18th WFTGA Convention 2019
20–27 January
Tbilisi, Georgia
Georgia - Diversity Which Creates The Uniqueness

GUIDELINES INTERNETION@L
Our WFTGA Guidelines International (GI) has been in abeyance for a while. Following our last General Assembly meeting of Delegates, the new Executive Board (EXBO) have decided to begin producing this newsletter for our members again. This March 2017 edition is only an 'interim' production, mainly aimed at sharing our International Tourist Guide Day (ITGD) activities in one publication. We are aiming to produce a fuller GI as we did before, at least 3 times per year. If you would like to contribute please contact XXXXXXXXXX no later than XXXXXXXXXX

LETTER FROM THE WFTGA PRESIDENT, ALUSHCA RITCHIE

Dear members of the WFTGA

During a successful International Convention in January and February 2017 in Tehran, I was elected as the new President of our Federation, the first from the Southern Hemisphere. I am a professional tourist guide in Cape Town, South Africa, and have served on the WFTGA Executive Board (EXBO) since 2015. I am looking forward to a productive and positive two years at the helm of an EXBO with guides from the USA, Australia, Canada, Iran and the UK – we truly are spread across the world!

The Convention was attended by around 350 participants representing 40 countries. At the General Assembly there were 41 delegates present representing 25 member countries plus 9 member countries represented by proxy nominees. Therefore, for voting purposes at the General Assembly business meetings of Delegates, we had a total of 34 votes, a very healthy number indeed.

Secretary-General of the UN’s World Tourism Organisation, Mr Taleb Rifai officiated at the opening ceremony, with significant contributions in person from the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hassan Rouhani, and the Vice-President and Head of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organisation, Ms Zahra Ahmadipour.

Our hosts were the Iran Federation of Tourist Guide Associations IFTGA led by Mr Arash Nooraghayee, IFTGA Vice President Mr Mohsen Hajsaeid, and International Relations organiser Ms Atefe Dehgan, together with a wonderful team of hundreds of guides from all local associations belonging to IFTGA. Their help, hospitality, friendship, kindness, politeness, professionalism, and collegiality were a true inspiration to all of us who attended. During the Convention we had excellent lectures, talks, workshops and a round table session, accompanied by tours to sites in Tehran itself. The WFTGA Training Division also held its main biennial meeting, and the General Assembly of Delegates took a whole day, plus other sessions during the Convention to meet and fulfil our constitutional requirements.
INTERNATIONAL TOURIST GUIDE DAY 2017

ITGD was decided by WFTGA in 1989 during the 3rd International Convention in Cyprus. It was realised that enhancing the image of the Tourist Guide worldwide would help the profession. Marking our WFTGA Foundation Day in 1985, we showcase the skills and professionalism of Tourist Guides worldwide on or around 21 February every year. This is an opportunity for our WFTGA members to celebrate our work at local level, highlighting our communication and presentation skills, our ethos and standards, our aims for mutual cultural understanding and sustainable tourism. Our association members and our individual members energetically plan and publicise events and tours for this important date for Tourist Guides. It is about us specifically – not the whole tourism industry, so it is special to us all. Below we have a compilation of the contributions received through the Facebook page and personally. Thank you to all and well done!

AUSTRIA ITGD 2017

From Felicitas Wressnig

The Vienna Tourist Guides Association had promotional tours in five museums of the National Library plus two outside walks: altogether 11,000 (!) individuals took one of the variation or multiple of our guided tours! 150 guides were working full day and we all were completely exhausted at the end of the day....
CANADA ITGD 2017

Members of the entire industry and APTG Montreal partners were present to celebrate at the oldest brewery in North America, Molsons. The Mayor of Montreal, Mr Denis Coderre, was made an honorary member, the 2nd for the APTG Montreal association. Not only have our colleagues in Canada been celebrating ITGD on 21 February, but this year marks the 20th anniversary since the very successful 7th WFTGA Convention held there in 1997! In addition, Montreal is celebrating its 375th Anniversary, while Canada itself is its marking 150th Anniversary. Congratulations to the entire team in Montreal!

APTG Montreal members with their new honorary member, the Mayor Mr Denis Coderre

GEORGIA ITGD 2017

Celebrations took place in Tbilisi, Georgia, with dignitaries, and festivities.
GREECE ITGD 2017

On Greek TV a report to cover events of ITGD 2017!

And a guided tour to the Down Syndrome Hellas Association members in Rotonda and Gallerius Arch for the International Tourist Guide Day 2017 offered by the Union of Tourist Guides Thessaloniki, Northern Greece, and led by Efí!

And guided tour of Dion, on the foot of Mount Olympus, with the theme "Mt. Olympus: Home of the 12 Gods", in celebration of the International Tourist Guide Day, offered by the Union of Tourist Guides of Thessaloniki, Northern Greece!

And in Athens, Greece, in the midst of our Carnival Sunday and spring with a Treasure Hunt! More than 200 participants and counting! Fun!

ITALY ITGD 2017

From Andrea Ogunbisi

Held between the 17 and 21 February in Italy, ITGD there involved tourist guides from all over the country, and thousands of happy an enthusiastic visitors too. But this year events were even more meaningful. After the devastating earthquakes in August and October 2016 and the heavy destruction caused in the central regions of Italy, as guides we decided to contribute in some way to the restoration or reconstruction of a damaged monument, so we launched a special fundraising aimed at that. Even the smallest sum gathered were witness to how much guides and visitors care for our historical and artistic heritage and how fragile our surroundings are. Guides in Arbuzo, Calabria, Campania, Emilia Romagna, Friuli, Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardia, Marche, Piemonte, Puglia, Sardegna, Sicilia, Toscana, Umbria, Veneto... all contributing time and skills to events across the country.
IRELAND ITGD 2017

From Ela Sooder

Tourist Guides from ATGI, the association of approved Tourist Guides of Ireland braced the harsh February weather and the wild Atlantic storm and organised a clean-up in the Burren Region in aid of the Burren Beo Trust. The Burren are a truly unique karst landscape and together with the nearby Cliffs of Moher form the UNESCO Geopark. The area, measuring about 250km2 of which 1500 hectares are National Park, supports arctic, alpine and medieval plants, is home to 23 different types of Orchids and 28 types of butterflies. The protection and conservation of this region is highly important and ATGI Guides are delighted to support that cause on the International Tourist Guide day and mark the year of sustainable tourism.

MALAYSIA ITGD 2017

International Tourist Guide Day in collaboration with Malaysia Women Tourist Guide Association (MWTGA) and Southeast Asia Tourist Guide Association (SEATGA) at Malaysia Tourism Centre Kuala Lumpur.

On the left, Kandia Mangku, our good friend and colleague
On the right, the Board meeting of Southeast Asia Tourist Guide Association (SEATGA) in Kuala Lumpur on 26 February. Associations from Indonesia, Malaysia, Mandalay Myanmar, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore

POLAND ITGD 2017

From Jan Żebrowski

International Tourist Guide Day 2017 was marked in Poland by several tourist guides. In Ostroda they held Lectures and a walk around the city for residents and visitors and all enjoyed cake too!
PUERTO RICO ITGD 2017

From Hilda Morales

The Asociación Puertorriqueña de Interpretación y Educación, Inc. (APIE) participated in ITGD too. Although our Botanic Garden was closed to the public, the administration of the gardens opened its doors to the museum guides of Caguas. They took part in a programme of activities to celebrate ITGD 2017. Guariquitén helped us out and prepared us a delicious creole lunch as you can see in the photograph!

ROMANIA ITGD 2017

On February 19th, the Romanian Tourist Guide Association celebrated the International Tourist Guide Day 2017! This special day, celebrated all over the world is a WFTGA (World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations) initiative. Our aim was to bring together professional tourist guides in order to create a great community. The events followed the UNWTO (UN World Tourism Organization) theme for the year - 2017 International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

The initiative is a multi year-long program engaging the campaign in three dimensions:
2. Education actions to spread the IY2017 messages in seminars, meetings and conferences.
3. Public Awareness Actions, by engaging in awareness campaigns.


SLOVENIA ITGD 2017

From Mateja Kregar Gliha

On 21st February, more than 800 participants in 25 cities and towns across Slovenia joined tourist guides to celebrate International Tourist Guide Day and to take part in 56 different events, from guided walking tours to introductory educational workshops. The celebrations proved to be an extremely successful event.

The event organisers were associations, museums, galleries, institutions and individual tourist guides whose primary purpose was to present the importance of qualified, well-educated and dynamic tourist guides and their work to a local community. The content of the events was extremely diverse. Some organisers opted
for shorter, classic guided tours, others focused on special sights so often overlooked due to the lack of time during usual tours, while yet others decided to present new tourism products... As for the reactions of visitors to these events, they were excellent and also inspiring. All of the visitors acknowledged that they are living in a beautiful place, rich in cultural heritage. Unveiled stories brought to life many a building past which people often hurry without even noticing it.

We are particularly pleased to see that applicants for international protection, both from the centres in Ljubljana and Logatec, also took part in guided tours, which were translated into Farsi. We trust that their stay in a temporary hometown will be much more enjoyable!

The celebrations received outstanding media coverage, both before and during the events. It is definitely national and numerous local media that made the event even more popular with the public. At the end of the day, new ideas and possibilities sprang up, and they will certainly enrich the celebrations of International Tourist Guide Day in 2018.

UK SCOTLAND ITGD 2017

From Rosalind Newlands

The Edinburgh and SE Scotland Branch of the Scottish Tourist Guides Association were presented this year with a unique opportunity to put together a bespoke walking tour to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Edinburgh’s New Town, which along with the Old Town, is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

James Craig won a competition in 1766 to plan a visionary ‘new town’ for Edinburgh. It would be residential and would attract people of wealth to the City. It was also planned to show loyalty to the Hanoverian King down in London and let it be known that Edinburgh was no backwater.
James Craig’s plan was a first! A planned grid system with three parallel streets, wide and spacious, with a square at either end of the middle or main street named after the King, George 3rd. Intersecting streets were named after the Hanoverian Royal Family and included the emblems of Scotland and England – the Thistle and the Rose. The plan was granted Royal Assent and building began in 1767, 250 years ago. The grid plan was very successful, although its use from residential to commercial slowly changed, and further residential extensions were added throughout the 19th century to enlarge Edinburgh’s New Town. Nowadays it is a very sought-after part of town to work and live in amid its architectural elegance.

One or two major tourism organisations in Edinburgh (ETAG and Essential Edinburgh) decided to celebrate the 250th anniversary with a lumiere event, whereby several of the original buildings of Edinburgh’s first New Town would be lit up with special projections giving a glimpse of what life was like for the Georgians of the late 18th century. The local branch of the STGA was able to collaborate with these organisations to devise a walk that would link these key buildings. The walks were to be known as a walking tour of Edinburgh’s Georgian Shadows and guides were to represent the original ‘link boys’, urchins who would guide residents of the New Town from their houses to other buildings by using a flaming torch. We’re using lanterns!

The project was launched on Thursday 23rd February in the week of International Tourist Guide Day and our walks began on the 24th February. The walks were designed to talk about the architecture, the social life of the early Georgians and the plan behind the New Town. They took place in the evenings, lasting around 75 minutes when we could admire all the special lighting projections.

We ran 18 walks until the 25th March for 900 bookings, many from local residents interested in finding out more about their city. Not only have we attracted many more bookings than expected, but also we have raised the profile of professional Blue Badge Guides working here in Scotland’s Capital city. Other commercial businesses are working with us, too, by offering vouchers to participants on our walks and we have enjoyed considerable media coverage. We are delighted to celebrate this special 250th anniversary, working with fellow tourism interests and offering an informative and fun walk to many local people.