. To get a good shot to hook the TV, we arranged for the Prime Minister to set off a huge string of firecrackers. TV have re-used this footage again since … things went a bit wrong! A community of interest target group invited were the Chinese. More information: DOC WGNRO-25303 web site page

Example: Ruapekakea Pa, 1848, DOC, Northland district, New Zealand: 2003 Celebration. This was a land wars battle site, an era of history that New Zealand is only gradually coming to terms with. The aim was to attract our Minister and national TV. The hook for the Minister was a special Maori ceremony at dawn that colourfully re-enacted some of the stories of the site. This action was also a hook for the TV, along with the new Waharoa, a large traditionally-carved entrance structure, which provided a dramatic backdrop for an interview. More information: DOC WGNRO-23757 web site page.

Example: Tauranga Bridge, 1917, DOC, Bay of Plenty district, New Zealand: 1997 celebration. This is a remote site with no active community of interest. It is on a highway through an uninhabited bush area, where cleared areas had been farmed until the Depression. Local partners were recruited for the restoration, two District Councils and the Institution of Professional Engineers. Descendants of the farming families were tracked down as part of the historic research project.

All the above, plus tramping clubs and vintage car clubs were invited to the ceremony. A marquee was erected and a picnic lunch catered. It was one of the most moving openings I have ever been to with some stunning speeches from descendants of the farmers. More information: DOC WGNRO-23796 heritage fact sheet.

Example: Waitawheta Hut, 2004, Bay of Plenty district, New Zealand. This is a remote site with no active community of interest. It is an uninhabited bush area that was logged 1922-1928. Access is a three hour walk along of the best surviving bush tramway routes in New Zealand. We wanted to get our Minister there and national TV. The hut was built on the site of a cookhouse that provided meals to 50 bushmen. As part of the historic research project we tracked down a 94 year old woman who had been a waitress there as her first job aged 14. She had a 1922 photo of her outside the cookhouse. She was the hook so we flew her in by helicopter. To help recreate the story, we also flew in her 14 year old great-granddaughter. Tramping clubs were invited to walk in and around 200 attended. More information: DOC WGNRO-24830 web site page.

7.2 Anniversary Celebrations
A great aspect of historic heritage is that you can use anniversaries to raise profile, and the opportunities just keep on recurring! If you attract a crowd, its known as events tourism. With some lateral thinking you might generate an anniversary or reunion on average every eight years. The tool is chronology of key site dates which is usually part of a conservation plan anyway. You can then calculate anniversary dates. As well as the opening and closure dates of a site, you should identify notable events during the history of the site that warrant recognition. These should be highlighted as part of the cultural values part of a conservation plan.

Example: Brunner Mine, West Coast district, New Zealand. This big coal mine opened in 1865 and closed in 1924. Both these dates generates an anniversary on a 25 year cycle. The most notable event was the 1895 mine explosion that killed 65 men. This disaster evokes the greatest local community connection. On a 25 year cycle the next three anniversary dates for Brunner mine are: 2015 (opening 150 years) 2020 (explosion 125 years) 2024 (closure 100 years). The 1995 centenary of the explosion attracted 1600 people including 540 from Christchurch on the Tranz Alpine train. More information: DOC WGNRO-18859 site brochure.

You may need a two year lead time for planning big anniversaries, and they need to be grounded in existing community groups and networks.

Example: Waiuta Gold Mine, 1906, DOC, West Coast district. In its heyday Waiuta had 600 inhabitants, but
became a ghost town when the mine closed in 1952. A 1986 80th reunion attracted 1000 people.

Example: Arturs Pass National Park. In 2005 DOC celebrated 75 years since the park was founded and attracted 450 to a weekend program. Some of the profits will go to heritage projects; the interpretation of Jacks Hut 1878 and the reinstatement of the 1960’s ornamental park gates.

Example: DOC is currently setting up an anniversaries calendar that will automatically advise staff of anniversaries with a two year lead time. More information: DOC WGNRO-18865.

7.3 Annual Events

These are quite a big ask, because of the organising required on an annual basis and the need to sustain it and keep it fresh.

Example: Mansion House Kawau Island, 1852, DOC, Auckland district, New Zealand. This is a mansion in a very attractive setting on an island, but so has no local community of interest. For the last few years a dress up gala ‘Governor Grey’ weekend has been held, attracting up to 1000 people. More information: DOC WGNRO-25270 heritage fact sheet; and Web link

Example: Napier City, Hawkes Bay district. This is the biggest annual cultural heritage event in New Zealand. The city has successfully built a ‘point of difference’ around their Art Deco architectural heritage, and hold an annual Art Deco weekend at the end of February that attracts 12,000 participants. More information: Web site link

7.4 Partner Celebrations

You may also be able to enhance the celebration of another anniversary that can be linked to your site. An advantage of this opportunity is that someone else may do most of the organising. They get variety added to their program. You get their crowd. In New Zealand a popular rural celebration is the reunion of former pupils organised for the local school anniversary. Your local heritage site can participate in this and even host a special function (open to all) that honours former employees and their descendents.

Example: Ormondville railway station, founded in 1880, also participated in the 125th anniversary celebrations of the Ormondville school that was founded two years earlier in 1878. A school committee did the core organising, the railway station events were an item included on their school program.

8.0 MEASURE BENEFITS

Some of the potential benefit measures applicable to historic heritage are:

- Visitor numbers
- Visitor satisfaction – qualitative & quantitative
- Economic benefits – qualitative & quantitative

8.1 Visitor numbers

The simplest measure of benefit is counting the increase in visitor numbers at a site. This requires a visitor counting system to be operating for at least a full year before any major upgrade work commences. Early establishment is critical to success but hard to achieve because the natural inclination is to focus on planning and implementing the improvement work. But if you don’t have a base measurement for the site prior to improvement work commencing, you cannot demonstrate the visitor number benefits that the improvement work has created.

Example: Visitor number measuring was in place at the Karangahake Mines site prior to upgrade work commencing. We know that over the first three years of measurement the annual visitor numbers grew from 3000 to 36,000.

8.2 Visitor satisfaction

A step up in benefit measuring is the quality of the visitor experience or visitor satisfaction. Your heritage site project does not have, and never will have, a budget for this sort of measurement, so it is not productive to entertain the idea. However research done by others can provide a generic steer on how to improve the quality of the visitor experience at your site. Broadly there are two types of research:

- A few large sites research the satisfaction of their own visitors.
- Some agencies research generic visitor satisfaction factors.

The findings of this research can then be applied to your site.

This still does not allow you to directly measure benefit, but you can construct qualitative benefit statements based on the evidence of this other research.

Example: Napier Art Deco compile a range of data that show the growth of their event and the economic benefits. More information: Web link

8.3 Economic benefits

Demonstrated economic benefits are a very powerful measure that is likely to be attractive to politicians, business interests, and locals. If your site cannot afford this sort of research, you can transpose the results of research done by others. Often it needs to be coupled
with visitor number research at your site to estimate an overall benefit.

Example: The Central Otago Rail Trail offers a three-day walking experience, that can be done in part or whole. A 2005 economic benefit study showed that each visitor-day generated $90 of benefits to the district. The visitor-days for 2004 was estimated at 9000. This gave an economic benefit to the district of $800,000 in 2004. More information: DOC WGNRO-18463 heritage fact sheet.

Economic benefits can also be demonstrated in qualitative ways. There will be benefits to businesses such as cafes, pubs, general stores and accommodation that can be described from personal interviews.

Example: In three years tea rooms business at Karangahake Mines has grown in three years from one person working five-days-a-week to six persons working seven-days-a-week.

9.0 CONCLUSION

The principal issues for heritage in the future are people issues not technical. The biggest challenge however to work on our culture to raise public appreciation of engineering heritage. Today engineering is so much taken for granted, it is not longer such a novelty. Yet in engaging the public are the biggest gains to be made in terms of increased funding. Key history, with an enticing point of entry, must be accessible to the public to arouse their interest. Key sites must be developed so that the visitor has a memorable experience and tells their friends. An equal effort must go into developing the visitor experience as goes into conserving the fabric. Sites that become a successful part of local tourism will attract local business and political support. Opportunities must be available for the keenest people to participate actively in heritage activities. This paper provides a toolbox for tackling these people issues. Appended is a checklist you can use to plan the people aspects of your heritage project.
Heritage Appreciation Action Plan.

Site name: WGNRO-25340

The actions below are planned to significantly increase public appreciation of the heritage values of this site. Add specific detail that names names. Delete text that does not apply. See WGNRO-25310 for a fuller explanation of this approach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Specific actions</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation</strong></td>
<td>• Heritage fact sheet: [] DME reference</td>
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<td>• Heritage significance: [] define key points in simple terms.</td>
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<td>• Point of difference: [] define key point(s) in simple terms.</td>
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<td>• Marketing shot: [] available when?</td>
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<td>• Web access: [] provide link, available when?</td>
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<td>• Other:</td>
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<td><strong>Media Potential</strong></td>
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<td>• National news: [] what programs, what is the hook?</td>
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<td>• Local news: [] which</td>
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<td>• Magazines: [] which program, what is the hook?</td>
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<td><strong>Partners on board</strong></td>
<td>• Funding Agencies: [] which, how much?</td>
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<td>• District or City Council: [] nature of their support?</td>
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<td>• Regional Tourism Organisation: [] nature of their support?</td>
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<td>• Tangata Whenua: [] which? nature of involvement?</td>
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<td>• Community Groups: [] which? nature of involvement?</td>
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<td>• Concessionaires: [] which? nature of involvement?</td>
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<td>• Volunteers: [] which? nature of involvement?</td>
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<td><strong>Wow Visitor Experience</strong></td>
<td>• Access facilities: [] includes paths, signs, bridges, car parks, toilets, shelters</td>
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<td>• Landscaping:</td>
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<td>• Friendly local guides:</td>
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<td>• Brag shot developed:</td>
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<td><strong>Celebration Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>• Identify opportunities</td>
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<td>• Hook developed:</td>
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<td>• Attract key decision makers:</td>
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<td>• Attract communities of interest</td>
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<td>• Visitor satisfaction increase:</td>
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