Editorial and President’s Message

Dear Colleagues, Friends and Readers,

Another issue of GUIDELINES INTERNETION@L – another chance to bring information to regular readers and to welcome new readers discovering Guidelines Internetion@l for the first time. Since this magazine first went on-line we have tried to improve each issue and make it even more user-friendly. This time, two versions are offered: Guidelines Internetion@l can be read on-line as usual, or, for easy and fast print-out a paginated "Word-Document-version" (.doc) without illustrations is also available. We would be grateful to know which version you prefer. So, do write in!

During the recent 9th World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA) Convention in Cyprus I was elected President of WFTGA. For the next two years the delegates entrusted me with the responsibility to lead and manage the World Federation, which has become the global forum for professional tourist guides. On my priority list the provision and quality of the Membership Service take first ranking. WFTGA’s Past Treasurer and current Vice-President, Koula Vassiliou, has taken over this important portfolio. Together with her team of Area Representatives, she will service existing members and endeavour to recruit new full and affiliate members. The new tiered membership fee structure, approved by the General Assembly, opens up WFTGA membership for financially weaker associations enabling them to become part of the World Federation network.

Johnny Lee from Hong Kong, a very experienced Treasurer, is taking care of WFTGA’s funds. The required on-line services for members are most expertly being dealt with by Ruby Roy from Canada, WFTGA’s very able Webmaster and Convention Co-ordinator.
As of 1 April 2001, WFTGA is employing an Administrator who, together with the Secretary, Jenny Oulton, will take care of administrative matters such as membership enquiries and correspondence. Gerald Flavin’s and Tom Hooper’s legal background provides a valuable asset to the World Federation.

By accepting a position on the WFTGA Executive Board one has to know that such a position means a complete involvement. To candidate for and accept an Executive Board position without the necessary commitment and only for reasons of prestige is equal to betraying the members. Only teamwork is what makes things happen. This is why I regard the WFTGA Board as a team.

A new WFTGA brochure has already been published and a new WFTGA Cultour-Card will be available for distribution. This WFTGA Cultour-Card will entitle the individual professional tourist guides of WFTGA’s Member Associations to reap the benefits of the “WFTGA Cultour Partner Programme” while at the same time the WFTGA Cultour Partners will be given additional promotion (see STOP PRESS). The WFTGA Cultour Partner Programme will also help to strengthen ties with other important partners in tourism.

"Pride in WFTGA membership" is my motto and, during the next two years, I will make every effort to make my motto a motto of tourist guide associations worldwide.

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ASSOCIATION NEWS

AUSTRALIA

Melbourne

New National Association formed

In a special report, Anne Bottomley, President of the Professional Tour Guide Assn. of Australia Inc. (PTGAA), announced the formation of a National Association. In June 2000, Anne had attended a meeting of representatives of State and Territory Tourism Commissions and Tourist Guide Associations in Canberra. At that meeting a commitment was made to undertake further discussions with a small group of key representatives for the purpose of forming a national organisation.
In November, Anne attended a further meeting convened as part of the ongoing commitment to this process. There was general agreement on the formation of a National Association whose title is to be Council of Australian Tourist Guide Associations. The key issues will be training and accreditation. The aim is to have the accreditation programme in place by the end of this year. The new National Association will have the functions of representing the guides at a national level, to raise trade and consumer recognition and to link with the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations.

Tourist Guides recognised as Partner in the Tourism Industry

The Professional Tour Guide Association of Australia Inc. (PTGAA) is now listed as an Industry Partner on Tourism Victoria's website. It reads: "The PTGAA has the responsibility of representing tour guides in Victoria, focusing on professional development and business networking for its members. Tourism Victoria supports the work of the PTGAA, including the development of a national accreditation program for the industry."

AUSTRIA

Attractive New Brochure

With the ongoing sponsorship of the Austrian Federal Chamber of Commerce, an attractive brochure was produced presenting the services of the tourist guides in all of Austria's nine federal provinces. The brochure contains a short introduction to each region and useful contact addresses.

You find more information at www.austriaguides.at

Unqualified guiding is an offence

Tourist guides in Vienna are particularly grateful to the Vienna Tourist Board which agreed to generously sponsor a mailing to 5,000 partners in tourism such as tour operators to draw their attention to the fact that only licensed tourist guides are authorised to take incoming guests on guided tours. During this year’s season, checks will again be carried out on a regular basis to spot and report unqualified guides. In Austria unqualified guiding constitutes an offence, and the guides are fully supported by the authorities in their efforts to stop this practice.
Montreal

Association Professionnelle des Guides Touristiques (APGT), Chapitre de Montréal, celebrates its 25th Anniversary (By Ruby Roy)

Although there have been licensed guides in Montreal since the beginning of the last century, it was only in 1975 – a few months before the 1976 Summer Olympic Games in Montreal – that the APGT was officially registered under provincial law as the only association representing tourist guides in the city. Until 1985 various educational institutes, including the University of Montreal, offered tourist guide courses. The Institut de Tourisme et d'Hôtellerie (ITHQ), which is a pre-university college, is the only institute recognised by law to offer the course. An originally two-year course, now condensed into one year, is offered every two years. Once students have completed training and have received their diploma, only then can they obtain their city of Montreal permit to be a tourist guide. Only then can they join the APGT.

In 1992, when Montreal celebrated its 350th anniversary, APGT became a quasi professional corporation run by a dedicated team of volunteers, all of them active guides. They produced a change of image and APGT became more visible. APGT promoted itself with triangles put on the windscreen of coaches with a professional guide on board, new membership cards were issued, new distinctive clothing was created, and flags were used on walking tours.

In 1993 began a stronger collaboration with the tourism industry and in 1994 APGT joined the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA).

In 1997, APGT Montreal hosted the 7th International WFTGA Convention (and who of the participants from 26 countries could ever forget it? Ed’s note). This doubled not only APGT’s exposure to the industry but highlighted eastern- and western parts of Canada on the pre- and post-convention tours.

Since 1994, APGT also keeps tabs on unqualified guides and records their activities.

APGT is grateful to the tourism industry in Montreal, especially the various sponsors and employers who work together with the guides as a team. But APGT is also grateful to the many, many volunteers who have shared its ups and downs. Without their contribution “donated” to APGT over all those years, the Association would not have achieved the standard and recognition it enjoys today in the tourism industry.

Toronto

The truly impressive undertaking by the Canadian Tour Guide Association of Toronto of organising The Great Canadian Quiz was recently rewarded
by the City of Toronto with this beautiful certificate from the City of Toronto. In 2000, the Toronto tourist guides had combined International Tourist Guide Day and Flag Day, and had organised The Great Canadian Quiz in a very frequented location in Toronto. It was a great success with the general public.

**Vancouver**

Jeff Veniot, President of the Canadian Tourist Guide Association of British Columbia (CTGA of BC) recently invited all guides and other members in the tourism industry to visit them at their new website [www.ctgaofbc.com](http://www.ctgaofbc.com). One of their members set up a picture site of some of their recent meetings and trips – just go to [www.epsbc.com/ctgabc](http://www.epsbc.com/ctgabc). CTGA of BC also posts its newsletter on the website.

**HONG KONG**

**Association changes to Board**

After many years as an association, Hong Kong Tourist has now become a board. The name change reflects the evolution from a membership-based association of hoteliers, retailers, tour operators and others into a statutory body responsible for marketing Hong Kong overseas. But only the name will change. The Hong Kong Tourist Board's brief will be the same as before.

(Source: AMI Feb. 2001)

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**Tourist Guide Bill to open the Tourist Guide Industry**

According to the South African Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, the complete transformation of the SA Tourist Guide Industry will be fast tracked to provide previously disadvantaged individuals access to the industry. The Tourist Guide Bill would seek to open the tourist guide industry to a wide spectrum of individuals throughout the country and considerable emphasis would be placed on thorough and professional training. Training institutes would have to keep pace with the times, re-examine their syllabi and ensure that training is provided for all sectors of the population.

The Government, in terms of the new Bill, will insist on professionally-trained tourist guides who will be intellectually equipped to provide foreign visitors with a true perspective about the history of the country. The new Bill will introduce strict controls, eliminate illegal tourist guides and raise the status of the professional tourist guide – all factors which many in the industry believe are long overdue.

(Source: UPDATE, July 2000)
TURKEY

The Turkish Tourist Guide Association's (TUREB) long-lasting efforts have finally been crowned with success. Recently, the Ministry of Culture of the Turkish Republic has agreed to grant all professional tourist guides, irrespective of their nationality, free entrance to museums and historical sites in Turkey. This makes Turkey the first country in which all museums and historical sites nationwide participate in the WFTGA Cultour Partner Programme.

UNITED KINGDOM

England

The first UK Guild Committee meeting of 2001 took place in January at the Guild House and was attended by 19 Association representatives from all over the country. The meeting was the opportunity for the new chairman, David Jagger, to introduce himself. David took over at the AGM last December from Tom Hooper, who had chaired the Guild for three years. The Guild represents 1883 members of whom 237 are full regional members.

It was announced that London is to run a Mentoring Scheme for newly qualified guides and it was suggested that regional associations might like to do the same as a way of encouraging new members.

The next Guild Conference in 2002 will be hosted by Jersey.

Scotland

Until at least January 2003, Scotland is most likely to appear regularly in Guidelines Internation@l with news and updates. Why? Well, the next International Convention of the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA) will be hosted by the Scottish Tourist Guides Association. The programme Ros Newlands and her colleagues presented on behalf of their Association at this year's Convention in Cyprus sounded very exciting. So watch out for updates!
United States of America

National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations-USA (NFTGA)

The National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations-USA was created in November 1998 when the Guild of Professional Tour Guides of Washington, D.C. invited representatives of guide associations across the United States to come together to create a National Federation.

The creation of this organisation brings tourist guides and other tourism professionals under one nationwide umbrella organisation to collectively raise the visibility and to promote the importance of the role of tourist guides in the tourism industry in America. NFTGA-USA's commitment to develop and to maintain the highest standards of professionalism will enhance the similar goal for professionalism in the tourism industry.

NFTGA-USA's common voice will work:

• to assist in the organisation and development of local and regional guide associations
• to recognise tourist guide professionals and their contributions to the overall tourism-related economy
• to participate on a national level in tourism-related organisations to increase the visibility of the profession
• to enhance the role of tourist guides in the travel/tourism industry
• to promote political advocacy of the guiding profession in the realm of job protection on national shores

NFTGA-USA provides a forum for member associations through a newsletter and a biennial convention:

• to share information and to discuss and solve issues of mutual concern
• to collect and share pertinent data and to track the latest industry trends

The new NFTGA logo/pin, designed by Betty Muyres from San Antonio, displays thirteen stars. The United States were founded by thirteen independent colonies.

Together with her committee, Vicky Schwartz, the NFTGA Membership Chairperson, has been assisting tourist guides in forming new guide associations. Currently, the areas of Dallas/Forth Worth, Houston, Napa Valley and San Diego are in the process of forming tourist guide associations.
New York

NYC & Company Tourism Roundtable addresses Tour Bus Concerns

With an eye to managing the growth of New York City's tourism now and in years to come, NYC & Company has initiated an important dialogue between the public and private sectors focusing on the smooth passage of tour coaches to hot tourist destinations throughout the city. The tourism roundtable is a notable example of how NYC & Company can contribute to the Industry and the community.

Representatives from the Tourist Guides Association, the Department of Transportation, the Police Department, the Department of City Planning, and the Mayor's Office gathered to discuss mutual concerns with coach companies. Topics included parking, passenger drop-off and pick-up, idling, and ticketing. Roundtable participants agreed that education and awareness on the part of both the city and the coach operators are key to effective solutions. A follow-up "Task Force Awareness Tour" was scheduled to give participants "first-hand experience" of the challenges that coach companies face when visiting New York City. Roundtable meetings will be scheduled on a continuing basis.

Rocky Mountains

At their meeting in February, the Board of Directors of the Rocky Mountain Guides Association (RMGA) decided to accept the exceptional introductory offer presented by the Denver Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau and join the DMCVB. This affiliation offers the membership new opportunities. There will, for example, be networking possibilities at DMCVB events. RMGA will have a listing in Bureau publications and will receive leads from them. In addition, RMGA will have use of the DMCVB's meeting rooms.

Washington

The Blakeman Award (Guide of the Year) was given to Peggy Loftus, Master Guide, for her long track record in contributing to the Guild and the profession, noting particularly her work as up-date coordinator and the breadth of her involvement as coordinator of International Tourist Guide Day, a task that involves not only leading the effort within the Guild but also working with Friends, Affiliates, media, and the general public to improve the general understanding of what guides actually do.

The Certification Programme – What is it?

The Certification Programme of the Guild of Professional Tour Guides of Washington, D.C. was created in 1994 in keeping with the Guild's mandate to educate its members, promote the profession, and improve standards of guiding. The voluntary programme is available to all full Members of the Guild.

The programme is designed to enable members to pursue an in-depth course of study, both academic and practical, which encompasses core knowledge, guiding skills, and business skills. To advance to the final written and oral examination stages, participants must attain a certain
number of points in various areas of professional knowledge and activity. The requirements of the programme usually take three to five years to complete.

San Antonio

Members of the Professional Tour Guide Association of San Antonio (PTGA) met with representatives of the Metropolitan Planning Organization and of the Convention and Visitors Bureau. The representative of the Metropolitan Planning Organization explained the scope of a US$1 million study for the downtown transportation alternatives. The representatives of PTGA stated the problems the guides have in accommodating the needs of visitors because of the restrictions placed on coaches. They also expressed the guides’ concerns about new hotels being built without sufficient parking possibilities for coaches. It was pointed out that these issues are going to grow by at least 37% by 2002 due to the expansion of the centre. This compression may also cause visitors NOT to return to San Antonio. The Metropolitan Planning Organization was urged to take these concerns into consideration in their study.

SPECIAL EVENTS

9th World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations Convention

Originally scheduled to take place in Israel, the 9th World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA) Convention was held in Nicosia, Cyprus, from 28 January to 2 February 2001. Under the theme of “The 21st Century: Guiding for Peace” the Convention attracted participants from eighteen countries.

The Convention was organised and hosted by the Cyprus Tourist Guide Association. After the painful joint decision by the WFTGA Board and the Israel Tour Guides Association to cancel the Convention in Israel, the Cypriot organisers had only two months to prepare the event. And they performed the miracle!

Not only did the participants enjoy a perfectly organised and smooth-running Convention but were also able to experience the legendary hospitality of the “island of Aphrodite”.
Lectures and Workshops

The Convention contained an interesting array of lectures and workshops. The keynote speaker, Dr. Noel Brown, President of the Friends of the United Nations, delivered two eloquent representations on "Tourism: A new World of Opportunity for Human Prosperity, Solidarity and Peace" and "Tourism and the Environment: Partner for a Sustainable Future". Dr. James Fleming, Director of the Biblical Resources Study Centre Jerusalem, captured the participants' attention with "The Common Roots of Judaism, Christianity and Islam" and gave valuable advice on cross-cultural guiding in his workshop "Interfaith, Peace and Justice – Sensitivities in Guiding". Much was learned on our host country's history, future plans for the city of Nicosia, about mosaic making and Guiding and Ethics. A partially wobbly experience was Deborah Androus' workshop "Yoga on Tour". Have you ever tried being a tree? Stand on one leg and keep your balance – it's as easy as that! As balance is the first thing to go as we grow older, Deborah's "yoga tree" should be incorporated in everybody's programme of daily "musts".

New Membership Fee Structure

The General Assembly adopted a proposal on a new membership fee structure. The tier system is based on the World Bank's Purchasing Power Parity list. The new membership fees take into consideration the relative wealth of countries worldwide, and are to enable tourist guide associations the world over to afford WFTGA membership and enjoy the benefits of such a membership.

Administrator

The General Assembly also agreed on the World Federation employing an Administrator. Although having been a recognised need for many years, for financial reasons WFTGA had been unable to afford paid staff. As from 1 April 2000, the Administrator will take care of the correspondence, answer enquiries, service the portfolio holders – all in close cooperation with the Executive Board members. Since 1987 the registered office of WFTGA is in Vienna where also the Administrator will be. WFTGA is grateful to the Vienna Guild (Chamber of Commerce) and the Vienna Guide Service for the initial generous sponsoring of this new undertaking.

Training Programme

During the Convention, Part III of the Training the Trainer course was conducted. The eight candidates successfully completed the course adding to the already existing group of WFTGA Certified Guide Trainers.

Elections

As usual during the international WFTGA conventions, the election for the Executive Board and the voting for the next convention venue took place.
The new Executive Board members are:

President - Elisabeth Schroder, Austria – Editor Guidelines Internetion@l, Public (International) Relations

Vice-President – Koula Vassiliou, Cyprus – Membership Services

Secretary – Jenny Oulton, UK - Administration

Treasurer – Johnny Lee, Hong Kong – Area Representative Central & Northern Asia

Further Members:

Gerald Flavin, Australia – Constitution and Procedures Update

Tom Hooper, UK – Updating of Constitution and Procedures, International Relations

Ruby Roy, Canada – Webmaster, Marketing, Convention Co-ordination

Next Convention Venue 2003

After an excellent presentation by the representatives of the Scottish Tourist Guides Association, the delegates voted unanimously for Scotland as the next Convention venue. A huge attendance is expected. Watch these pages for updates!

A new feature – the Convention Auction

Great fun was had by all when during the farewell dinner Tom Hooper excelled as eloquent and most able auctioneer. Generous donations brought along by various associations for that purpose found buyers equally as generous, resulting in about US$2,000 being raised for WFTGA.

Jane Orde Scholarship Fund

The Convention was dedicated to the late Past President of WFTGA, Jane Orde, who had led WFTGA through its early crucial years of growth and development. The newly established Jane Orde Scholarship Fund is meant to honour Jane’s contribution to the World Federation. The Executive Board of WFTGA voted to accept the funds donated by a private Foundation in order to provide scholarship monies to guides from developing countries enabling them to attend future World Federation Conventions.

Tourist Guides as active Archaeologists

The post-Convention tour took the participants to many archaeological sites in Cyprus. A highlight was the dig at the Tombs of the Kings dating to the third century BC. Under the supervision of the Director of the Cyprus Antiquities Department and more physical digging effort than anticipated, the “find” of the day was an ancient piece of a skull.
Everybody was sorry to have to leave sunny Cyprus. But for most of the participants the next big event was soon to come: 21st February - International Tourist Guide Day.

**International Tourist Guide Day**

International Tourist Guide Day, first celebrated in 1990, was once again the opportunity for tourist guides worldwide to showcase their professionalism and skills to their local communities.

ITG is a public-relations event par excellence. Each local area contributes to the success of the day in its own way. The activities were again manifold and varied as no limits are set to the participating guides' creativity.

At the time of putting Guidelines Internetion@l on-line, many reports were still outstanding. However, a few "examples" can already be given.

Tourist Guides in Melbourne, Australia, provided four complimentary foreign-language city tours for newly arrived or older members of the Italian, Spanish, German and Chinese communities whose understanding of English is limited. The guides believe that these tours will provide them with a better knowledge and understanding of the history, culture and environmental heritage of the city they now call their home.

It was considered a small sensation that the World Heritage site Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna, Austria, allowed dogs to enter the showrooms on 21st February. A tour for blind citizens has become a regular International Tourist Guide Day feature in Vienna. This year, Schönbrunn Palace opened its doors not only for the blind guests and their human companions but allowed them to be accompanied by their four-legged licensed guides. A real and greatly appreciated premiere!

The evening was spent at the KUNSTFORUM, one of Vienna's main art exhibition venues. In appreciation of the guides' work, the KUNSTFORUM had invited them to round off the day with a guided tour through the current exhibition and a delightful buffet.

The Tourist Guide Association of Toronto, Canada, chose to celebrate the day in an entirely different way this year. The Executive Committee had decided that it was time to design and produce a brochure about the Association and that 21st February was the right day to officially launch it.

In Montreal, Canada, the guides invited the City of Montreal Police, the traffic wardens, the Provincial police force and journalists on an "educational" tour to make them aware of the difficulties tourist guides face while guiding in the city. Comments from the participants were that such a tour and information session should be offered to all police officers/cadets. It became apparent that some participants had not even known that there are licensed tourist guides in Montreal.

The evening was spent in a restaurant where the guides welcomed their favourite police officer as their special guest. Julien Darveau retired after thirty years in the police force. While on the job in Old Montreal for 12 years, he had learned Greek and Mandarin and had been considered by the
guides as their "patron saint". He is considering starting to attend the tourist guide course this year.

"Enlivening the Visitor Experience" was the title of a half-day conference organised by the Northern Ireland Tour Guide Association on International Tourist Guide Day. The Conference discussed the role of the Blue Badge Guide in partnerships with local councils, coach and tour operators, regional tourism offices, universities and other sectors of the tourism industry. Highest standard of quality and professionalism in guiding were the hallmark of the projects presented. The examples served as both illustration and inspiration for more partnerships to be forged. The conference ended with a walking tour of Historic Antrim Town which has witnessed some of Ireland's major historical events. Representatives of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Tourist Board attended the event.

"It was a day to remember and one to build upon in future", says Annette Kurth of the Scottish Tourist Guides Association when she speaks of this year's 21st February and the event the guides had organised at Stirling Castle. The aim was for ordinary characters to regale visitors with extraordinary tales of the castle's history. Roughly 250 guests arrived from all over Scotland, eager to be entertained.

With badges and bearing colourful pennants aloft, each group was welcomed by the alchemist from the Renaissance court of James IV. The lion-handler told them lurid tales about prisoners and the royal menagerie of the 16th century. Urbane courtiers, seductive ladies-in-waiting and voluptuous serving wenches re-enacted famous scenes from history and an ethereal ghost haunted the Queen's Chambers. A Machiavellian gardener (in sandals despite the somewhat wintry weather) bore witness to the gruesome murder of James II, whilst on the ramparts a soldier explained about the ill-fated siege in 1746, when the castle was under Jacobite attack.

The costumes, generously lent by the Pitlochry Festival Theatre, truly helped the characters weave their magic and make the participating guides deserving candidates for a Scottish "Tourism Oscar".

In San Antonio, Texas, the Mayor and Council members were presented with a certificate entitled "See Your Town Through the Eyes of a Tourist". The certificate was decorated with a colourful bow, streamers, and sunglasses. The certificates are good until January 2002 and can be used for a guided tour for as few as one person or up to a busload. The Council person will be responsible for the transportation.

YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEER

The year 2001 has been declared by the United Nations the Year of the Volunteer. The running of the World Federation and of most, if not all, of its member associations would be unthinkable without this invaluable personnel resource: the volunteer. The commitment of volunteers, which goes far beyond that of normal membership, means considerable investment of time and energy as well as the input of tangible and intangible resources, and sometimes a loss of income, which other members are not in a position to contribute.
Can you name a volunteer of "the first hour", a member of your Association who has volunteered right from the beginning or in an outstanding situation or on a very special occasion? Guidelines International welcomes your contributions on this topic. If you send a short description and, if possible, a photo of your "top" volunteer, Guidelines International will dedicate a special corner to those individuals in one of the next issues.

AROUND THE WORLD

Australia

Australia's current population is 19.1 million. By 2100 the population is estimated at 32 million.

Clean Up Australia (CUA)

CUA is the largest community environmental organisation in Australia. The annual Clean Up Australia Day held each March regularly draws more than 750,000 volunteers. A record number of clean up sites were registered in 2000.

Special Events

This year, Australia celebrates its political consolidation in 1901 when New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and the offshore island Tasmania federated as sovereign states. Victoria has a second reason to celebrate: gold was discovered there in 1851.

South Africa

South Africa is the second largest cider market after the UK and is growing at 20% p.a.

A recent TV report mentioned that there were an estimated 132,000 taxis in South Africa.

United Kingdom

King Arthur and his Round Table

We all know, of course, that King Arthur came from the West Country ... or was it Wales ... or maybe Scotland? The Russians have added to the myth of Arthur's origins by claiming that he really was a nomadic tribesman from Russia.

The Sarmatians were a tribe of soldiers from the Steppes who were defeated by the Romans on the Danube. As part of a peace accord, Emperor Marcus Aurelius was given 8,000 of the Sarmatian cavalrymen, of
whom 5,500 were sent to Britain. These highly skilled horsemen fought under the banner of the dragon and worshipped a war good depicted as a naked sword set upright in the ground. They were the first in Britain to bear the motif of the dragon. The Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg has a number of dragon images from the tombs of Siberian nomadic warriors dating back to 500 BC.

Meanwhile, after a 20-year investigation, a team led by Oxford professor Martin Biddle, may have finally cracked the riddle of King Arthur’s Round Table. For centuries, historians have tried to work out the origin of the round table which hangs in the Great Hall, Winchester. Professor Biddle dated the 51 planks in the table to 1290, ruling out any possibility that it was used by the legendary King.

Instead, Professor Biddle believes it was the central part of an elaborate medieval Arthurian fancy dress ball during Edward I’s reign. Apparently, Edward was fascinated by Arthur.

(Source: Metro/Guide Post, Jan. & March 2001)

**New World Heritage site in Wales**

Blaenavon in South Wales recently became one of the 700 sites worldwide which have been given World Heritage status.

Blaenavon was chosen because of the key role it played in the industrial revolution. The 6,000 residents of the Victorian town hope that the World Heritage status could attract 500,000 tourists a year and 15m British pounds of investment.

**United States of America**

**Tourism in New York City**

It is estimated that 36.7 million people visited New York City in 1999, and a record 38.4 million are estimated to have visited in 2000. These staggering figures represent an 11% increase from 1998 and a 28% increase since 1995. There were 30.1 million American visitors and 6.6 million overseas tourists. It is calculated that approximately 80% of all visitors to New York spend time in Times Square. In 2000, a projected 30.7 million visitors will have come through Times Square and will have spent approximately US$13 million.

**Census Figures**

According to the US Census Bureau, San Antonio, Texas, ranks as the third largest city in Texas. The 2000 census claims the population is 1,144,646.

The 1890 census indicated San Antonio had 36,681 residents, not including the military, which was estimated at 2500.
Italy

Giotto skeleton identified

Based on the La Nazione newspaper, The Weekly Telegraph (no. 479) reports that a skeleton found under the Duomo in Florence 30 years ago was identified as that of Giotto. The skeleton's face as reconstructed by Prof. Francesco Malegni, a palaeontologist, bears a strong similarity to a face in a fresco in Padua, which is supposed to be a self-portrait of the early Renaissance artist.

Japan

A museum dedicated to John Lennon has opened in Yono, 15 miles north of Tokyo, on what would have been the Beatle's 60th birthday. Visitors are able to hear Beatles music as they tour the museum, which covers two floors of a new building. Most of the 130 items on display, including Lennon's famous wire-rimmed spectacles, were given by Yoko Ono, his widow (The Weekly Telegraph no. 481).

INSIGHT

Exhibitions

2000 Wildlife Photographer of the Year

(Natural History Museum, Vienna)

BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition is the largest and most prestigious wildlife photography competition in the world. Organised by BBC Wildlife Magazine and The Natural History Museum and sponsored by the British Gas Group, the Competition encourages both amateur and professional photographers to record and document the beauty and wonder of the natural world.

This exhibition, currently shown at the Natural History Museum in Vienna, displays the winning and commended images from the BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition taken from over 19,000 slides that were entered by photographers from over 60 countries.

The BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year title is awarded for the single image judged to be the most striking and memorable of all the photographs entered for the Competition. The 2000 winner, Manoj Shah, from the United Kingdom, grew up in Kenya. One of his favourite activities as a small child was visiting nearby Nairobi National Park watching animals in their natural environment. That experience became the foundation for taking photographs of wildlife.

"... appealing and accessible – it has tremendous pathos" (Simon King)

Flip Nicklin says of this photo: "The burst of flash in the baby's eyes really draws you into the picture and there is a beautiful contrast between the intense gaze of the baby and the averted gaze of the mother."
From Vienna ehe exhibition will go to many museums around the world. Watch out for it! It is an experience that makes you aware that nature needs our protection.

Note: The Vienna Natural History Museum is a WFTGA Cultour Partner museum (see Stop Press).

 Hungary Celebrates its Millennium in Vienna

A thousand years ago, Prince Vajk, who has entered the history books as St. Stephen and founder of the state of Hungary, was crowned King. This act also meant the foundation of a Christian Hungarian state. The famous Stephen's crown, often on flight, stolen, lost, pledged and four times buried, was last worn by the Emperor Charles I when he was crowned King of Hungary on 30 December 1916.

By adopting Christianity, Hungary became a part of the western Christian "family" of states. For this reason, Hungary decided to celebrate its Millennium in Austria with which is was united for four hundred years under the Habsburg monarchs.

"Emperor and King" – a Historical Journey – Austria and Hungary 1526-1918" is the title of the exhibition currently shown at the Austrian National Library together with the Collegium Hungaricum. Priceless exhibits testify 400 years of the history of the two countries -Hungary and Austria - in one common state.

Note: The Austrian National Library is a WFTGA Cultour Partner (see Stop Press)

 On a Musical Note

Saturday, 27 January 2001 marked the 100th anniversary of Giuseppe Verdi's death. Although being a composer whose works are among the most frequently performed, only a relatively small number of his 28 operas are really known. Rather slowly Verdi's operas were discovered by the general public. Of Verdi's early works only "Nabucco", his third opera, was not condemned to be hidden in the archives of opera houses. Verdi's fame began with "Nabucco" – for political reasons. "Viva Verdi" became a synonym for "Viva Vittorio Emanuele, Re d'Italia". The Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves "Va pensiero" was taken up as the Italian anthem for independence. Verdi himself became a symbol of the resistance against the Habsburg rule.

As opera houses around the world commemorate this anniversary with performances of Verdi's operas, the Kunsthistorische Museum in Vienna organised an exhibition which takes the visitor until 1 July 2000 on a sightseeing tour through "painted music" of the 16th and 17th centuries.

"Dipingere la Musica" is the title of the museum's summer exhibition at the Palais Harrach. While one section of the show is dedicated to Orpheus and his colleagues from Antiquity and mythology, another presents musicians from the Old and the New Testament. Approximately 100 paintings, thirty
graphic sheets and precious contemporary instruments illustrate the diversity of the topic. A musical feast for the eyes is awaiting the visitor.

Note: The Vienna Kunsthistorische Museum is a WFTGA Cultour Partner museum.

THE LANGUAGE CORNER

European Year of Languages

The year 2001 has been declared the European Year of Languages (EYL). Forty-five countries from Portugal to Azerbaijan are taking part in the EYL, which aims to celebrate multilingualism and promote language learning at all levels in European society.

"The Linguist" reports that in the UK for instance, one of the main ways in which the general public can be involved in the year will be through the Languages Challenge. A sponsored publicity drive will encourage everyone, from whatever walk of life, to take on a language challenge for 2001 – that is, to set themselves a practical, demonstrable language-learning goal – for example, singing a song in Swedish, reciting a poem in Arabic, welcoming some visitors in Japanese or making a speech in Welsh. The aim is to stress participation and the fun aspect of language learning.

The European Day of Languages will be celebrated on 26 September.

Try to pronounce this one

In the February 2001 newsletter of the Canadian Tour Guide Association of Toronto, Rena Graefner informed her colleagues about the longest word that is known to have been entered in an English language dictionary. It is:

Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis
(pneumono/ultra/microscopic/silico/volcano/coniosis)

It means "a lung disease affecting miners who inhale silicate or quartz dust".

Best franglais

During the wartime animosities between Winston Churchill and de Gaulle, Churchill is reported to have warned de Gaulle in his best French: "Si vous m'opposerez, je vous get-ridderai!"

Defective Error Farce

Paul Jacobs from Cape Town spotted this one in the Derby Abbey Community News: "We apologise for the error in the last edition, in which we stated that Mr. Fred Nicolme is a Defective in the Police Force'. This was a typographical error. We meant of course that Mr. Nicolme is a Detective in the Police Farce."
Interested in a very special Italian Language Course at a very special price? – Look up Issue 2 of Guidelines Internetion@l (December 2000) for the offer by the Koinè Language and Cultural Activity Centre in Florence, Italy.

LETTERBOX

Letter from a Touraholic

Dear Tourist Guides:

My name is John and I'm a touraholic. I know the exact day I became addicted. It was the first day of my tour of Canada. We were visiting Toronto where I spent some of my childhood. In two hours I learned more than I ever had in the years I had lived there. It was more than just the acquisition of knowledge that turned me into a tour addict. it was the way the tourist guide brought the city to life in a way the guidebooks never could.

To satisfy my addiction, I have taken many tours and I have experienced over 20 itineraries on four different continents. My passion for touring burns as bright today as it did on that day in Toronto. I am often asked why I like touring so much and it's a question I love to answer.

Undoubtedly, the tourist guides are amazing. The competition for jobs is intense, which means that the standards are extremely high. Not only are tourist guides a walking encyclopedia of history and culture and local customs, they are also entertainers. I have yet to hear a passenger – adult or child – ask, "Are we there yet?"

So "tourist guides" – keep up the good work ... because I'm proud to be a touraholic!!!

Cheers to you all!

John

(Source: CTGA of Toronto Newsletter, Feb. 2001)

He Dared to Dream – a Letter from South Africa

Lutendo Wilfred Lishivha made history during November 2000 when he became South Africa's first SATOUR-accredited Black National Tourist Guide. To say that it has been a magnificent achievement is an understatement. Originally from Venda and with a passion for history from his school days, young Wilfred, on leaving school, earned his first salary in Venda delivering milk and guava juice for a dairy company. In 1993 he took the plunge and headed for "Egoili", for fame and fortune.

But there was no fame and there was no fortune. He struggled for months doing piece jobs, mowing lawns and tending gardens. His first real job in
Johannesburg was with an Italian "odd job" man fixing kitchen units, painting and doing maintenance work on homes in the leafy suburbs of Johannesburg. One day, during his lunch break, Wilfred met his cousin Edward who was employed as a security guard at Gold Reef City. One thing led to another and Wilfred soon found himself on a "guided tour" of Gold Reef City with cousin Edward.

This short walkabout re-ignited Wilfred's passion for history and he discovered that he had a real thirst for knowledge about his own country. When cousin Edward suggested that he should perhaps become a tourist guide, he lost no time. While still within the grounds of Gold Reef City, he phoned Gold Reef Guides from a call box and asked for an interview. He was immediately signed up for the next Gold Reef City training course. Other courses followed – Soweto in 1994 and Gauteng Province in 1995. "His overall ability and pleasant manner coupled with a strong dedication to professionalism, was a joy to see", writes Jenny Briscoe of Gold Reef Guides. "He quickly became one of our most thought-after Black tourist guides."

In 1997, Wilfred joined the Shongalolo Express as the company's first Black tourist guide on cross-country train excursions for foreign visitors. "That is when I decided to study for all nine South African provinces", says Wilfred, "I wanted to become South Africa's first Black National tourist guide". On 31 October 2000 Wilfred's dream was realised when he was accredited by SATOUR for all nine provinces.

(Source:UPDATE, December 2000)

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

A good tourist guide must learn to listen – So listen to a colleague's sad tale ...
When God gave out brains, I thought He said trains – and I missed mine;
When God gave out looks, I thought He said books – and I didn’t need any;
When God gave out noses, I thought He said roses - and I asked for a red one;
When God gave out legs, I thought He said kegs - and I asked for two fat ones;
When God gave out ears, I thought He said beers - and I asked for two long ones;
When God gave out chins, I thought He said gins - and I asked for a double;
When God gave out heads, I thought He said beds - and I asked for a soft one.

Since then, I am trying to listen better!

(Source; UPDATE, December 2000)
The World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA) is happy to announce its new "WFTGA Cultour Partner Programme". A number of important museums and institutions of world renown have already agreed to participate. The advantages of the WFTGA Cultour Partnership are twofold: WFTGA members enjoy yet another benefit and may broaden their knowledge free of charge, while the cooperation partners benefit from the multiplier effect of tourist guides and the word-of-mouth recommendation. The continually updated list in Guidelines Internation@l represents a further promotion for the Cultour Partners.

How does it work? In conjunction with the guide identity card and/or badge, the new WFTGA Cultour-Card will entitle professional guides when travelling outside their own countries to benefit from free entrance to many important museums and institutions around the world. Ask your Association secretariat for more information on this new membership benefit and watch out for a list of Cultour Partners in future issues of Guidelines Internation@l.

Are you interested in joining the WFTGA Cultour Programme and become a Cultour Partner? All museums and cultural institutions are cordially invited to participate in the WFTGA Cultour Programme. Please contact: WFTGA Administrator, c/o WKW, Stubenring 8-10, A-1010 Vienna, Austria/ Tel. +43 1 523 59 11, fax +43 1 51 450 1342, e-mail: info@wftga.org

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