

INTERPRETATION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

And stuff like that...



PARK
MANAGEMENT
INSTITUTE

FRPA Park Management Institute 2024

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RESOURCES

02

HISTORICAL

03

INTERPRETATION

CULTURAL ARTIFACTS

DEFINITION

Cultural artifacts are tangible objects, tools, or items that hold significance within a particular culture or society, representing its values, beliefs, and historical experiences. They can range from ancient relics, artworks, and manuscripts to modern-day items, such as photographs, clothing, or technological devices.

EXAMPLES

- Arrow Heads (North America)
- Boomerangs (Australia)
- Roman Coins (Europe)
- Komps (Netherlands)
- Murtis (Hinduism)
- Kippah (Judaism)
- Matryoshka Dolls (Russian)
- Rosary Beads (Catholic)



Tall Tale

a folktale with
unbelievable
exaggerations told as
if it were true and
meant to be humorous

Examples: Pecos Bill, Paul Bunyan, Johnny Appleseed





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INTERPRETATION

HISTORIC OR HISTORICAL?

Something historic has a great importance to human history. Something historical is related to the past. People with big egos get them mixed up if they say they had a historic family background. Unless they helped win a war, it was probably just historical.

WHAT MAKES A PROPERTY HISTORICAL?

TO BE CONSIDERED "HISTORICAL," A PROPERTY MUST HAVE THREE ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES:

1. SUFFICIENT AGE
2. A RELATIVELY HIGH DEGREE OF PHYSICAL INTEGRITY
3. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE.

AGE

A PROPERTY MUST BE "OLD ENOUGH" TO BE CONSIDERED HISTORICAL. GENERALLY SPEAKING, THIS MEANS THAT A PROPERTY MUST BE AT LEAST 50 YEARS OLD, ALTHOUGH THIS IS JUST A GENERAL RULE OF THUMB. ANOTHER WAY OF LOOKING AT IT IS THAT A PROPERTY MUST BE OLD ENOUGH TO HAVE BEEN STUDIED BY HISTORIANS, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS, OR ARCHAEOLOGISTS SO THAT ITS PLACE IN HISTORY IS CLEAR. THIS LATTER PERSPECTIVE ALLOWS SOME TYPES OF PROPERTIES THAT ARE LESS THAN 50 YEARS OLD TO BE CONSIDERED "HISTORICAL."

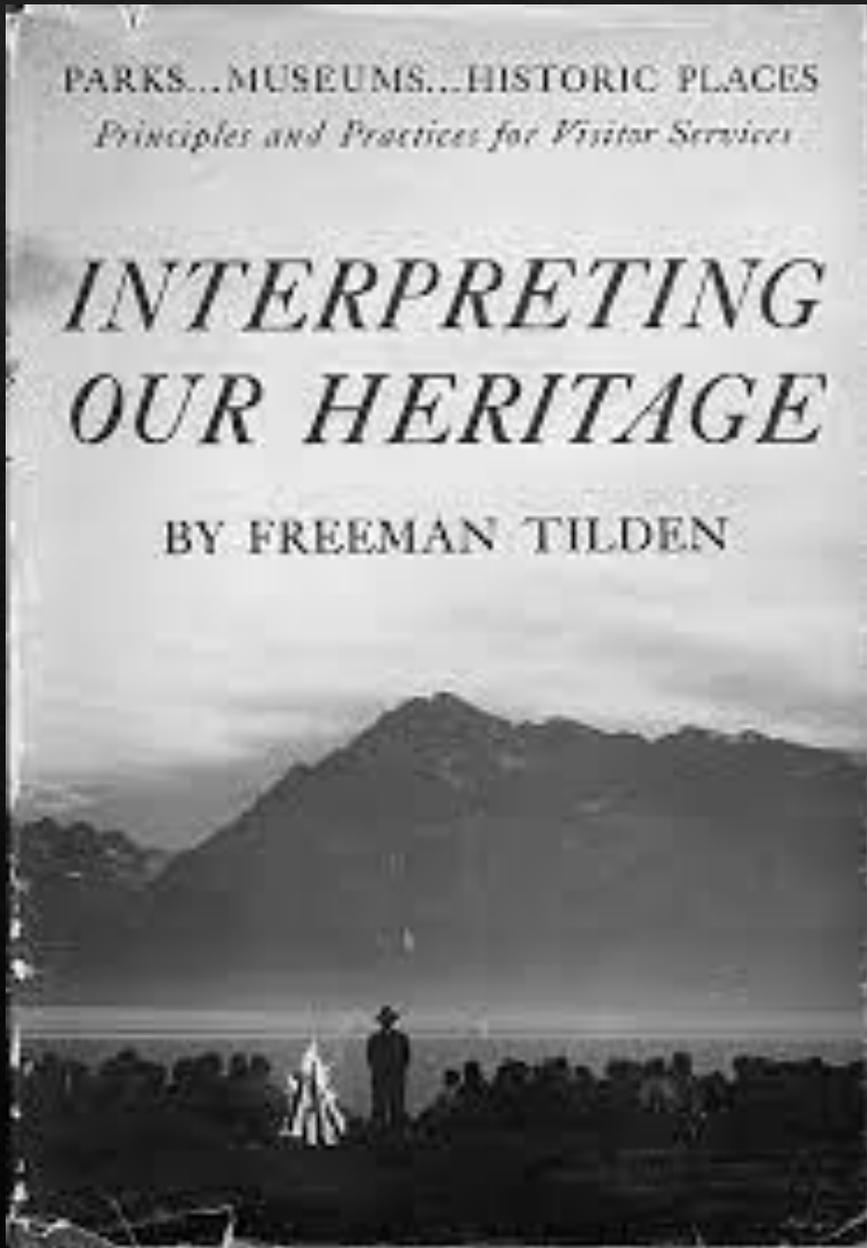
INTEGRITY

IN ADDITION TO HAVING SUFFICIENT AGE, A PROPERTY MUST RETAIN ITS HISTORICAL PHYSICAL INTEGRITY. FOR A BUILDING, STRUCTURE, LANDSCAPE FEATURE, HISTORICAL SITE, OR HISTORICAL DISTRICT, THIS MEANS THAT THE PROPERTY MUST BE RELATIVELY UNCHANGED. ITS ESSENTIAL CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES RELATIVE TO ITS SIGNIFICANCE MUST STILL BE PRESENT. FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE, INTEGRITY MEANS THAT THE SITE MUST BE RELATIVELY UNDISTURBED, WITH ITS PATTERNS AND LAYERS OF ARTIFACTS AND OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE RELATIVELY INTACT. FOR A TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY, INTEGRITY MEANS THAT THE SITE MUST BE RECOGNIZABLE TO TODAY'S AFFILIATED CULTURAL GROUP, EVIDENCED THROUGH TRADITION, AND STILL USED OR REVERED IN SOME WAY.

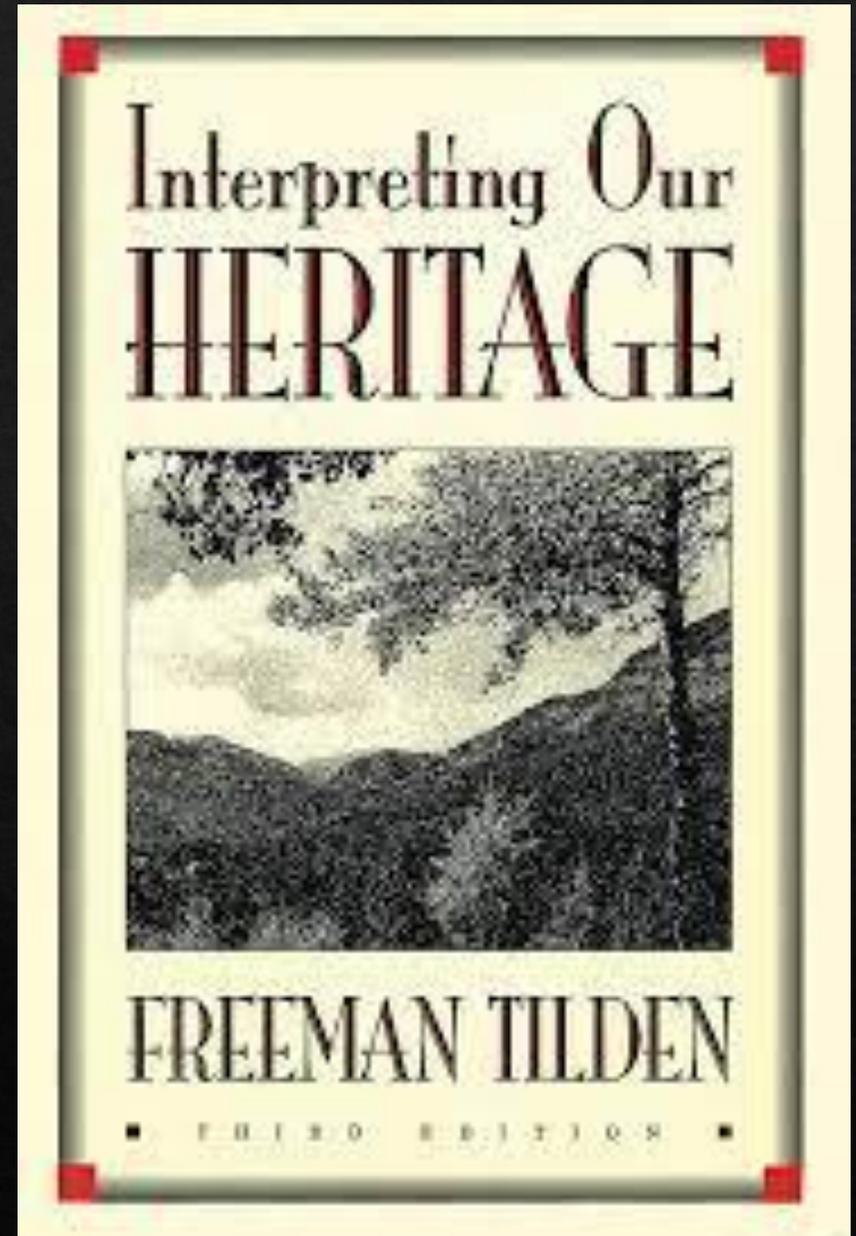
SIGNIFICANCE

FINALLY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, A PROPERTY MUST BE SIGNIFICANT TO BE CONSIDERED HISTORIC. SIGNIFICANCE IS DEFINED IN THREE WAYS:

- (1) THROUGH DIRECT ASSOCIATION WITH INDIVIDUALS, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, OR DEVELOPMENTS THAT SHAPED OUR HISTORY OR THAT REFLECT IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF OUR HISTORY;
- (2) BY EMBODYING THE DISTINCTIVE PHYSICAL AND SPATIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ARCHITECTURAL STYLE OR TYPE OF BUILDING, STRUCTURE, LANDSCAPE, OR PLANNED ENVIRONMENT, OR A METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION, OR BY EMBODYING HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES OR FINE CRAFTSMANSHIP; OR
- (3) BY HAVING THE POTENTIAL TO YIELD INFORMATION IMPORTANT TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PAST THROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL, OR OTHER PHYSICAL INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS



Freeman Tilden
(August 22, 1883 –
May 13, 1980) is
known as the Father
of Heritage
Interpretation and
lived to be 97 years
old. Tilden was the
first author to ever
provide a definition
for the field of
interpretation:



1) "The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation."

Much of the interpretation we come across tends to be presented as sterile specification, a factual report or an academic account of the subject matter. The role of interpretation is to provoke the audience to interact, to think and to react to the presentation. Good interpretation asks provocative questions.

2) "Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile."

This includes tangibles, intangibles as well as universal concepts. Talk to your visitors before a program and relate your program to them using information you may have gained from your conversation with them – their interests, knowledge of the sites history, habitat, culture, art, etc. Take people's recreation interests and make them interpretive (e.g. interpretation by bike, having an "interpretive" fishing clinic or boating safety program.

3) "Information does not equal interpretation, but all interpretation contains information."

4) "Interpretation is an art which combines many arts regardless of subject material. Any art is to some degree teachable."

You might use acting, puppets, artwork, photos, props, storytelling or other artistic skills in developing your interpretive program or service.

5) "Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part."

A critical aspect of successful interpretive planning is the development of themes. In general, all interpretation should illustrate one main interpretive theme. These can be supported by program themes and sub-themes.

6) "Interpretation for children must be designed specifically for children, and not simply a dilution of programs and information for adults."

Interpretive programs for children need to have fun, hands-on, and edutainment with a clear theme or purpose in mind. Analogies and examples need to be geared for children as well.

**Despite the Urban Legend,
Twinkies only have a shelf
life of 45 days.**



**Although this is twice as long as
Twinkies lasted before their big
relaunch in 2013, it still does not
approach the wild claim that they
never go bad.**

QUESTIONS?

COMMENTS?

**FUN FACTS OF
YOUR OWN?**

It Starts in Parks!

Randolph Ferris

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