

Newsletter
December 2019



“FREEDOM to/in Time Travel, can we see the future?” Report from the 15th Bridging Ages International conference.



During September 9-13, the 15th Annual Conference was held in Estonian National Museum, Tartu, Estonia. The conference brought together Time Travel specialists and those interested in Time Travel (TT) in order to discuss best practices and to share experiences. Delegates of the conference came from Hungary, South Africa, Lithuania, Latvia, Finland, Sweden and Estonia.



The topic of the conference, "FREEDOM to/in Time Travel", explored the questions: does this method give us the freedom to talk about problematic or taboo topics in modern society and can we contribute to our society by doing so?

During two conference days, best practices were discussed and stories of experiences were exchanged. The question of how to deal with different problems in society using the TT method was addressed. Examples were given— including the Integration Project in Finland, TT to the year 2068 in Sweden and an example on how to fight against gender-based violence in Tanzania. And much more. The discussions were sharp, enjoyable and lively.

The keynote speakers focused on different perspectives of freedom and heritage. Marten Kaevats from the Government Office of Estonia focused his presentation on the possibilities of the digital society. He explored the topics of creating safe sharing spaces for new ideas and the benefits that can be gained in applying the already existing technologies at the global level.

Merilin Piipuu (right photo) from the Estonian Cultural Ministry was discussing the meaning of freedom and asked: Can we put freedom into a museum?



The process of transforming the Museum of Occupations to the Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom was presented as an example.

Johanna Björkholm from the National Expert Committee of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Finland focused on intangible cultural heritage. Citing on the recent Unesco convention for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage. She emphasised on two aspects – knowing how and knowing what so as to gain a practical knowledge of the traditional culture and increase awareness of it.



Our Time Travel event on the second day of the conference, took us back to the year 1869, some months before the first Song Festival took place in Tartu. The peasants of Erastvere manor came together to talk about how to plan the trip to Tartu and discuss why women are not welcome to perform in the public event. The journalists, couriers, pastors and schoolteachers from abroad joined them, as their task was to write about the local culture.

The post-conference study trip took us to Setomaa – a land rich with history. Where, after the Second World War, some of the Seto people were living in Estonia and the others lived in the Russian side. Seto people are famous for their colourful national clothes and the noteworthy silver jewellery of Seto women. They are also known for the Seto leelo – a multi-tone singing tradition. In 2009, UNESCO added the Seto leelo to the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

On top of that, one member of the group – Pernilla Lundström, the birthday girl - was dressed up as Seto at the Obinitsa Museum, wearing all the wonderful silver jewellery. Also, the local women demonstrated how the Seto leelo sounds.

Kaari Siemer, Saale Randaru and Pille Rothla, Tartu, Estonia



Words from Gulshera Khan, newly appointed President of Bridging Ages

In South Africa, we say “*Umntu ngumntu ngabantu*”. Literally this translates into “*I am through others*”. More philosophically it means a belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity. I believe that this is also what Bridging Ages is ultimately about - to make a contribution, to make a difference.

Over thirty years ago, the Time Travel and Historic Environment Education, was initiated at Kalmar county museum, Sweden. Today, it has spread to more than 20 countries, across four continents. It is “a method so simple, yet so powerful”, as described by Louis Marias, an educator from Western Cape, South Africa.

Truly inspiring work has been done over the years. It is all captured on the website bridgingages.com. Our exposure to other parts of the world has taught us that the issues of human rights, democracy, gender violence, xenophobia and environmental issues are common concerns. We can make an impact on these matters through the Time Travel method, especially in our comparative reflections and dialogue.

While, fundamentally, time travel is an educational method, it transcends boundaries in supporting the goals of community building and social cohesion. We work across professional fields in a multi-disciplinary approach. Unearthing

sites and stories which are close to the heart of local communities, affirms their dignity and sense of belonging. As a social worker I have connected immediately to this method. There is great value in its implementation.

Our task is twofold. Firstly, to consolidate, spread, entrench and institutionalise the method. Secondly, to work towards an organisational structure that reflects the qualitative growth and geographic spread.

I wish to pay tribute to the leadership of the organisation since its inception. We can only aspire to build on their rich legacy. Over the years, a network of skilled and experienced time travel practitioners has emerged. The growth of the organisation requires their continued active participation.

Finally, we are looking forward to an exciting and enthusiastic period ahead.

Gulshera Khan



Bridging Ages Board

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St Michael and the dragon, a unique collaboration project between the church of Sweden, Mora Hockey Club and the local high school

For two years, the Hockey Club in Mora, Sweden, together with the school and the church, has worked with young people ages 14-16 years old on *fundamental values*.

The hockey club felt that they needed help in their quest for the youth to become the best version of themselves, both on the hockey field, but also outside the sports arena. The same request had the high school Noretskolan, which is committed to working for democracy and trust and has a value-based pedagogy employed at the school. **And so started St Michael and the dragon**, a project between the Swedish Church, Mora hockey club and the high schools in the municipality

The young people meet continuously during the year to, and in the middle of winter, when Mora is at its coldest, the youngsters take part in a time travel.

Together we go back to the year 1932 when Mr Gunnar Faleij introduced hockey for the bandy playing youngsters. The Morabians were not interested in this new sport and much persuasion was required from Mr Faleij before they dared to try the new and unknown sport hockey. The key questions in this time travel is -What had happened if the people in Mora did not dare to test the new game, which today has become an important part of the local people's soul? And how do we relate to new things and people that come to Mora today?

The Time travel has really fallen out well. The young people immediately make connections



to the present and the future. In the time travel, they dare to express apprehensions and fears for the new and unknown. And at the same time, give each other the courage to be open and welcoming.

The headmaster of the school has on several occasions expressed that he sees a difference in how the students who are part of St Michael and the dragon now stand up for themselves and for others in the school. He even made the effort to call the hockey club's youth manager and coach and told them about the good results.

- Having an external partner who looks at our basic values and helps us to become a better place and community for our children and young people is both innovative and rewarding, says youth manager Andreas Hägglund from Mora IK.

Pernilla Lundström, Church of Sweden.



Time Travel method and Applied heritage, Academic course in Kalmar, Sweden

In September an academic seminar on the Time travel method was held in Kalmar. The participants described it as *unique and valuable, challenged my thinking, challenged my understanding*

Several persons within the Bridging Ages network are connected to research studies at a university with a perspective on the Time Travel method and Applied Heritage. It is within the disciplines of archaeology, science education, museum education, tourism, archaeology, social cohesion. This comes at the time when the Time Travel method seems to be spreading to more people and more institutions. So the need for an academic course has been identified with the goal being to bring together those people in the Bridging Ages group who are connected to the ongoing research.

Participants and content

The academic course was held in Kalmar in a partnership between Kalmar County Museum and Linnaeus University. The coordinator was Ebbe Westergren. Fifteen participants/researchers from seven countries (South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, Brazil, Serbia, Latvia, USA) participated.



The course included six full days of lectures, workshops, a Time Travel event, many discussions and an excursion to heritage and Time Travel sites. The lectures were held by professors and lecturers from Linnaeus University, on such topics as: The use of heritage in today's society; The Time Travel method, theory and practice; Ethics and moral dimensions in Time Travels; Heritage futures; Mathematics and Time Travels, Learning, knowledge, education and curriculum, Heritage tourism. Each participant presented a short paper at the end of the course, detailing how the course affected and inspired their own research.

Time Travel Event

The second day began with a Time Travel to the future, year 2069, which was a first experience for most participants. The Scenario was based on the declining of the Kalmar Society's wellbeing. This decline comes with the impact of Global Warming and Climate Crisis, loneliness, religion, family values and more. The aim was for this community to take lessons from outside experts and global people. During





the reflection session, it appeared that change is not easy, people will still be holding on to what they think defines them, regardless of the predicaments they face at that point. Therefore, the question that I personally asked myself after that Time Travel was: how do we prepare ourselves for the future, how do we transition, will it be smooth or coupled with bumpy rides? I guess, with every Time Travel, questions should be raised, even long after the Time Travel has taken place... it must trigger questions, so that it fulfils its purpose.

Aspirations from the participants

The participants came from very diverse backgrounds. And all participants engaged with great enthusiasm.

Brazil-Tiago, from Brazil, a research fellow at Linnaeus University, Kalmar, spoke about how the Time Travel Method would be a relevant tool for his archaeological work with former Rubber Tappers in Brazil.

South Africa- Four participants from South Africa, spoke with one voice regarding the poorly implemented policies, and they all wished to somehow use the Time Travel Method in influencing policy, either in Education with matters regarding the curriculum, teacher training, and/or in heritage matters.

Turkey- Was represented by three participants, their aspirations evolved around two issues, the incorporation of the Time Travel Method and Applied Heritage in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Education and Environment Preservation.

Mathematics was brought up as one of the key interest areas of focus.

Latvia- The focus from Agrita was mainly on the work of the museum. Her aspirations were driven by what she would like to see her museum doing to demystify the myth that museums have a traditional role in society, that of preservation of artefacts.

Way Forward:

Many ideas came up to stay connected and develop partnerships and ideas for the future:

- Form an academic committee within Bridging Ages with people interested in research of Applied Heritage and Time Travels.
- Devise a platform to communicate, update each other about our research findings, international conferences, funding opportunities.
- Create academic publications on the Time Travel method, a possible journal with collaborative articles. Pair together practitioners and academics.
- Develop joint projects.
- Have an academic session at the Bridging Ages event in Turkey next year.
- Organise another course on academic research on Time Travels

Thandeka Sibiyi,
Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest, Hungary



This Time Travel made a big impact on everybody - *moving experience trying to solve future problems, probably alike of our current problems.*

Bridging Ages 2020 conference

Engagement in Environment and Community

The Time Travel Method in Education, Tourism and Local Development.

Save the date



The next international Bridging Ages conference will be held in Giresun and Ordu, Turkey. The program includes several sessions on these issues, as well as an academic session and a Time Travel event at Giresun Island. We welcome people from museums, schools, universities, municipalities, NGOs and other interested persons and organizations.

Cem Mutlu TURKSEVEN, Hakan ADANIR
Bridging Ages Turkey

We want your story in the next newsletter!

Bridging ages Newsletter spreads knowledge about what is happening around the world within Bridging ages and the field of Time Travel method. Do you have anything going on that you want to tell the whole network through an article in this Newsletter? Send your idea to linda.liljeberg@kalmarlansmuseum.se.

Over the years this newsletter has presented a variety of innovating and important projects from around the world. For the next newsletter we are extra interested in: What happened after the project ended? What does it look like today? Did you learn something unexpected?



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