



24th April 2019

International Conference of National Trusts 2019

The Falkland Islands Museum & National Trust (FIMNT) recently sent two members of staff to Bermuda to attend the 18th International Conference of National Trusts (ICNT), held in Bermuda earlier this year. This was the first time that delegates from the Falklands Islands have attended a National Trust conference – made possible through travel bursaries and assistance from the International Council of Museums UK (ICOM-UK), the International National Trusts Organisation (INTO), and local company, Stanley Services Ltd.



Tour of St George's

Over 130 delegates from 31 countries gathered in Bermuda between March 26-30. The theme of the conference: 'Arms Wide Open: Strategies for engaging with diverse communities.' The conference started with an Opening Ceremony with a special welcome by His Excellency the Governor, Mr John Rankin CMG and opening speeches by representatives from INTO, the Bermuda National Trust and other members. This was followed by a tour of St George's – the first permanent English settlement on the Islands and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Speeches at the Royal Naval Dockyard

We were also given a tour of the Royal Naval Dockyard (RND) built in the late 1800s (another UNESCO World Heritage Site). It was here at the RND that the first of the Breakout Sessions was held. Titled 'Small and Beautiful' this fascinating session was about the balance between development and sustainability in small island environments. The resounding message from guest speakers was the same - you can't have growth without development – what flows in, must flow out. It was interesting to see how some islands are, in many ways, ahead of the rest of the world on many issues. Questions asked by speakers included... who is responsible for coming up with a vision? How do we go from thinking about this vision, to putting it into action? These and other questions gave delegates a lot to think about.

The Falklands currently send almost all of its household waste to landfill. Islands like Bermuda recycle what they can, and incinerate and convert into energy anything they can't. Tourism in the Falklands is booming, this year the Islands are predicted to receive more visitors than previous years and whilst we welcome the steady increase in visitors, we need to realise that this also means an increase in refuse.

The 'Open for business' breakout session focused on how to build success by growing your audience. This session had great tips on how to try and engage with different audiences. For example, getting people, in particular children, to tell the story of heritage assets in small videos. By making these stories personal we can evoke strong feelings of understanding which could result in offers of help. Also interesting was the session on segmentation designed for the art and cultural section. These segments expand the knowledge of arts audiences and participants with a targeted set of tools for understanding motivations, behaviours and lifestyles and how they relate to engagement with arts and culture. This system is devised by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre. There are 8 culture segments which can be used to

help understand the needs of existing audiences and participants, reach out to new ones, and maximise and realise fundraising potential. This got us thinking about how to best target these segments (something we are currently looking at).

A plenary address by John Orna-Ornstein, Director of Culture and Engagement of the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland on the third day of the conference was particularly interesting. Key points from his address and an idea of how this got us thinking are below:

- Professionals need to put time and energy into understanding their audiences.
This ties in to the Morris Hargreaves McIntyre system for example – a system we are actively looking at.
- Make your stories more meaningful!
Who do we get to tell our stories? For example, using the last surviving lighthouse keeper to tell people about future fundraising campaigns for the lighthouse.
- We need to come to terms with the fact that we can't conserve everything, and that sometimes we just need to let things go!
This is true – in particular with the size and resources available to us – we can't save everything. The Falklands has lost shipwrecks, bridges and sites of historic importance in the past because of lack of funding.
- Save, and acquire things that mean the most to people.
Made us think of two of our campaigns - the Cape Pembroke Lighthouse and San Carlos Museum and how much they mean to people.
- You can change how people feel about something by getting them involved in the decisions that are made.
This is something we have discussed in the past – would people become more interested in heritage if they helped make the decisions?

Gail Lord is the world's leading cultural planner with more than 2,200 museum and cultural clients in 460 cities worldwide. Her talk on changing the narrative from a hard power to a soft power future was thought-provoking. Soft power is the "ability to influence behaviour through persuasion, attraction or agenda setting." For example, taking heritage used to celebrate hard power includes; trophies of war, hierarchies of civilisation, records of great men, conquests of nature and build environment. The idea is to change the narrative by giving heritage a 'soft edge.' To give an example, the Tower of London Poppies got people thinking about 'peace' as oppose to 'war.'

A plenary on Reciprocal Visiting by Natalie Bull, one of INTO's Trustees, got delegates talking of the possibilities. Similarly, delegates explored ways Trusts could help each other through staff exchange programmes, working holidays or just by lending expertise to other trusts. The FIMNT had offers of help during the conference and much thought has since been given to the idea of a reciprocal visiting agreement.

Another interesting breakout session concentrated on the joys and woes of heritage tourism, this was about striking the balance between commercialisation and benefiting from heritage tourism. What are the consequences and benefits and is there a balance? We travel to experience stories, places and traditions embodied in natural, built and cultural heritage... but how do we measure and understand the impact? Does exposing sites to tourism protect them, or put them in harm's way? It's about having a growing but balanced tourism industry. An example given was the Giant's Causeway in Ireland. Visitor numbers have gone through the roof as a result of Game of Thrones. One of the solutions to cap the number of visitors was to perhaps put the price up ... but does that then make it inaccessible to the residents in the area? The simple answer there would be to have discounts outside of peak times or offer free admission to locals. In many ways we are fortunate that a lot of our heritage is inaccessible by road – this means that visitor numbers are low – but is this *really* a good thing?

Oliver Maurice, Director of INTO, gave a talk on the 17 sustainable development goals – goals that will transform our world. INTO would like members to tell them how they are contributing towards the 17 SDGs. Oliver stressed the importance of safeguarding our natural and cultural heritage and told his audience to "campaign hard and don't give up. If a building means something to people, you will get there." Personally this is something we needed to hear. The FIMNT has many campaigns and at times we become disheartened with the lack of support we receive.

A plenary, titled, 'The Last Straw' revealed some shocking statistics. Since the 1950s, 8.3 billion metric tonnes of plastic have been produced with 275 million metric tonnes generated in 2010 alone. Of that, it is estimated that between 4.8 to 12.7 tonnes of that waste entered the ocean – 80% from land based sources and 20% from maritime sources

(fishing lines etc). Charles Alluto, Jersey National Trust, told delegates of the plastic free initiatives Jersey has implemented (known as the 'Surfers against Sewage' campaign). Charles advised that other Trusts download the toolkits available for download – toolkits that encourage people to give up 3 plastics – any more ambitious than that and people will be put off. Miguel Pina from the Barbados National Trust added that every 60 seconds one truckload of plastic enters our oceans and that Barbados has pledged to say no to plastic bags, bottled water, straws, stirrers and disposable razors. Barbados have since ceased importing single use plastics and will make it illegal to use them from July this year. The FIMNT made the decision to stop using plastic bags in 2014 and will continue looking for ways to help the environment.

Another useful breakout session was one on Arches, the Getty Conservation Institute's/World Monuments Fund open source platform for heritage inventories. This was particularly helpful because the FIMNT has recently started putting their Heritage Environment Record together.

The team from the FIMNT made the most of the time they spent travelling to the conference by meeting with stakeholders and visiting Museums in the United Kingdom. The SS Great Britain and Fleet Air Arm Museums both want to collaborate with the Historic Dockyard Museum (looked after by the FIMNT) for upcoming anniversaries so the timing of this visit was perfect. The team also met with the Friends of the Falkland Islands Museum & National Trust and Jane Cameron National Archives (FIMA). This was the first time the ladies had met most of the committee so it was wonderful to put faces to some of the people they had corresponded with over the years. There was also time to meet with Square - who the FIMNT deal with for online payments, and the Falkland Islands Association (who would like to assist with the 50th anniversary of the SS Great Britain returning to Bristol exhibition next year).

Flights per person to the UK alone (return) cost in excess of £1,600.00 so it was important that the most was made of the trip. It actually worked out cheaper to travel via the UK as oppose to travelling via South America.

The contacts that the FIMNT made over those two weeks are invaluable and the FIMNT has every intention of continuing to attend the conferences, the next of which is in Belgium in 2021. Many delegates commented on how fantastic it was to see the Falklands at the conference with many offers of help made.

The Falkland Islands Museum & National Trust are very grateful to the International National Trusts Organisation (INTO), the International Council of Museums (ICOM UK) and local company, Stanley Services Ltd for their help getting the FIMNT to Bermuda and for helping us raise the profile of the FIMNT.

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