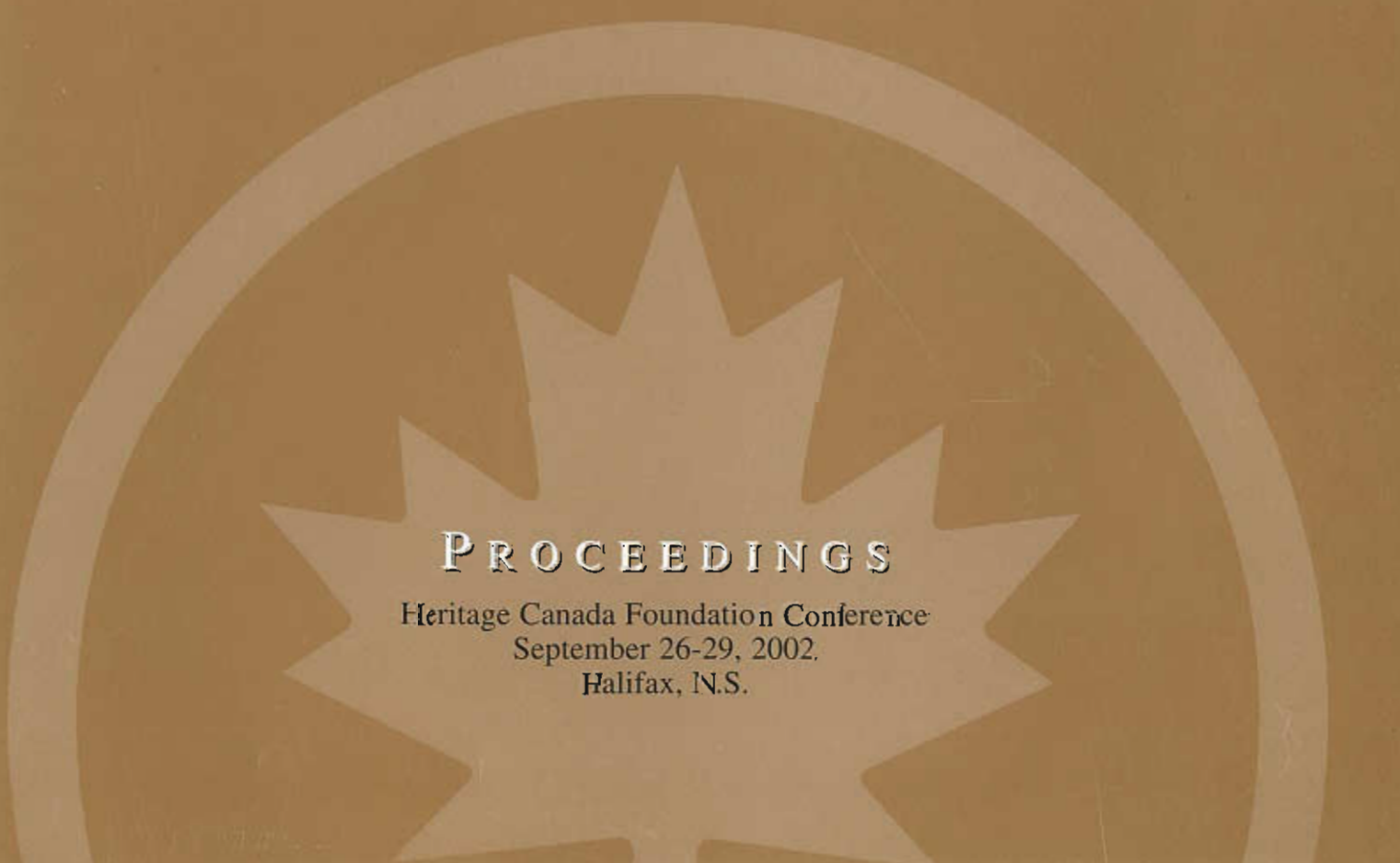


# DISCOVERING HERITAGE TOURISM

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## PROCEEDINGS

Heritage Canada Foundation Conference  
September 26-29, 2002.  
Halifax, N.S.

The Heritage Canada Foundation acknowledges  
the generous support of

The Canadian Tourism Commission



The Province of Nova Scotia



The Regional Municipality of Halifax



**The Heritage Canada Foundation**

5 Blackburn Avenue

Ottawa, ON K1N 8A2 Canada

Telephone: (613) 237-1066

Fax: (613) 237-5987

E-mail: [heritagecanada@heritagecanada.org](mailto:heritagecanada@heritagecanada.org)

Web site: [www.heritagecanada.org](http://www.heritagecanada.org)

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The Heritage Canada Foundation  
5 Blackburn Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1N 8A2 Canada  
Telephone: (613) 237-1066  
Fax: (613) 237-5987  
E-mail: [heritagecanada@heritagecanada.org](mailto:heritagecanada@heritagecanada.org)  
Web site: [www.heritagecanada.org](http://www.heritagecanada.org)

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PREPARED BY:  
Sheila Ascroft

CONFERENCE PLANNING:  
Douglas Franklin  
Maggie Villeneuve

EDITOR:  
Carolyn Quinn

DESIGN:  
Jennifer Morse

TRANSLATION:  
Bérengère de Guernon

FRENCH LANGUAGE EDITOR:  
Pierre Cremer

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# OPENING REMARKS

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**BRIAN ANTHONY,**  
Executive Director,  
Heritage Canada Foundation

Welcome to the annual conference of the Heritage Canada Foundation. We are delighted to be in Halifax, Nova Scotia—in a city and province rich with heritage buildings and sites. It is one of the best locations in Canada to have a conference on heritage tourism. The Foundation has also attempted to create a conference program that will bring us current, relevant information on heritage tourism in both Canada and other countries. We hope that our deliberations here, along with our recently published study on heritage tourism, will help to light the path ahead, both in the conservation field and in the tourism industry.



**TRUDY COWAN,**  
Chair of the Heritage Canada Foundation  
Board of Governors and Board member for  
Alberta

Travel is an urge that we all seem to carry with us. Perhaps that is why we often refer to life itself as a journey, discovering, endlessly, as we move about each day. For those involved in the conservation of our heritage buildings and historic places, tourism takes on a completely different meaning. Whether we save, present or interpret the heritage we know, or travel to discover the heritage of other places, those of us in heritage conservation have high expectations about tourism. We seek authentic places. We want to know how these places have been shaped by their inhabitants and how, in turn, these places have influenced people.

Heritage tourism is important. It is a major part of cultural tourism, which is nearly 40 percent of all tourism. During the conference, we will learn more about the significance of heritage tourism: to communities, industry and the heritage movement. We will discuss approaches to and philosophies of heritage tourism. Equally important, we will “practise what we preach” and visit the famed seaport of Lunenburg, a National and World Heritage Site.



**BRENDA SHANNON,**  
Vice-Chair of the Heritage Canada Foundation  
Board of Governors and Board member for  
Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia can justifiably be called the “crossroads of heritage” in Atlantic Canada. We offer the visitor, whether a first-time wanderer or a nostalgia-filled expatriate, a depth of heritage tourism. The trails and places of the Mi’kmaq First Peoples, the living legacy of the Acadians, the proud culture of the Loyalists and Scots and, above all, the heritage of our seacoast, provide a wealth for us to experience. In a literal sense, we are also at a crossroads. Just a short walk from here is Pier 21, a National Historic Site that does more than feature our history, it also touches the heart. As a place of maritime heritage, Nova Scotia is remarkable. Halifax is a place of pilgrimage for those who want to see relics of the *Titanic* or a magnificent, star-shaped colonial fortress. So, learn and enjoy yourselves, and welcome to Nova Scotia.

# KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

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## TOPIC:

### Preservation and Presentation: Some Thoughts on the Role of the Canadian Tourism Commission and Heritage Tourism



## PRESENTER: ROGER WHEELOCK,

Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer, Canadian Tourism Commission

Roger Wheelock spoke on behalf of Jim Watson, President and CEO of the Canadian Tourism Commission, who was unable to attend the conference.

Mr. Wheelock noted that he has seen "both sides of the heritage tourism equation." Before his current position at the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), he was the General Manager and CEO of the Butchart Gardens in Victoria, B.C., and also a member of the British Columbia Heritage Trust.

Heritage activities are an important element of the tourism product, although the industry may not be as explicit and conscious as it should be of these activities. While the tourism industry does not use the terms "built heritage" or "sense of place," it does speak about authentic attractions, experiences and cities with a unique character or a soul.

The tourism industry is progressively more involved in many types of heritage preservation and interpretation initiatives. As a recent

example, the U.S. National Tour Operators Association and the *Smithsonian* magazine are co-operating to give out an annual conservation award. Historic Battle Harbour in Newfoundland was one of the five finalists in 2001.

The Canadian Tourism Commission is a Crown corporation with an arm's-length reporting relationship to the Minister of Industry. This relationship provides the CTC with another important venue for economic development. The CTC's board has representation from both the private and public sectors, on regional and national levels. Heritage concerns and issues are conveyed to and considered by the board.

The key mandate is to market Canada as a prime world tourism destination and to provide timely information to the tourism industry. In 2001, there were 19.5 million overnight international tourists to Canada, generating more than \$13 billion in revenues.

The CTC's main functions are marketing and sales, research, product development and information. It partners with the tourism industry rather than delivering directly to consumers and travellers. It is not involved in the business of real estate development, building attractions, renovating infrastructures or physical assets, and does not provide grants or subsidies.

The CTC communicates to the rest of the world and its potential tourists the many wonderful things that Canada has to offer. It has bureaus in Paris, London, Washington and Tokyo, to name a few. These foreign offices promote Canada's "product clusters": its cities, touring, authentic culture and heritage, adventure, and winter experiences. The primary markets of Canada, the U.S., the U.K., Japan, France, Germany and the secondary markets, all differ in terms of their expectations about what to experience and discover in Canada.

## THE CTC AND HERITAGE TOURISM

Within the limits of its mandate, the CTC has been active on the heritage tourism front. It was directly involved with the 2002 *Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism* at a recent world summit. This summit, held under the aegis of UNEP (United Nations Environment Program) and the WTO (World Tourism Organization), had 132 countries participating.

The Declaration states that: "the participants recognize that ecotourism ... embraces the following specific principles that distinguish it from the broad concept of sustainable tourism:

- ☐ contributes actively to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage;
- ☐ interprets the natural and cultural heritage of the destination to visitors;
- ☐ lends itself better to independent travellers, as well as to organized tours for small groups."

The CTC's long-term strategy, "Packaging the Potential / Faire fructifier les atouts," promotes the growth of cultural and heritage tourism along with the principles of authenticity, sustainability and integrity. This emphasis has brought the goals of tourism closer than ever before to those of heritage preservationists. However, the industry must guard against the over-exploitation of the tourism potential of a heritage destination as this has resulted in the demise of the product and a diminished visitor experience. In these cases, no one wins.

The CTC is now involved in implementing projects with other national or provincial partners in research, education, marketing, product development or communication objectives. It is within this context that the CTC is collaborating with the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Directors of the Culture and Heritage Taskforce in its recent cultural and heritage tourism planning. All the ministers of culture in Canada commissioned this initiative in 1997. This is a promising development and collaboration for the future.



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Information from the September 9, 2002, World Tourism Organization news bulletin reveals some trends in tourism. The main characteristics of demand are a clear tendency toward shorter stays when on holidays, greater fragmentation of holidays, and a shift from active holidays to holidays as an experience. The point is to achieve a complete participatory experience, which provides new knowledge as well as authentic emotions.

In terms of discovering and experiencing heritage, Canada offers an extraordinary wide range of high-quality categories of heritage experiences which deserve international attention, such as:

- existing “as is” or renovated built heritage in the fabric of so many cities;
- construction of historic villages (e.g. Fortress of Louisbourg) and monuments;
- historic sites;
- community museums;
- heritage cuisine;
- re-enactments of battles (War of 1812) and periods (Les Fêtes de la Nouvelle-France each summer in Quebec);
- experiencing traditional skills in museums.

## TOURISM AS A DEVELOPMENT TOOL

In 1996, the CTC launched the Product Club Program. This unique approach assists small and medium businesses or organizations wanting to connect with the tourism industry and offer tourists new experiences. Some 40 product clubs throughout Canada are delivering a great variety of tourism experiences, and tourists are being provided with better access to national or regional built heritage.

Several clubs include: the Atlantic Lighthouse Product Club (which was to be discussed in Session 2); the Économusées, which delegates learned about at the Toronto conference last year; the Club de produit acadien which, with its multiple attractions, centres on the Acadian way of life; Greek Town in Toronto; and the

newly formed Northern Learning Travel Product Club, based in Yukon.

According to data from Statistics Canada in 1999, spending by Canadians in cultural tourism amounted to \$3 billion. Indeed, an American survey from 2001 stated that 45% of American adult travellers include at least one cultural activity while on a trip—this represents 92.7 million people!

Another survey, the Travel Activity and Motivation Survey (TAMS), explored the activity preferences of 25,000 American and Canadian tourists. TAMS indicated that the Canada Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts Segment (those who in the last two years have taken leisure trips to Canada and have included at least four “heritage” activities in their trips) is estimated at 11% of the Canadian adult population, or 2.6 million people—a significant number.

The survey also found that these enthusiasts are underrepresented among younger Canadians (1 in 4), are more affluent than the typical domestic traveller, and share a wide range of tourism interests, but with an emphasis on the outdoors and natural scenery.

With predicted population changes in Canada, using projections for 2026, the Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts Segment will grow from 2.6 to 3.7 million, mainly because heritage activities appeal to older people.

One of the challenges for the future is that while new Canadians exhibit a strong tendency to seek heritage experiences as they travel, they are more reluctant than Canadian-born residents to visit Canadian destinations.

Examples of several new tourism initiatives were described. One new tourism product designed to meet the “learning-travel experience” trend is La vieille prison de Trois-Rivières, which opened last August. Here, guides who are former prisoners provide interpretation about the built heritage and about life inside a prison. This initiative is already on its way to becoming a great tourism success.

Others include:

- the formal creation of the Learning and Enrichment Travel Alliance or LETA, effective October 2002;
- Newfoundland’s annual Cultural Tourism Award;
- the *Bienvenue Québec* cultural (and heritage) tourism trade show in October in La Malbaie;
- Ontario’s Underground Railroad Trail (launched last March), which is one successful product being used to promote Cultural Tourism Product Alliances.

In conclusion, the CTC could collaborate further with the Heritage Canada Foundation.

There are some obvious difficulties, if only because the two bodies use different “languages”, have different motives and perspectives, and different business timelines, but this relationship is worth the effort, as time will demonstrate. How can they collaborate better? Perhaps this conference will come up with some ideas. Since the Heritage Canada Foundation gives out awards, perhaps it would be appropriate to consider a Heritage Tourism National Award.

*For further information on culture and heritage product development at the Canadian Tourism Commission, contact Ernest Labrègue (labrègue.ernest@ctc-cct.ca), or read the November 2002 issue on culture, Tourism, the CTC monthly, or visit the Web site: [www.canadatourism.com](http://www.canadatourism.com)*



# SESSION 1:

## Built Heritage Places and Heritage Tourism

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### TOPIC:

Nancy Arsenault and Peter Frood described two new initiatives that could become catalysts for linking preservation and presentation of historic places to key tourism groups.



### PRESENTER: DR. NANCY ARSENAULT,

User Relations Specialist  
(Learning Travel), Parks Canada



### PRESENTER: PETER FROOD,

Director, Historic Places Initiative,  
National Historic Sites, Parks Canada

In their presentation Nancy Arsenault and Peter Frood discussed recent research findings on heritage tourism and Parks Canada's approach as a heritage supplier. Then they dis-

cussed two new initiatives that will impact on heritage tourism over the next few years.

Referring to the *Travel Activities & Motivations of North American Travellers Study*, produced by the Canadian Tourism Commission, they noted that in 2001 as compared to the last two years, travellers were more likely to seek natural and historic sites as well as adventure, excitement and unspoiled nature. Travellers would also like to have more hands-on learning, and to experience different cultures and ways of life.

The study indicated that within the culture and entertainment segment, some 18.4 million adults in the U.S. and Canada were "cultural seekers," while another 19.8 million were "knowledge seekers" and 13.4 million were "action seekers."

All Canadians seemed to have an interest in natural heritage and thought that protecting heritage was important, only 31% were strongly attached to Canadian heritage (the passionate), the grateful accounted for 42%, the curious 16% and the detached 11%.

A Parks Canada Public Opinion Poll found that of those who visited a national historic site in the past year, 85% thought an understanding of Canada's history is important. A majority (53%) wanted to meet with specialists on site and 52% preferred learning through self-guided tours. Thirty-one percent used national historic sites, 26% considered themselves "lapsed users" and 43% were non-users.

The poll also showed that 65% thought nature was more important than history. Twenty-one percent thought the greatest threat to national historic sites was the lack of funding, 12% thought it was lack of public interest.

Dr. Arsenault explained that the Parks Canada mandate is "to protect and present important examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and to foster public understanding and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations."

Mr. Frood discussed the new Historic Places Initiative (HPI). He noted that while Canada has not evolved as broad a range of tools, legislation and financial incentives as we find in other countries, the Historic Places Initiative is based on the premise that the federal government cannot act alone to address problems in the heritage sector—citizens and other levels of government must also be mobilized.

HPI is a comprehensive program of new tools and policies that would support continued use, foster citizen involvement, encourage appropriate conservation practice and help put the federal house in order.

The federal government has announced phase one of HPI, which provides for the development of three tools supporting heritage conservation. The first, the *Canadian Register of Historic Places (CRHP)*, would identify and promote the estimated 20,000 historic places of local, provincial, territorial and national significance. It would become a tool for professionals and citizens, and a gateway for possible financial incentives. System development is under way and the federal, provincial and territorial governments will begin providing information to the CRHP in the spring of 2003.

The second element is the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, which will be pilot-tested in April 2003. The Standards would guide conservation work, evaluate eligibility for financial incentives and measure compliance. The Standards and Guidelines set out a disciplined approach to assessing heritage conservation projects. A key element is the "Statement of Significance" which includes a description of the heritage value and the identification of the character-defining elements of the historic place.

The third element is the certification process. It would become an accountability tool for the implementation of proposed financial incentives. The standards and guidelines would provide the decision-making benchmark for a certification agent to review and recommend

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approval of conservation plans and completed work. There would also be an appeals process. The basic process will be in place by April 2003.

The three tools now under development complement each other and provide an accountability framework to support the introduction of incentives. However, no decisions on incentives have been made to date.

Mr. Frood noted that the impact of the Heritage Places Initiative on heritage tourism could be better links between all levels of governments, a more informed, demanding consumer, and a Web-based Register that would allow for more thematic heritage travel planning. Smaller historic places such as the Viking Trail or Kamouraska could have a higher profile, providing additional opportunities to be promoted as new destinations.

Dr. Arsenault spoke about the Learning Enrichment and Travel Incentive that seeks “to position Canada’s national parks, historic sites and marine conservation areas as year-round, high-quality, educational destinations where visitors can participate in authentic heritage experiences and learn about the unique conservation, preservation, management practices and issues related to protecting and presenting Canada’s natural and cultural heritage.” From a visitor’s perspective, she said, it is about experiences that are engaging, personally relevant, socially satisfying and memorable.

“Sustainable tourism must be economically viable, environmentally sensitive and culturally respectful,” she said, adding that the tourist industry would benefit from the increased depth and breadth of enriched experiences for groups and individual travellers.

As heritage suppliers, Dr. Arsenault said, there are benefits to working with industry as it would help safeguard the integrity of heritage places, allow for the management of tourist impact, develop resource-respectful relationships, and let Canadians share and celebrate our heritage with visitors.

She said some of the results of “successful” tourism at heritage places include:

- recognition of the importance of heritage places;
- continued maintenance of heritage places;
- development of mutually beneficial partnerships;
- incorporation of heritage issues in business planning;
- investment in people and places;
- responsible marketing and promotion of products;
- creation of high-quality visitor experiences; and
- respect for the rights and obligations of indigenous people.

More information on the Parks Canada initiatives can be found on the Web at: [www.parkscanada.gc.ca](http://www.parkscanada.gc.ca)

# SESSION 2:

## The Business of Heritage Tourism

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### TOPIC:

**The marketing of heritage places for tourism was the focus of this session. The tourism “product club” is an emerging and successful collaborative vehicle to present heritage places, while the privately owned Canadian Cultural Landscapes markets custom-designed tours to meet “niche” interests in heritage settings.**



### PRESENTER: LYNNE PERRY,

Chair, Atlantic Lighthouse Council, &  
Executive Director, South Shore Tourism  
Association



### PRESENTER: DAVID MENDEL,

Canadian Cultural Landscapes /  
Les Visites culturelles Baillairgé

Lynne Perry suggested to delegates that they could “use” the tourism industry in a mutually beneficial way, namely, by sharing the culture/heritage experience on a fee-for-service tourism basis, which would allow for sustained preservation of that heritage.

While admitting that creating an experience around heritage can be a challenge—as Chair of the Atlantic Lighthouse Council, her challenge “is to make navigational aids into tourism attractions”—she had found that, once a target market is identified, the product can be developed to satisfy the potential customer. This would “create the economic scenario that allows one to sustain the business.”

Ms. Perry explained that marketing the product and the “product cluster” rather than the geographic area was the reason why the Canadian Tourism Commission advanced the idea of Product Clubs. The CTC provides funding to develop new market-ready tourism products and enhance existing products, she said. In the case of the Lighthouse Product Club, its purpose is to make more lighthouses in Atlantic Canada market-ready for domestic and international tourism. “It will provide an alternative use of lighthouses for community and tourism development—restaurants, B&Bs, shops, museums and so on,” she added. Club partners also must agree to conduct comprehensive market research to identify potential products and markets.

As a result of this market research requirement, the first *Atlantic Lighthouse Visitor Survey* was produced by the Economic Planning Group of Canada, Tourism and Management Consultants in 2000. It involved 913 questionnaires from four sites: West Point Lighthouse, P.E.I.; Miscou Lighthouse, N.B.; Rose Blanche Lighthouse, Nfld.; and Fort Point Lighthouse in Liverpool, N.S.

Ms. Perry cited specific details from the survey. It showed that a majority of respondents (57.5%) were interested in the lighthouse’s historical buildings; 35.8% were interested in photography; 32.7% wanted to learn about the marine heritage and history of the lighthouse;

13.3% were “lighthouse enthusiasts,” and 3.6% had a connection to the specific lighthouse.

Within the “lighthouse enthusiasts” group, which were defined as those who indicated that they had a strong personal interest in lighthouses, 73% were interested in historical buildings, 56.6% in marine history and 41% in photography.

The survey also indicated that 39.1% of respondents were interested in a café/take-out venues, 19.8% indicated preference for a museum, 17.3% wanted audio-visual presentations, 11.8% indicated workshops, 11.7% were interested in an interpretive centre, and 10% would like hiking trails.

When tracking specific reasons to visit lighthouses, 41.8% of respondents said they were in the area and thought it would be interesting, 23.8% indicated that they had a special interest in lighthouses and it was the primary reason for their trip, and 34.4% had an overall interest in lighthouses and these were part of the reason for their trip.

The Economic Planning Group of Canada produced the second part of the *Atlantic Lighthouse Visitor Survey* in 2001. This time, 1,177 visitors were surveyed at nine different sites in Atlantic Canada. It found that the average size of the travelling party was 3.3 and the average length of visit 1.36 hours. The length of visits ranged from 30 minutes at Fort Point Lighthouse in Liverpool to almost 3 hours at Cape Forchu Lighthouse, near Yarmouth, both in Nova Scotia.

Those respondents who indicated visiting lighthouses as a primary reason for their visit to Atlantic Canada (332/1,177) were asked how often in the past five years they had made a trip in which visits to lighthouses contributed to their destination selection. The results: 24.1% had never made such a trip; 39.8% had made this type of trip one to two times in five years; 17.5% had made this type of trip three or four times in five years; and 18.7% had made this type of trip five or more times in five years.

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The visitor satisfaction levels at the nine lighthouse sites surveyed were quite positive. The survey showed 4.8 out of 5 were happy with the service/hospitality received, 4.5 out of 5 were happy with the types of facilities and services provided, and 4.7 out of 5 had a great overall experience.

Other statistics gleaned from the 2001 survey were as follows:

- ☐ 67.0% indicated that it was very important to have the opportunity to enter the lighthouse.
- 53.9% felt it was important to have an interpretive display or museum.
- 27% felt that having picnic areas at the lighthouses was important.
- 37.4% indicated that a gift shop on site was important.
- 42.6% said that a restaurant/snack bar would be important.
- 63.0% felt it was important to have a visitor information centre.
- 40.5% thought that it was very important to provide walking/hiking trails.
- 63.6% indicated that it was very important to have washrooms at a lighthouse site.

The survey also looked at demographics and found that 46% of visitors surveyed were between the ages of 46-64 years, 34.1% between 25 to 44 years and 14.8% were 65 or older. Some 25.1% were university graduates and 16.9% had completed post-university graduate studies, another 24.9% had some college or university education and 16.4% were college graduates. Based on 818 completed surveys, 29.6% of respondents reported their household income to be between \$40,000-59,999; 28.4% between \$60,000-79,999, and 25.4% earned more than \$80,000.

## ATLANTIC LIGHTHOUSE COUNCIL

After the Canadian Coast Guard decided that it no longer needed all of its lighthouses as navigational aids and decommissioned them, the Atlantic Lighthouse Council (ALC) became responsible for protecting their heritage character throughout the Atlantic provinces. The Council now works with the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society, the Prince Edward Island Lighthouse Society and the New Brunswick Lighthouse Preservation Society.

The ALC recognizes that protecting the heritage of lighthouses is an important issue that has the potential to contribute significantly to the success of alternative uses for lighthouse sites. Although many issues are associated with lighthouse heritage, the main ones were alteration of existing structures, alteration of landscape features, new construction and moving existing structures.

To maintain the heritage character and integrity of lighthouses transferred to community groups for alternative uses, the Atlantic Lighthouse Council developed a set of principles. These are:

- Maintenance of heritage character is an important element for success and must receive the same attention as other issues.
- Effective heritage management requires a consultative process with stakeholders.
- ☐ Protecting heritage integrity requires a multidisciplinary approach undertaken by personnel with appropriate knowledge and skills.
- ☐ Changes to existing structures require full documentation before, during and after alterations.
- ☐ Changes to the building or site should, as much as possible, use similar materials, colours, designs, and original plans to ensure the changes respect the original historical character of the site.
- Alterations to a building must respect its heritage character and not detract from its heritage integrity.

- When a new building is constructed and cannot be built in the same architectural style or using similar materials, then the impact on the heritage integrity of the site should be minimized.
- All changes should be thoroughly researched before implementation.
- The heritage character of a site should be clearly defined in order to ensure changes impact as little as possible.
- Original material fabric should not be replaced during renovations, unless irreparably damaged, in order to maintain heritage integrity.
- Changes to the material fabric of lighthouses and their sites should be as minimal as possible.
- Alterations to existing buildings, addition of new buildings and demolition of structures on site should be assessed on an individual basis using regional guidelines.
- Disturbance of soil during building changes requires monitoring to ensure significant historical, architectural, or archaeological information is not destroyed.
- Changes to lighthouse buildings and sites will seek to maintain heritage character while ensuring visitor and employee safety.

The ALC has also produced a handbook to assist Lighthouse Product Club members, individuals and groups interested in establishing tourism operations at decommissioned lighthouse sites. There is a wide variety of potential uses for lighthouses, including interpretation, gift shops, accommodations, outdoor adventure activities, and community projects.

The *Quality Development and Maintenance Handbook* deals with establishing quality standards during the start-up phase of lighthouse tourism and community projects. It also describes how to maintain those standards during the operation of the site. The information is based on currently accepted professional standards within the lighthouse community, the Atlantic Canada tourism industry, and the field of quality standards.

According to Ms. Perry there are three options after the transfer of lighthouse properties: to



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continue operation of the lighthouse as a navigational aid and operation as an official lighthouse; to continue operation as a private light; or to discontinue operation. Each one is detailed in the handbook. For example, in the case of continued operation as a private light, the light characteristics and daymark features must be consistently maintained and the features reported to the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) on a continuing basis for inclusion in the *List of Lights*.

Operation of the light as either an official or private aid to navigation is a powerful way to ensure the heritage integrity of the site is maintained. This is not only because of the restrictions to construction and characteristics, but also because it will be obvious to visitors that they are on a working site.

Moreover, while recognizing the importance of clarity in lighthouse identification, the ALC also believes that changes made to lighthouses on transfer can be effected so that their impact on the heritage character of the property is minimized. (Using a screen to shield the light from the ocean and using internationally recognized symbols to indicate the measures will enhance the visitor experience to the lighthouse while ensuring that the light will not be mistaken for an official lighthouse.)

As a general principle, the ALC supports alterations to original structures only when the changes are unavoidable and required for the successful operation of the alternative use. Some changes would be required for the safety and convenience of site staff and visitors to the lighthouse. The handbook details how to handle such changes to signage, to stairwells, fencing and other standard alterations.

"The ALC will work with community groups to ensure these alterations are done in a manner that respects the original site features while providing visitors with a safe and enjoyable experience. There should be no changes to existing structures without ALC approval," Ms. Perry stressed.

The Atlantic Lighthouse Council recognizes

that transferred properties may require the construction of new buildings in order for the community group to operate successfully. However, approval for new buildings must be first sought from the ALC.

"The danger of newly constructed buildings having a negative impact on the heritage integrity of the site is great. For this reason, new buildings should either be unobtrusive and designed to blend in with the site or should conform as closely as possible to original construction on the site. If the buildings are of modern design, then they should be as far from the original lighthouse as possible and they should be camouflaged with landscaping or barriers to reduce their impact on the site," she explained.

The ALC recognizes that there will be pressures on some sites to move lighthouses and other structures, and these requests will have to be assessed on an individual basis. However, because of the potential for damage in transit, for inappropriate commercialization of heritage structures, and for the cultural loss to the local community, the ALC has a policy of not moving lighthouses unless the survival of the structure is in danger. This could result from erosion, vandalism or arson. In these instances the ALC would support moving the lighthouse.

Every request to move a lighthouse must go through the ALC approval process. This involves consultation with stakeholder groups, assessment of the detailed plan to ensure minimal damage to the structure during moving, assurance that the new site is a sensitive reconstruction of the original site, rather than a commercial attraction or parking lot location, and identification of a relocation site as close to the original site as is practicable if the request is approved.

Finally, although there are few lighthouses on the Trans-Canada Highway, Ms. Perry strongly recommended getting off the beaten track to see these heritage towers in their natural setting. "Everyone should be lured to these special places and educated as to their important

role in our history," she said, adding that the South Shore Tourism Association's next Lights Along the Shore Lighthouse Festival will be May 22-25, 2003, along the Lighthouse Route of Nova Scotia. Visit [www.ssta.com](http://www.ssta.com) for more information.

**David Mendel** spoke about the business of heritage tourism based on his 19 years' experience in this "fascinating niche of the travel industry." When he and Barry Lane founded Canadian Cultural Landscapes/Les Visites culturelles Baillairgé (Baillairgé Cultural Tours) in 1983, they did not, he confessed, have much experience in the field of tourism.

"I was still working on a doctorate in art history at Laval University and Barry was working for Parks Canada. It was he who had observed a need for more in-depth tours of Québec City, in which we could link specific historic sites and try to help visitors understand them in a larger historical context. We began by offering walking tours of Québec's historic district on a daily basis, and by helping to organize cultural trips for students and groups, in conjunction with a company from Ontario."

Their company has evolved a good deal since then. They established their own travel agency so that they could create complete travel packages. Today, almost all of their business revolves around providing multi-day tour packages for groups. Their first complete cultural tour program was organized for the Smithsonian Institution in 1986; they have continued to organize tours for the Smithsonian every year since then, and now organize an average of five or six tours a year specifically for them.

Mr. Mendel explained that they provide complete cultural trips all across Canada and handle everything from accommodation, land transportation, meals and educational content.

"A few years ago we also registered a new trademark and logo for our English-speaking clientele. Our new name, Canadian Cultural Landscapes, better reflects what we do today and the national activities of our company. In

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Quebec, we are still known by our original name, *Les Visites culturelles Baillaigé*, and we are still incorporated under that name," he said.

The tour packages are often built around specific themes such as the *Cuisines of Quebec* or the *Military History of Quebec*, which were designed for the Smithsonian Institution. A trip focusing on architecture was organized for the National Trust for Historic Preservation and one on the history of New France and Louisiana for The New Orleans Collection. Other groups taking cultural tours in 2002 were the Friends of the Royal Ontario Museum, Elderhostel and Interhostel.

In past years, the company has built trips around a wide range of themes, from tours with a literary component for the Jane Austen Society of North America to one with a political slant for a group of prosperous Texans who wanted to learn about Quebec nationalism. They have also organized many tour programs around art exhibitions, mostly for members of art museum associations. In total, the company offers 45 to 50 trips a year, some lasting five days, others lasting almost two weeks.

Barry Lane, his co-founder, organizes most of the tours outside the Québec/Montréal area, said Mr. Mendel. For example, this summer he sailed by cruise ship with the Stanford University Alumni from Chicago to Quebec City, then travelled by rail with Washington and Lee University Alumni from Toronto to Vancouver, and he will be in Nova Scotia with the Smithsonian later this fall.

The company has created more than 60 slide lectures on the history of the various regions where it leads groups. These 40-minute talks are often given in conjunction with lectures and tours given by local experts. In addition, its clients (the visiting alumni association or museum) may send a professor, or other expert, to travel with the group and give lectures during the program.

The majority of the clients have at least an undergraduate university degree, are retired

and have the means to pay for high-level trips. The participants are seeking an in-depth, authentic experience. Learning is one of the main reasons that they are on the trip and these clients often have high expectations.

Mr. Mendel emphasized that "when people travel with an institution whose main mission is education, the tour program should reflect the aims and standards of that university or museum. Our participants also usually want to stay in the best hotels, eat in the best restaurants, and are often ready to spend quite a few days exploring one location."

The company's tour groups stay an average of four to five days at a destination instead of just one or two, as is more customary in traditional tourism. Its clients spend more nights, eat more meals and frequent more sites than the usual traveller.

A small learning travel group of 25 people can have a considerable economic impact on a region. They can often contribute more economically than many busloads of travellers who are just passing through briefly. This can be of particular interest from a preservation perspective, particularly in environments that can be fragile, such as a natural site or a historic district.

All types of visitors are important, but recognizing the potential of culturally oriented travellers may help preservationists in their efforts to seek a balance between conservation and the need for tourist dollars. The growth of cultural tourism certainly provides an additional financial justification for preservation. Even if it wasn't a question of preserving our own heritage and identity, even if we didn't need to take care of these special places for ourselves, it would still be to the advantage of Canadians to preserve them in order to attract culturally oriented travellers.

Where possible, an ideal approach would be to identify and protect whole cityscapes, waterfront areas, rural landscapes, etc. If strip development is allowed to overwhelm such

places, they become far less attractive to culturally oriented travellers. For heritage tourism to flourish, saving an isolated monument or site is not really enough.

One of the secrets to the company's success is taking advantage of the historic buildings, sites and landscapes. They are of crucial importance in the planning of every itinerary. The historical and architectural interest of a site, the state of preservation and authenticity of a cityscape or landscape are key considerations when we choose hotels, eating establishments and routes from one destination to another and for the locations for specific lectures.

"We seek places where strong heritage elements are concentrated. Whenever possible, we stay in historic hotels, located near important cultural and historic sites (very often we stay in the grand hotels which were built by Canadian Pacific and other great transportation companies in the late 19th century and early 20th centuries). We try to design our lectures and itineraries so that each day's activities reinforce the participants' understanding of the theme of the tour," said Mr. Mendel.

Mr. Mendel described what happens during a few of his custom-designed cultural tours.

Most people think of Québec City in terms of its French heritage, without realizing how important the British influence has been on the architecture and urban planning of the town. During a five-day trip for the National Trust for Historic Preservation this September, the tour group spent a day focusing on this topic. After a lecture on British and French influences on the city, they had a walking tour focusing on the same theme. Later, they had a private concert in the Anglican Cathedral and a dinner at the Garrison Club (a very British Club, founded by military officers in the 1870s where, today, almost all the members are French speaking).

On another tour, a rail journey for the Stanford University Alumni, the company arranged for lunch at the Mount Stephen Club in Montréal. After dessert, Mr. Mendel gave a lecture on the

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history of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Originally, the Mount Stephen Club was the residence of Lord Mount Stephen, who built this spectacular mansion in Montréal's "Golden Square Mile" while he was constructing the railway across Canada.

Each year, during the Smithsonian Cnisines of Quebec tour, the clients meet with the executive chef in his roof-top garden in the Château Frontenac, and then have a cooking class with him in the hotel kitchen. Later in the program, they take in a lecture with historic images and maps about Life Along the St. Lawrence, focusing on how people settled there and lived along the river over the centuries. Afterwards, the touring clients explore the area to see it for themselves and visit a farmer who produces specialty crops for the chefs of the region.

The growth in cultural tourism could be greatly stimulated when diverse organizations are ready to work in a co-operative manner. This was particularly evident to Mr. Mendel when he participated in the organization of "familiarization" tours, where key decision-makers are brought to a region to demonstrate that area's potential for a culturally oriented trip.

The company has worked on three such 'fam' trips in Quebec and Ontario, one in New Brunswick and one in Newfoundland. This year, it also helped organize a fam trip for banking clubs interested in having a learning travel experience in Quebec. Organizing such familiarization trips involves the participation of many partners: the Canadian Tourism Commission, provincial and local tourism offices, Air Canada and local transportation companies, hotels, restaurants, and heritage sites and other cultural organizations.

Many organizations are now recognizing the great potential of learning travel and would like to participate. Across Canada, groups are now forming to promote cultural tourism—from national groups such as the Learning Travel Alliance to regional product clubs. However, experience has shown that it can sometimes be challenging for people from the tourism industry and heritage/cultural organi-

zations to understand one another.

"I believe that for the new partnerships to survive and prosper, they will have to be based on true mutual advantage. Success will require considerable effort, on both sides, to listen to one another and to be flexible. But there is no doubt that heritage organizations and the tourism industry can benefit greatly by learning to work together," he concluded.



# SESSION 3:

## Heritage Tourism in the United States

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### TOPIC:

**The National Trust for Historic Preservation has made a significant impact on heritage tourism in the U.S. Its five guiding principles on heritage tourism are the cornerstones of its success.**



### PRESENTER:

**AMY JORDAN WEBB,**

Director, Heritage Tourism,

U.S. National Trust for Historic Preservation

Amy Webb briefly described two other National Trust programs before talking about her heritage tourism division. The first is a Studies Tour program that offers learning experiences in the U.S. and internationally, including the Canadian Cultural Landscapes tours organized by David Mendel. The second, the Historic Hotels of America program, provides a “marketing umbrella” to the many individual historic hotels that are not part of a large hotel chain.

While these two programs deal with the consumer side of heritage tourism, she said the heritage tourism division deals more with the tourism development and management side. “We help people create the high-quality experiences that they can then share with others.”

Ms. Webb noted that although heritage tourism has long been a part of tourism in the U.S., it is only recently that this niche market has been called “heritage tourism.” The concept took

off in 1995 when President Clinton called the first ever White House Conference on Travel and Tourism. At this conference 10 priority issues for the tourism industry were identified, one of which was a focus on cultural tourism.

“Frankly,” she said, “cultural heritage tourism is just too big a mouthful to use in slick marketing materials. However, for the industry, for business to business, we have found that it is very important to talk about it this way. It helps everyone from art galleries to museums to understand that we are all at the table as equal players. Those people who visit historic sites are also the same visitors who will be going to the ballet or the museums, and who are buying the crafts. So we now define cultural heritage tourism as travelling to experience places, artefacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic and natural resources.”

Ms. Webb noted that another new term being tossed about is “sustainable tourism” and emphasized, “this is very much what we all are trying to do. One of the reasons we are in tourism is to make sure that we can help preserve those very special places.”

The National Trust has developed five guiding principles for successful and sustainable cultural heritage tourism:

- Collaboration
- Finding the fit between the community and tourism
- Finding ways to make sites and programs come alive
- Focusing on quality and authenticity
- Preserving and protecting resources

These principles took shape back in 1989, when the National Trust looked for a new way of preserving buildings. Based on our successful Main Street program, it decided to do demonstration areas, evaluate them, and develop guiding principles. With a large grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, four pilot areas in Indiana, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin were developed to try to

determine what underlies heritage tourism.

There is no easy “cookie-cutter” approach to heritage tourism because the resources and people differ in every community. It is necessary to acknowledge and incorporate what has already been done within a community and then identify the areas where assistance is needed most.

**Collaboration** is the first principle. It is necessary to have partnerships at all different levels—within a community, between communities, with like organizations and with dissimilar organizations—to make things happen.

There were three strong examples of collaboration. In the first instance, the week-long event called Frontier Days in Cheyenne, Wyoming, has been held for more than 100 years. It would not have lasted nor still be successful without the involvement of everyone in the town. Cheyenne is referred to as the ‘Big Empty’ as it is several hours away from everything. By offering a free pancake breakfast, many visitors pay for a hotel room the night before so as not to miss it.

Another example involved the historic churches in downtown Providence, Rhode Island. These old churches needed maintenance but had little revenue. Through a partnership with the Providence Preservation Society, they created a brochure to entice people to visit the churches. Then they held a special event, Divine Providence, where Preservation Society guides talked about downtown revitalization to groups as they toured the historic church structures, listened to choirs and shopped for Christmas at church bazaars.

In the third example of collaboration, Ms. Webb mentioned that “one of the problems individual historic attractions have is that they don’t have the marketing dollars to compete with the big boys.” In Nashville, the Hermitage (home of President Andrew Jackson), the Country Music Hall of Fame and other attractions have banded together and formed the Nashville Attractions Coalition. By

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so doing, they found that together they had much more of a voice and could actually be a stronger player in the tourism community than any one of them individually.

The second principle is **finding the fit between the community and tourism**. In sustainable tourism, one should ask, "How do you make sure that what you're doing is good for the visitor, but also is good for the person who lives in that community?" One of the most important things is to ensure that the local community is involved. One needs to find out why they want or don't want tourism to come to their community. A good heritage tourism program should provide benefits for the visitor and the resident alike, explained Ms. Webb.

The pilot program at the Lac de Flambeau Reservation in Wisconsin is instructive. Apparently, over the years the tourism office had sent out materials that led tourists to expect the Chippewa to be dressed in traditional costume and living in teepees. Of course, this was not the case. The Chippewa wore jeans, drove Hondas and lived in houses just like everyone else. To find the fit between contemporary Native life and the tourists' desire to experience traditional Native culture, Ms. Webb's group worked on hospitality training with the Chippewa. Specific times of the year were chosen when the visitor could come to a pow-wow and see traditional Native costumes, music and dance.

The Hand Made in America program has helped bring culturally minded tourists into homes to meet the arts and crafts people of Appalachia, a rather poor rural area in North Carolina: Hand Made in America was very careful to make sure the craftspeople wanted it and held a series of public meetings to explain what they were trying to do and what benefits it could bring. They also found out what the craftspeople wanted to share and keep private. This was an important step to finding the fit between the community and tourism. Hand Made in America then put together a guidebook called *The Craft Trails of Western North Carolina*, which has become a role model for other states. Follow-up economic impact

studies show increases in crafts sales from this publication and from the home visits.

The next principle is **finding ways to make sites and programs come alive**. There is a lot of competition for a visitor's time, not just from other visitor attractions, but also from all of the other activities that fill our daily lives, such as working around the house or taking the children to sports games.

Today's visitors have higher expectations, and in order to convince them to come to heritage attractions, planners have to offer an entertaining and interactive experience that engages as many of the visitor's senses as possible. They need to offer something of very high quality to compete. Another question to consider is how the aging baby boomer generation—the "forever young" generation—won't come to something marketed as a "senior" tour.

Ms. Webb asked delegates to consider three interpretation scenarios at a Civil War battlefield and to think about what they would remember as tourists: if someone simply stood there in a Parks Service uniform and talked about the Civil War; or if interpreters in Civil War uniforms demonstrated how to fire a musket; or if they personally were allowed to handle a musket and actually try firing it. She said the final experience would stay with a tourist forever.

"The more you can have the visitor actually experience something, the more they will remember it because most of your visitors are not passionate about the story being told and you have to find ways to grab their attention," she said.

Taking home souvenirs could have added heritage tourism value. Rather than going into a faceless gift shop and buying a trinket, she told delegates to consider luring tourists into arts and crafts studios, where they could talk to the artists and then buy something to take home. That would no longer be just a souvenir, because it would always have that story attached to it. Another marketing technique would be to have a tag on the souvenir that

would tell who the artist is or why this product is unique to Nova Scotia or wherever. The tag would cost pennies and yet the value added and the amount charged for the item can be considerably more.

An example of being creative in tourism is the new West Virginia visitor centre on the interstate. It is not just the traditional welcome centre, but also offers top-quality exhibits, and arts and crafts demonstrations like basket weavers. Even the food dispensed is catered from one of the best resorts in West Virginia. Instead of a typical hot dog, tourists can try a fried green tomato sandwich. She said this is an authentic way to make the state come alive.

**Focusing on quality and authenticity** is the fourth principle. Studies show that today's heritage travellers in the United States are more sophisticated and well travelled than those of a generation ago. This means that today's heritage travellers have much higher expectations regarding both quality and authenticity. One way to assure tourists that what they are seeing or eating or buying is authentic is through a mark of quality. While Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is known for its Amish people, there is a lot more to the town. The National Trust helped the community guidelines for authenticity for heritage sites, heritage services (stores with local products) and events. They developed a logo and put together a branding campaign so that this Lancaster Heritage logo has become similar to the Good Housekeeping seal of approval. In tourism advertising this logo appears beside authentic heritage sites so the tourist is assured of the quality. The logo is used also in directional signage, banners, maps, and on product tags. There are similar programs around the country, including the Silver Hand in Alaska, which ensures the local Native products are indeed authentic and not from elsewhere. While the products carrying this logo cost more, the educated visitor who understands what to look for accepts that the mark of quality makes them worth more.

Another strong example of this authenticity is the Pike Place Market in Seattle, the number

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one attraction in the state of Washington. It is still very much a living farmers' market, partly because it has taken the unique angle of preserving not only the historic buildings surrounding the market place, but also the historic usage of those buildings. There is a commission that decides what kind of businesses are acceptable. Primarily these are food vendors and limited craft shops. The commission doesn't allow T-shirt shops or those things that seek the lowest common denominator of tourism. It does not allow any franchises, although there is a Starbucks coffee shop because it was the first outlet.

The fifth and final principle is **preserving and protecting resources**. The historic resources that are the backbone of heritage tourism programs are irreplaceable so it is essential that their preservation and protection are ensured because that, in turn, ensures that heritage tourism programs are sustainable. Preservationists must be very careful to be strong stewards of the heritage resources we are promoting. If heritage buildings are ignored, they may get into a state where nothing can be done for them. Ms. Webb also stressed the importance of other kinds of resources that could be lost, such as river landscapes, open spaces, archaeological sites, even oral story-telling traditions.

There are four basic steps for getting started in heritage tourism programs. Heritage attractions are often first developed for the local community. As they are enhanced, marketing efforts expand to a wider regional, state or national audience. These four steps can be repeated at each stage along the way. The steps include:

**Assessing the potential.** Evaluate what your community has to offer in terms of attractions, visitors' services (hotels, restaurants), organizational capabilities (who will run the program), and ability to protect resources and marketing.

**Planning and organizing.** Make good use of human and financial resources. They are the keys that open doors to sustainable heritage tourism. Set priorities and measurable goals.

**Preparing for visitors; protecting and managing resources.** With a plan in place, it is time to make sure that you are ready for visitors. Look to the future as well as the present. Be sure that the choices you make now improve your community for the long term.

**Marketing for success.** Develop a multi-year, many-tiered marketing plan that targets your market. Look for partners in local, regional, state or national groups.

As a result of the 1995 White House conference, the American Association of Museums spearheaded an effort to offer regional cultural tourism forums all over the U.S. and formed a national coalition called Partners in Tourism to oversee this effort. The forums proved to be a useful networking tool for states, and the Partners in Tourism coalition continues to meet to share information at the national level about cultural heritage tourism. It offers a quarterly newsletter called *Cultural Tourism News* as well as a Web site that includes current information about cultural heritage tourism and a listserv.

Another result of the White House conference was that the Travel Industry Association of America commissioned the first ever national study of cultural and heritage travellers. Its findings indicated that there were a lot of cultural and heritage travellers in the U.S., and more importantly, it showed that they stayed longer and spent more money than other kinds of travellers.

The latest National Trust initiative is called *Share Your Heritage*. This program has the financial backing of both the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Express Company. Launched in 2000, *Share Your Heritage* has created how-to advice materials from experts based on the five principles and four steps, and conducted leadership training workshops. As well, it has produced a user-friendly publication of success stories representing the broad spectrum of cultural heritage tourism programs from across the country. The *Share Your Heritage* publication, along with other how-to heritage tourism

publications, is available from the National Trust's publication office (visit [www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org)).

"Without a doubt," stated Ms. Webb, "cultural heritage tourism in the United States has made tremendous progress in the past decade plus. With interest currently at an all-time high, we hope to take advantage of our position to solidify national support and recognition for heritage tourism. Heritage tourism is here to stay." She concluded with a quote from Garrison Kcillor, who attended the White House conference: "...People don't come to America for our airports ... our hotels ... or the recreational facilities.... They come for our culture ... they come here to see America."

## DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS

An unidentified delegate asked if there was any specific collaboration between Canada and the U.S.

**Amy Webb** responded with one example called [culturalcascades.com](http://culturalcascades.com). She said this is a relatively new Web-based promotion that links Vancouver, Seattle, Portland and Eugene. She asked delegates if they knew of any other programs that might link the U.S. and Canada.

**Trudy Cowan** (Chair, Heritage Canada) stated that Alberta and Montana have done some collaborating. "*The Alberta-Montana Discovery Guide* is still being used and sold despite being outdated. It has been a very effective tool," she said.

**John Thompson** (*Canadian Geographic* magazine) mentioned that his magazine was talking with the staff at *Lake Superior Magazine* about a book that the *Canadian Geographic* is compiling about an ecotour along the north shore of the lake and said he hopes to collaborate with them on a book about the south shore. He also asked whether there were any other major corporations besides American Express that have a philosophical predisposition to support heritage programs or travel.

**Amy Webb** said that American Express really

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has been “The One” in the United States, although other corporations have supported things at the local level. She explained that the National Trust initially went to many of the tourism-based organizations and has “bare bones” partnerships with a couple of the rental car companies, airlines and hotels. She said strong support has come more from private foundations.

**Marjorie Mercer** (Ontario Heritage Foundation) noted that this is the inaugural year of the Doors Open program across Ontario, and that one of the events planned is a binational Doors Open in Buffalo, N.Y., and Niagara. She said it was “an amazing example of partnership, heritage, tourism, with volunteers and businesses coming together recognizing our border but seeing that region as a wonderful example from a natural and historical point of view.”

**Pat Malicki** (Architectural Conservancy of Ontario) added that for the last 40 years Windsor and Detroit have been combining to celebrate the International Freedom Festival for both countries’ birthdays. She said there was also a “two nation vacation” program with the Detroit tourist area, and that last year the two cities celebrated 300 years of the French settlement on both sides of the border.

**Dan Morris** (Atlantic Lighthouse Council) explained that the ALC regularly has participation from both Maine and Massachusetts, and that ALC members receive a subscription to the *Lighthouse Digest*, which is published out of Maine.

**Jean-Marie Girardville** (Association of the Most Beautiful Villages in Quebec) said he thought there was a co-operating project between Maine and the province of Quebec following the trail of the Kennebec River and the Chaudière River in Quebec.

**Brian Anthony** (Executive Director, Heritage Canada) talked about a long-term plan for the Prince of Wales Prize that will involve collaboration not just with the United States but with other countries as well. He explained that with the involvement of His Royal Highness, the

Prince of Wales Prize for the Preservation of the Built Heritage of Canada was created, and that the City of Saint John, New Brunswick, would be awarded the third annual prize at this conference. The award is presented each year to that local government, large, small, urban or rural, which has manifested outstanding commitment to the preservation of the built heritage in its jurisdiction.

He said that the long-term plan involves “developing a user’s guide or a learning tool for mayors and city councils and planners to learn how to become a prize-winning community in heritage terms. We will also be able, as we build up the stable of prize-winning communities across the country, to use them for marketing, to show them off. As our Good Housekeeping seal of approval, having the Prince of Wales’s mark next to the community’s banner is an important one.”

Mr. Anthony said that when the prize was created, it was always with the intent to export the idea to other countries. “His Royal Highness wanted to make sure that it was rooted in Canada first, that we could demonstrate that it worked and had the desired effect. And now that we’ve done this, he has signed off on a list of countries that he would like me to approach,” he added.

Mr. Anthony said he would soon like to touch base with his counterpart at the U.S. National Trust for Historic Preservation to suggest implanting the Prince of Wales Prize in the United States. “Over the next 5 to 10 years, we will have an ever-increasing number of heritage-conscious communities that will have this cachet, and I think there will be some great marketing opportunities binationally as well as internationally.”

**Amy Webb** said that she had been talking to other organizations in the U.S. about some kind of a designation program for heritage communities, but that they had not made much progress and this might be a good time to tie in to this Canadian idea.

**Frank Caplan** of the St. Catharines, Ontario,

Heritage Committee and Niagara Region LACAC Association told delegates that Niagara is being marketed as a tourist destination in the U.S., particularly since St. Catharines was the terminus of the Underground Railway.

**Dick Evans** (President, Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network) suggested there was a close parallel in two very powerful organizations that have grown over the years. He said that the Atlantic Salmon Federation, which covers the whole North Atlantic area, has become extremely effective in attracting wealth and resources to a common concern, and that Ducks Unlimited has become an enormous continental power. He suggested that perhaps they can teach heritage groups about organizing on a large scale.

**Gordon Nelson** (Ontario Governor, Heritage Canada) thanked Amy Webb, saying that heritage tourism involves “many people, many values, many interests and the trick in the civics process is to bring them all together.”



# SESSION 4:

## New Trends in Heritage Tourism

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### TOPIC:

**This session presented some recent trends in conserving and presenting heritage sites, as well as some important issues relating to the benefits and trade-offs that come with heritage tourism.**



### PRESENTER:

**PROF. GEOFFREY WALL,**

Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and Research, Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo



### PRESENTER:

**JEAN-MARIE GIRARDVILLE,**

Président, l'Association des plus beaux villages du Québec / Association of the Most Beautiful Villages of Quebec

Dr. Geoffrey Wall began by asking delegates several questions, including what compromises or trade-offs they were willing to make to preserve built heritage, and “what balance between built heritage and the local McDonald’s is acceptable?” He also asked if it must be sustainable tourism versus sustainable development. His answer was that tourism must be economically viable, ecologically sustainable and socio-culturally appropriate.

He also questioned whether heritage—defined as the contemporary use of the past—is a finite resource or a renewable resource. While built heritage is often lost without protection, he said that “new” heritage is being created all the time as people assign value to it. “Every place has a heritage and every person has a heritage, except some places and some people’s heritage are more marketable than others.”

A very broad perspective is needed because the concept of heritage tourism includes not just heritage attractions, but also accommodation, transportation, interpretation, food services, etc. Heritage attractions should be multifaceted just as heritage tourists are multi-motivated. Studies show that some are very highly committed to heritage tourism, some are merely interested, and for others, it is incidental. One has to be careful about statistics, such as saying 65% of the people support heritage, because most of them might be in this incidental category.

A “heritage commodification model” can explain how heritage groups are becoming involved in providing tourism commodities. Commodification means that people pay money to have an experience which was previously free. This is what heritage groups should want—money to support their heritage. And it doesn’t need to be a derogatory word.

Not all heritage resources could or should be shared with tourists. Tourists don’t necessarily want to experience everything anyway. After seeing what kinds of heritage attributes one has, that may be of interest to tourists, those attributes must then be linked and assembled with other resources such as transportation,

accommodation, food and beverages, so that one has some kind of product to sell. One must also understand the market. To become involved in heritage tourism requires much more than the heritage resources themselves.

Heritage has been described as a “contested domain” in which some things are highly valued by some people, but are less valued by others. The story to tell is therefore dependent on what is to be preserved and presented.

Usually, it is the stories of the winners that get told; however, things are changing slowly. It used to be the palaces and the cathedrals that were supported as heritage buildings, now we’re seeing it democratized a little bit with more interesting vernacular architecture being included. Nonetheless, these are value choices. They are not determined by scientific analysis, but by individuals and group values and political processes. As such, these values can change.

Our society is changing as different ethnic and cultural groups immigrate here, and their priorities and associations will be different. The idea of what is heritage will also be different. “You can only sell somebody’s heritage back to them, you can’t sell them your heritage,” said Dr. Wall, giving as an example his recent experience of visiting museums in China. Much of the museum information there is on the Ming Dynasty or one of the dynasties and that has little meaning for the western visitor. But, interpretation by date, for instance 1560 or 1870, can elicit understanding. If an artefact is dated to the time of the opium war, for example, there is more meaning. We need to be aware that somebody else’s heritage may not be of that much interest to people who can’t relate to it.

Authenticity itself can be problematic. There was an authenticity before the structure was even built because there was a piece of ground there with plants on it, so what period are you going to call authentic? Then there is the authentic façade with nothing behind it. What is authentic? Who says so? Is it authentic from the point of view of the tourist, the heritage

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buff, or the government? This means that whoever has the power to designate something as authentic advantages some and disadvantages others.

## SUCCESSFUL HERITAGE FROM A TOURISM PERSPECTIVE

In order to evaluate success, clear goals and objectives are a necessity. Heritage groups should agree upon goals and objectives for their sites, and then decide whether tourism could help achieve them.

The market for heritage tourism is also highly competitive: Canada is competing against the Taj Mahal and the Great Wall of China and so on. For many of our Canadian sites, the market is not the international tourist. It will cost a lot more to convince somebody to come to our site from Japan than it will to get somebody to come from the regional market.

Even at an international destination like Niagara Falls, about 65% of the market comes from the region, and the average length of stay is only 3.5 hours. So even for an internationally famous tourism destination, it is still the regional market that is important. Many local historic sites could be used not just by tourists, but by local people for recreation, meetings, or dinners that would help create some community support for the heritage buildings. There is also competition from "instant heritage places" like the Epcot Centre, and from reconstructed heritage such as the Fortress of Louisbourg.

Tourists usually want to visit multiple attractions, not just one, unless it is really special. Sometimes a heritage site can be linked to other types of attractions, such as a fair or event. The more variety of attractions in the area, the better the chance for tourism. One must be cautioned against making heritage sites "highly authentic but boring." Dr. Wall recommended using animations or interactive sessions to get people involved in doing things during their visit. "As Lynne Perry said in the lighthouse session, some people come for the

lighthouses, some come for the birding opportunity, and some just for a picnic," he observed.

Ideally, a heritage site should be in an attractive environment and have a supporting infrastructure, such as cafés, accommodations and accessible roads. Dr. Wall had found that "to make money out of tourism, you have to get people into bed. When tourists stay overnight in the region, they are then spending money in hotels, B&Bs, on breakfasts and so on. By increasing the expenditures within a community, the site will receive a lot more political support from that community."

But success has its own problems. One must manage all these visitors and now the authentic heritage site must have indoor toilets and parking lots, and suddenly it's not quite so authentic anymore. If it becomes too crowded, maybe the experience will be diminished. More people require more maintenance. So success in tourism may solve some of one's problems, but not all of them, and it will create some new ones as well. This means that whatever story the heritage site needs to tell, it must be done carefully as it will influence the clientele that comes.

Also, it is important to build links with other similar sites, such as has been done in the Maritimes with its "necklace" of lighthouses, and with other types of attractions in the area. Many people like a little diversity in their touring experience. Special events could be one way to have people return for a second or third time. Little has been heard about the prospects of return clientele. "If you've been there once will you come back again? Or is once enough? How do you get people to come back?"

In conclusion, it is very important to know what will be the benefits and trade-offs from tourism. Those involved in heritage tourism need to have clear goals and objectives, to be realistic about what tourism can and can't do, and to take the time to understand the tourism markets available.

It's not enough to just attract tourists, one must consider ways of separating them from their money. This needs to be done at the site, whether it is by charging entrance fees or selling books or postcards or requiring a guide to be hired. One must also consider ways for the community to get money from the tourists so you have community support. It doesn't just happen because visitors arrive. One must have a strategy for it. The offerings one has may have integrity, may be authentic, but the scale (the size of the offering, how much time people can spend there, etc.), the location (ideally it has to be near a tourist route) and the context (the complementary attractions and services) are crucial if one's very special heritage sites are going to provide a very special experience for tourists.

**Jean-Marie Girardville**, who has 20 years' experience with Tourism Quebec and is founder of the Association of the Most Beautiful Villages of Quebec (l'Association des plus beaux villages du Québec), spoke about current trends in heritage tourism.

First though, he described the various types of heritage: human heritage (traditional ways of life), architectural heritage (historic or not), monuments, religious heritage, classified historic sites, historic events (reconstructions), heritage arts and crafts (traditional methods and know-how), heritage landscapes, industrial heritage, heritage districts, etc. He said heritage is so diversified because it touches most human activities. The clients for cultural and heritage tourism are evolving as tourism itself evolves.

Using information from a study carried out by the Travel Industry Association of America, he said that, between 1996-2000, there was a 7% increase in visits to historic sites and museums. This study showed that, in comparison with other types of tourism, cultural visits were longer (5.2 nights), more money was spent (US \$722), 60% of overnight stays were at commercial accommodations, the majority of tourists were retired but still active, and they were more educated and wealthier. Heritage tourists, it seems, travel out of season, notably

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23% in spring and 23% in autumn. This could be of great interest for the tourism industry as it would encourage enterprises to stay open in the off-season.

The study also showed the cultural tourist travelled more in organized tours (6% versus 3%). Their activities were also quite diversified with 48% coming to shop, 28% to visit natural parks, 21% for the fresh air, 17% to go to the beach, 12% to visit theme parks, 9% for the nightlife and 7% to visit a casino. Culture, he said, is not an exclusive element in tourism.

The study by Tourism Nova Scotia came to the same conclusions. However, it also found that more women than men took cultural tours (45% in heritage tourism versus 36% in other conventional tourism groups). In another study by Créatec/Dept. of Canadian Heritage, 31% of Canadians claimed to be passionate about Canadian heritage, 42% grateful for it, 16% intellectually curious about it and 11% indifferent to it. Percentages in the first two categories were lower in Quebec and a little lower still in British Columbia, probably because they are more interested in their own provincial heritage.

There are solid trends and opportunities in heritage tourism. However, to move with the times on tourism and socio-cultural trends, the industry must be aware that cultural tourists are:

- more intelligent (they want to understand, learn and participate);
- ▣ more convivial (they want more animations, new technologies; they want to be entertained);
- more interested in personalized individual experiences (for example, the genealogy theme is a current favourite);
- taking more visits and staying longer, especially on their annual vacations.

The travels of cultural tourists are more planned out because of political instability, economic fluctuations and climate changes.

There is also a definite socio-cultural trend towards an aging population that favours

returning to its roots, to the countryside, to its religion. Because these people have more time to travel, their activities are slower, less active. Therefore, they prefer fresh air and cultural heritage destinations.

An American study has examined the authenticity of tourism. It showed that increasing numbers of tourists were looking for the more exotic and original experience and places with cultural differences. This tendency could be due to the effects of globalization: a world of increasing uniformity and superficiality. The research also showed that tourists want to see respect given to the environment and to local populations, such as that found in Ecotours.

Regrettably, a number of threats weigh on heritage tourism: the shopping culture, the quality of the landscape, the place occupied by culture, imitation heritage and other elements. The shopping culture can be harmful to certain heritage areas, particularly in the historic districts of the larger cities like Québec City. As the number of tourists visiting the area increases, the number of local residents diminishes. This is part of the life cycle of tourism.

Further, there is a temptation to sacrifice heritage sites for economic development at the municipal and provincial levels—be it for industrial investment or commercial establishments or shopping centres. The commercialization of culture and heritage reflects a disdain for certain cultural interventions. In this sense—the disappearance of our cultural roots—one must strongly resist the globalization of the economy.

The quality of the landscape is one of the prime tourist attractions. It is also an important element in heritage tourism; people are interested in natural and cultural history. The degradation of the landscape, including heritage buildings, has diminished in many areas over the years, as a result of the work of organizations such as the Heritage Canada Foundation, and programs such as Main Street.

The landscape is a collective creation that should be enjoyed by all—local residents and

visitors alike. Its preservation is therefore a collective responsibility. The cultural landscape is part of the environment and is affected by chemical pollutants, air and water pollutants and visual pollutants. It is right to consider the cultural landscape as a major part of our heritage tourism. Those who want the landscape simply for themselves are thieves because they are stealing the landscape from the collective and they also harm heritage tourism.

Culture is not a political priority for the government (e.g. only 1% of Quebec's budget). This is unlikely to change until culture has an economic importance. That's why we are starting to talk about a cultural industry, and heritage must follow the same road in order for it to become a priority.

A study by the Department of Canadian Heritage indicated that Canadians are more preoccupied with natural heritage than cultural heritage. Finally, the declining numbers of people practicing religion threatens the financial support of religious heritage buildings. The religious buildings are less well maintained and therefore less frequently used. However, Quebec now has a government program to help support religious buildings.

The fourth threat to cultural tourism is imitation heritage. The reconstructed Acadian Village and Upper Canada Village are substitutions. While they permit the re-creation of the milieu, they are not authentic. "Why travel the world when you can experience a "cartoon" version on foot at the Epcot Centre or Las Vegas?" asked M. Girardville.

Increasing the success of heritage tourism might involve integrating non-cultural activities into existing heritage tours. Some suggestions are as follows:

- Remove tours of churches or mills that are too repetitive or specialized.
- Offer authentic heritage as a lure within a larger generalized tour.
- ▣ Make heritage lively and vibrant by using animation, new technologies, sound and



- lights, and dramatic historic re-enactments.
- Use marketing strategies to position a heritage site for its uniqueness.
- Explore the possibility of tourist apprenticeships to provide a cultural immersion.
- Develop or use a label of quality (e.g. Qualité-Québec tourism program, Association des plus beaux villages du Québec) and work to position the product.
- Control the support capacity—put a quota on hotel development and vehicles, and market to select groups.
- Develop a code of ethics to promote respect towards tourists.
- Create a network of distribution and promotion.
- Use school visiting programs to develop an interest in heritage.

The Association of the Most Beautiful Villages of Quebec was founded by Mr. Girardville in 1997. He suggested that the concept, which already existed in France, could be used in other Canadian provinces and in the United States, especially in New England where there are many beautiful villages.

The association is a network of rural municipalities—each encompassing one or several villages or hamlets within Quebec—which have preserved their geographic, historic and cultural characteristics, and display authentic natural, human and architectural heritage in an exceptional landscape.

Its three objectives are: to preserve and enhance the value of the architectural and historical heritage, as well as the quality of the landscape; to instill a sense of pride and belonging among the citizens of the member villages; and to promote the network within the tourist industry.

The villages are selected according to three main criteria. First is the quality of the site, its beauty or originality. Second is the architectural quality, authenticity and infill elements within the village (on private or public property). The third criteria is the quality of the local beaches.

The 29 villages in nine tourist regions were chosen for their heart and soul, in short, for their authenticity. They are mainly situated along the primary tourist routes of Quebec and border the lakes and rivers, particularly the St. Lawrence. Some members of the association are Knowlton, Standbridge East, Frelighsburg, Verchères, Lotbinière, and Kamouraska.

The many small villages and their residents constitute an invaluable asset. Local businesses strive to preserve smaller, more approachable operations, allowing tourists to learn more about local life and history. Supporting artisans, artists, farmers and other local businesses not only ensures the survival of traditional village life, but also the authenticity of products. The villages offer a wide range of inns, bed and breakfasts, and farm stay accommodations that allow tourists to spend time with the townspeople. The villages are ideal for visiting on foot or by bicycle.

The villages, however, face many challenges: municipalities that lack a sense of heritage; few financial resources, resulting in heritage not being a priority; and the temptation of commercial or industrial development that generates taxes but destroys heritage. However, heritage remains economically viable because of its impact on tourists.

More information can be found at: [http://www.beauxvillages.qc.ca/anglais/accueil\\_a.html](http://www.beauxvillages.qc.ca/anglais/accueil_a.html)

## DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS

**Paul Schurman** (P.E.I. Governor, Heritage Canada Foundation Board) said, in summary, that “no matter what business we are involved in—historic or heritage tourism or others—new trends and issues surface, and one must address the issues and possibly adopt the new trends to survive. Your messages, facts and figures illustrate the need for a balance between heritage tourism and the general community and, indeed, the public and private sector. I think we all agree that you have given us food for thought.”

# MINISTER'S LUNCHEON

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## THE HON. RODNEY MACDONALD

Minister of Tourism and Culture,  
Province of Nova Scotia, delivered the following address:

Welcome to Nova Scotia. I am pleased to host today's luncheon for this important conference. Here in Nova Scotia we are blessed with amazing natural coastline, rivers and streams, highlands and woodlands. We are surrounded with cultural landscapes that remain much as they have been for hundreds of years. We can walk along streets in small, rural communities, or here in a national city and find authentic built heritage of stone, wood, and brick.

In Nova Scotia, you can find heritage and cultural resources that have remained virtually unscarred by time and population. As a major tourist destination we have a unique opportunity. An opportunity to continue developing a thriving economy based on our heritage and cultural resources, while maintaining the authentic Nova Scotian way. An opportunity, at the same time, to preserve our irreplaceable heritage resources, including our built heritage.

Today, I'd like to share with you some of our journey since this department was formed, and give you some highlights of our efforts to ensure we remain good stewards of Nova Scotia's rich natural and cultural history.

I also want to outline our department's new principles of heritage and cultural tourism. Principles that will support the preservation of natural and cultural history, and heritage properties throughout Nova Scotia. Principles that we have developed to take advantage of Nova Scotia's strong, tourism-based economy and actively support the preservation of our heritage and cultural resources.

The Department of Tourism and Culture was formed in 1999 and we have had combined responsibilities for tourism, culture and heritage. This, I believe, underscores our strong link between tourism and heritage, including built heritage.

The Heritage Division of our department includes the Nova Scotia Museum, its 26 associated sites, and the provincial collection of 200 plus buildings and 800,000 artefacts and specimens. The Division partners with people, organizations, communities and governments to develop many of our heritage initiatives.

Examples include efforts to preserve the Gaelic language and culture, the African-Canadian story in Nova Scotia, and the rich heritage of the Mi'kmaq.

The Division includes several programs at the heart of which is the effective stewardship of our heritage resources. The Community Museums Assistance Program offers support to 67 museums across the province.

The Strategic Development Initiative encourages sustainable heritage-related endeavours that forge a strong link between the initiators of heritage projects and their communities. We have doubled our investment in the Initiative this year.

We have a Special Places Protection Program that oversees the province's archaeology program, as well as Nova Scotia's designated special places.

For more than two decades, the Heritage Property Program has identified, preserved, and encouraged the continued use of built

heritage in Nova Scotia. Two hundred and fifty-four heritage properties are recognized, designated and protected from significant alteration or demolition.

Through this program, our department has been involved for the past few years in the development phase of *The Canadian Register of Historic Places*, which Mr. Frood spoke to you about in his session earlier today. We will continue our commitment to this program during its implementation phase.

As you have heard throughout this conference, heritage tourism is gaining increasing attention. All those who take part in heritage tourism must work with the same understanding of the importance of sharing our rich heritage and cultural resources in the context of tourism.

Here is the crux of the matter. It is essential for both the long-term future of our heritage and culture resources, and the continued economic prosperity of the provincial tourism industry, that these resources are preserved, managed carefully, and nurtured as a legacy for the future.

At the same time, it is essential to provide opportunities for the appropriate use and enjoyment of these resources by offering high-quality and authentic heritage and cultural experiences to today's well-educated, discerning traveller.

To this end, cultural tourism is about marketing culture to visitors. The concepts of packaging, partnership, marketing, and collaboration to create cultural opportunities are crucial to creating a cultural tourism destination.

Out of these basic beliefs, we have developed several Heritage and Cultural Tourism Principles. These principles reflect the content and spirit of several international charters, documents, and the Nova Scotia Tourism Strategy.

The first principle is one of Celebration. Our natural and cultural heritage provide valuable opportunities for appreciation, interpretation, education, enrichment and celebration of who

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we are, and a sharing of our experiences for the benefit of everyone.

Next are the principles of Integrity and Quality. Activities and programs which make use of heritage and cultural resources, including commercial activities, must incorporate concepts of preservation and quality. Heritage and cultural resources must be designed, managed and governed, both to maximize the benefits of their use and to ensure their long-term existence. In addition, the heritage resource must be presented in such a way that the visitor's experiences are high-quality, have integrity and are appropriate.

As well, it is essential that heritage and cultural tourism is a product of Interdependence and Partnership. The shared role of government, industry, businesses, communities and other stakeholders must be recognized and understood. We must work together to successfully use and present the resource for tourism purposes, while properly caring for, preserving, and appropriately celebrating our heritage and culture.

Next, it is vital that our initiatives are sustainable. Heritage and cultural attractions and programs must incorporate tourism and economic viability objectives into planning, management and operations. These objectives should include creating opportunities for revenue generation, meeting the needs of visitors, effective marketing, securing financial and appropriate human resources, and encouraging capital reinvestment to maintain quality and economic success.

Initiatives must be well managed and synergistic. To derive the maximum benefits from the use of heritage and cultural resources for tourism purposes, the activities and programs must be well managed and co-operative. The relationship between heritage, culture and tourism is dynamic and should be managed for future generations.

Another principle is that of Knowledgeable Development. The heritage and culture sectors must be dynamic and responsive to market

trends and changes in visitor expectations. We have to continually develop new, quality tourism products, programs, and experiences that appeal to today's well-travelled discriminating visitors.

And, there must be appropriate measures for progress and success. Staff, industry and communities must research and monitor heritage tourism programs and activities to determine visitor satisfaction and the degree of economic success, along with their impact on the integrity of our heritage resources.

How will those involved in heritage, culture and tourism activities apply these principles? They should ensure we are all working together. They should make sure the financial benefits derived from tourism will improve the quality of life in our communities. They should ensure there is an effective system in place to protect the integrity and diversity of our culture and heritage, and to identify and address needs for new strategies and products. They should make sure stakeholders are included in planning, developing and delivering presentations and products. Everyone should be involved in establishing goals, strategies, policies and protocols.

I am confident that as we continue to work toward developing a vibrant program of heritage and cultural tourism initiatives with our community partners, we will be able to enjoy as much of Nova Scotia's heritage and cultural resources as we do today.

# NOTES

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