

Newsletter
December 2018



Bridging Ages international conference in South Africa – “high standard”, “positive atmosphere”

The Bridging Ages international conference 2018, held from 11 to 13 September at Freedom Park Museum and Heritage Site, Pretoria, South Africa, was a great success. It was attended by 150 delegates from South Africa, Kenya, Sweden and Finland. Many of the delegates have expressed their appreciation: “high standard”, “positive atmosphere”. We learned, experienced and went home energized!

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More info:

www.bridgingages.com



Time Travel event at Freedom Park, how to meet the challenges of today?

The Time Travel method all over South Africa

The Time Travel method and Bridging Ages groups now exist in all nine provinces in South Africa. In September and October 2018 workshops were held in several provinces to train Time Travel champions. Page 5-7

Conference and trainings were organized by Bridging Ages South Africa, Bridging Ages and Freedom Park, with support from Department of Arts and Culture of South Africa



The Bridging ages conference – a meeting place

The Bridging Ages annual international conference is a meeting place for people working with Time Travels, to discuss, reflect and develop new ideas.

This year we gathered in Pretoria, South Africa, a country with many years of experience in Time Travels. The theme **“Create a Legacy through the Time Travel method”** formed an umbrella for presentations and workshops. As usually happens when a lot of creative people meet, the discussions were fantastic and the meetings stimulating. We learned, experienced and went home energized!

From Bridging Ages International, a big thank you to Bridging Ages South Africa and their endless work to make the conference a success. You truly made South Africa look the best! Also thank you to Freedom Park as well as Department of Arts and Culture for your valuable and great roles in making the conference successful. And to the delegates; thank you for your inputs, ideas and enthusiasm!

Annina Ylikoski, president, Bridging Ages International



The spirit of collaboration ensuring success

Freedom Park is very grateful for being chosen as the host of the 2018 Bridging Ages international conference. This could not have come at a better time, when we are celebrating our Patron in Chief, Nelson Mandela and also Albertina Sisulu. The conference created a platform to discuss legacy creation through Time Travels and heritage education. Topics on education, history, political and socio-economic issues, and the future, were thoroughly discussed. Many of the 150 delegates have expressed their appreciation and we have received a lot of positive remarks: “high standard”, “excellent...”; “a great experience!”, “high quality of papers”,

“fantastic efforts by the organizing committee”. As Freedom Park we are committed to support this initiative and ensuring its success and sustainability for the future, not only in South Africa but also on the African continent.

On behalf of Freedom Park management and council, I would like to convey our appreciation for Bridging Ages and for BASA, for their support, mentoring and showing the value of the spirit of collaboration in ensuring success.

Jane Mufamadi, Chief Executive Officer, Freedom Park.

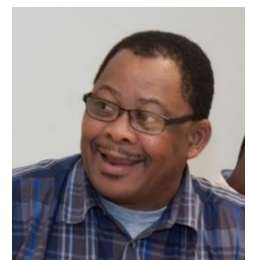


A boost in international relations and confidence

The Bridging ages international conference was very successful. The conference theme **“Create a Legacy through the Time Travel method”** drew the attention to the contribution of Nelson Mandela and Albertina Sisulu, who dedicated their lives to the service of society. As Bridging Ages exists for the same goals of developing society, the papers presented sought to show the various challenges faced by the world and South Africa. The Time Travel event was a highlight of the conference as the reality of the current situation in South Africa was emphasized with the learners’ dynamism.

The conference has given our continent and Bridging Ages in South Africa a boost in international relations and confidence. This was appropriate as Time Travel now has a national footprint in all the South African provinces. We thank South African Department of Arts and Culture, International also the host Freedom Park. Together we made it possible.

Radikobo Ntsimane, Andy Peterson and Gulshera Khan, Bridging Ages South Africa



How to meet the challenges of today? Time Travel, Freedom Park 2009

How do we address challenges like land ownership, corruption and racism? The participants in the conference Time Travel at Freedom Park were divided into nine groups, from nine provinces, with one challenge connected to each group: land ownership, gender, racism, corruption, unemployment, education, crime, health and community building. The Time Travel story was a preparation for the visit of Nelson Mandela at Freedom Park in 2009 and make suggestions to him how to engage people in building the country. 50 learners from a high school in Mpumalanga joined the participants of the conference, making the total number of participants in the Time Travel to almost 200.

At the end of the Time Travel each group had three minutes to present their ideas how to address their challenge and how to engage people. Amazing how many creative ideas that

came up! All the ideas were put together in a “national manifesto”.

The following day the ideas were further discussed by the conference delegates and structured in an action plan for Bridging Ages (last page). Mandela’s own words are true: “Visions with actions can change the world”

Ebbe Westergren, Honorary President Bridging Ages



Bridging Ages Kenya, transform learning institutions and communities

Some of the key challenges in Kenya today: Youth unemployment - Unequal distribution of wealth & resources - Divisive ethnic politics - Run-away corruption among leaders - Cheating in exams - Social media threatening positive African norms.

After the handshake between President Uhuru Kenyatta and Opposition leader Raila Odinga in March 2018, they formed the “Building Bridges Initiative”, a task force on building bridges to unity. The mandate of this team is to evaluate the national challenges with the aim of “creating” a new Kenya. But the most important is to conduct consultations with citizens and civil society organisations on how to unify Kenya.

But it takes more than the two political leaders to make the country to achieve its ideals. This is where Bridging Ages and the Time Travel method come in as a non-partisan and non-political organization that Kenyans can use to build socio-political bridges in the grass root communities.

The aim of Bridging Ages Kenya (BAK) is to provide a vibrant method, using local history and stories to develop a profound understanding of life and society today, by

connecting the past to the present. BAK works towards building a free and democratic society, promoting nation building, reconciliation and social cohesion.

The vision of BAK is to transform learning institutions and communities through heritage education and participatory learning approach. **Its mission** is to use the Time Travel Method and the local historic environment as a resource in learning and teaching various subjects in the curriculum and the local communities.

Time Travels can be used for instance in

- Education in schools
- Building bridges in local communities
- Cultural events and peace building
- Replay cultural sports
- Nurture cultural technologies in communities to create employment
- Use art to communicate societal ills and as an expression of hope in Kenya’s future.

*Mildred Ayere
Maseno University
Bridging Ages Kenya*



Time Travels in Europe and Sweden

Key questions on life quality, gender equality, education and social cohesion

As in the rest of the world, the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, are important guidelines for the countries in Europe (No poverty, Good health etc). The European Union has also identified ten challenges to be addressed the coming years: jobs, growth, climate change, fundamental rights, migration, democratic change etc. In the Kalmar region, Sweden some of the challenges are health, environment, migration and education.

In what way can the heritage sector and the Time Travel method address those challenges and contribute to solutions?

Kalmar county museum has been working with the Time Travel method for more than 30 years and it is still an essential tool. Focus is on education with schools, but health, elderly care and integration are also important sectors.

Training of care workers at elderly centres, workshops with immigrants, Time Travels on faith and life with confirmands, all the Time Travels with learners, with key questions on life quality, gender equality, education and social cohesion, is a way to meet challenges in the society and provide solutions. The main task for the museum is to be in the Service of Society and its Development and the Time Travel method makes a difference.

*Örjan Molander,
Director Kalmar
County Museum,
Sweden
Tina Lindström,
Head of
Educational
Department*



The Time Travel method brings people together, South Africa

Although more than twenty years into democracy, there are many challenges in South Africa today: land ownership, racism, corruption, unemployment etc.

The Time Travel method is as unique method to bring people together from all walks of life irrespective of age and level of education. It gives a contribution to make people understand their immediate challenges and find ways for solutions.

The Time Travel method was introduced in South Africa in 2006 and Bridging Ages South Africa established in 2009. In 2014 National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) came on board and speeded up the process. DAC expressed the ambition to spread the Time Travel method to all provinces in the country. This is now achieved after comprehensive training programs for several years and the training workshops in five provinces in September/ October this year.

The Time Travel method addresses challenges of society, by using the past to create the future. Some of the advantages of the method we have observed in South Africa:

- Assists community developing programs
- Give space for reflection on sensitive issues
- Supports education and school curriculum
- Contributes to the transformation of museums in their relevancy today
- Job creation opportunities, especially in the NGO sector
- Bridge the gap amongst generations
- Therapeutic programs, adding to the work of the TRC

We can see a boost in self-esteem and confidence among “Time Travel people” in South Africa, as a result of the international conference and the provincial trainings. The next step is to sustain and consolidate Bridging Ages and the Time Travel method on both national and provincial levels and develop the international approach further. Governmental institutions, educational and heritage organizations, and NGOs working together.

Radikobo Ntsimane, Andy Peterson, Gulshera Khan, Bridging Ages South Africa, Ebbe Westergren, Honorary President Bridging Ages, mentor

Trainings in the South African provinces, short reports

North West, North West Museum Committee

“Fight or negotiate?”

The North West Time Travel training were held in Kraaipan, the place where the first shot was fired in the South African war (Anglo-Boer war) in October 1899. The North West Museum Committee, together with Kraaipan museum, hosted the training for about 30 persons. The centre in the Time Travel event was setting up a military camp, October 9th 1899, when negotiations were still going on between the Boers and the British. The participants played the role of the local people, the Barolong, used as servants, cooks, medical care etc, so the whole story was seen from their point of view. The key question “Fight or Negotiate?” created intensive discussions.

The North West Museum Committee takes responsibility for the progress and

coordination of the Time Travel method in North West. The Ikageng Time Travel group in Potchefstroom, with many years of Time Travel experience, is a good support.



Intensive discussions, Go to war or negotiate?

Eastern Cape, Nelson Mandela Museum

“Making all voices heard”

The Eastern Cape Chapter of Time Travel, through Nelson Mandela Museum hosted the provincial leg of the Time Travel training 25-26 September 2018 at the Nelson Mandela Youth and Heritage Centre in Qunu. There were representatives from Bridging Ages South Africa, Nelson Mandela Museum, Wild Coast Museum, Mqhekezweni Great Place and officials from Department of Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture.

The practical Time Travel event was held at Mqhekezweni Great Place, the place where Nelson Mandela grew up. 90 persons took part in the event, half of them adults and half learners from neighbouring schools. The story of the Time Travel was the preparation of an Imbizo (community meeting) in 1934. The key questions focused on building democracy and making all voices heard in the community, as mentioned by Nelson Mandela in his biography.

On the second day of the training, the participants reflected on the Time Travel event and discussed how to take the Time Travel further in Eastern Cape. A working committee

for Bridging Ages Eastern Cape was elected, under the lead of Nelson Mandela Museum. The Time Travel method gives a sense of deep understanding on how to apply the knowledge of the local past to the benefit of the local community today. The Time Travel method has the potential to improve and change the situation and conditions of a community. It serves as an intervention programme in a society and engenders social cohesion and nation building.

Solomzi Bovana, Nelson Mandela Museum



Dancing, a highlight of the Imbizo.

Free State, Department of Sports, Art, Culture and Recreation “What do we want to achieve in the struggle?”

Heritage Services at the Free State Department of Sports, Art, Culture and Recreation hosted a two-day training on the Time Travel method, 17-18 September in Bloemfontein. Participants were staff from Heritage Services, museum staff, teachers from Kaelang Secondary School as well as members of the Performing Arts NGO (Disability group). A group of learners took part in the Time Travel event.

The first day included a Time Travel event at the Wesleyan Church School, the place where the South African Native National Congress (SANNC, later ANC) where founded in January 1912. The scenario was set two days before the founding meeting. While preparing the meeting and the venue in the Time Travel event, the participants discussed “What are the struggles in the country?” “What do we want to achieve?”

After the event the participants reflected and touched on similarities and differences, the

challenges of today and how to tackle these challenges.

Day two focused on how Free State will take the Time Travel method forward in the province. Future Time Travel sites were proposed and ways to proceed. A task team under the lead of the provincial Department was set up and given the responsibility. The Time Travel method is a way to work towards social cohesion and nation building.

Ntando Mbatha, Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation



Prepared to fight for an equal society

KwaZulu-Natal, Port Shepstone Twinning Association, KZN Museum Service “Time Travel and Therapy, What are my needs?”

Inathi Child and Youth Care Centre in Oribi Gorge, KwaZulu-Natal started by Sr Xavier in 1982 as St. Martin’s Home. Destitute children were given shelter, food, clothes and care. Today the centre accommodates 60 children, age 6-14, placed there on court orders. Most of the children are rescued from extreme neglect, poverty, physical or sexual abuse. Social workers and care workers give treatment, in line with individual plans, and the children go to school every day.

Port Shepstone Twinning Association (PSTA) and the Inathi Centre met for the first time a couple of years ago, to discuss if Time Travels can contribute in the treatment of the children? Can a Time Travel event build up safe spaces for reflection on the needs of the children and inspire future therapy?

After months of preparations and discussions between the staff and PSTA the Time Travel event was organized the 10th October 2018. All children and all the staff took part, together

with people from PSTA, making it 90 persons in total. The scenario was the preparation for an inspection of St Martin’s Home in 1999. The children were divided into groups: gardening, bead making, games, make a drawing of St Martin or express feelings in drawings, poetry or small essays. Each group had a leader from PSTA and social/ care worker. In each activity key questions on the needs of the children were articulated (What make you happy? What make you sad? Dreams?).

It was very interesting to see children and staff working at the same level. Children enthusiastically embraced the program and various activities, getting involved wholeheartedly and without reservations. It was almost as if they were transported to another world. The children were keen to showcase their creativity in the artwork, beadwork and poetry, talents which they usually keep to themselves. Children were also able to voice out and enact their feelings, enabling staff

listening skills to be put to the test. Listening skills is of extreme importance when working with children. After the Time Travel event, the staff have made follow-ups. The Time Travel was not just a learning experience for the children but for the staff as well, in several ways. Everyone had fun, also learning about the history and purpose of the Centre.

Wellington Bobore, Inathi Youth and Children Centre, Oribi Gorge, KwaZulu-Natal



Sister Xavier and the Inspector listening to the children

Mpumalanga, Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation

“Legacy of Samora Machel, Unity and solidarity”

Mpumalanga Province held its workshop 16 -17 October 2018 at the Mbuzini Monument and Museum, the site of the tragic death of former president of Mozambique, Samora Machel, and his 33 compatriots in 1986. The participants of the workshop were also able to take part in the Annual Mbuzini Plane Crash Tragedy Commemoration Day, with official representatives from South Africa and Mozambique, on the 18 October 2018.

The Time Travel workshop and event was attended by more than 40 participants, members of the local community, delegates from the Mlambo Tribal Council, representative from the Mozambique consulate and officials from Mpumalanga Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation.

In the workshop the participants were introduced to the Time Travel method and how it can be applied in their local community, how it can deal with problems or issues and provide solutions for the development and empowerment of local people. The focus was also on how the Mbuzini Monument and Museum can be utilised to strengthen the relationship between the two countries, South Africa and Mozambique. The local community, newly introduced to the Time Travel method, showed a quite magnificent understanding and interest to this great initiative.

The Time Travel event focused on the inauguration of the Monument in 1999. In the activities some of the participants made symbols of unity, such as bead making and drawing of the flags of the two countries. One

group made a list of possible actions, how to use the site in the development and empowerment of the two communities along the border. The event ended with a magical healing ceremony at the Samora Machel Monument.

On the following day of the workshop, the reflection of the event and the way forward of the Time Travel method were discussed. The participants agreed overwhelmingly that the Time Travel project should be sustained and be an essential part of their community development strategies.

In the annual Mbuzini plane crash tragedy commemoration on the 18th October, Mr Ebbe Westergren was given an opportunity to deliver a message of support.

The workshop, the Time Travel event and the commemoration day was very educative and an unforgettable experience for everyone involved.

Themba Shilubane, Mpumalanga Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation



The Mozambique flag, as well as the South African, a sign of unity

Message of support from the Department of Arts and Culture

Promote heritage, foster social cohesion, expand education

I am pleased to give a message of support to the Time Travel method and this important conference on behalf of the Department of Arts and Culture of South Africa (DAC).

The Department of Arts and Culture has been supporting this initiative through Bridging Ages South Africa, Bridging Ages International and the Time Travel method for almost five years.

Our support for this initiative and programme is aimed at three levels:

At the Political level - since the bilateral meeting between the Cultural Ministers of Sweden and South Africa, at Freedom Park, where they both pledged their support for this programme, the programme has been a collaborative effort between South Africa, Sweden and then Finland.

At the Institutional level – Freedom Park is an Entity of the Department of Arts and Culture, and we are very pleased to partner with Freedom Park, through this programme, to give expression to the mandates of both DAC and Freedom Park.

At the Programmatic or content level - The work of Bridging Ages and the Time Travel method lies at the heart of the work done by DAC to protect and promote heritage, foster social cohesion, expand education through our museums, and provide opportunities for skills development for young people.

Through this partnership with Bridging Ages, Sweden, Finland, Freedom Park, and in welcoming all our international and especially continental guests, we aim to build cultural relations with African and international partners, establish networks, and strengthen our collective positive impact on society.

We wish the conference great success and you all a wonderful stay in South Africa.

*Louise Graham, Chief
Director, International
relations, Department of
Arts and Culture of
South Africa*



Action Plan from the Bridging Ages conference

- Ensure social development and cultural heritage by facilitating Time Travels and reflective dialogue.
- The Time Travel method to be inclusive of different race groups and customize the method to different societal context.
- Addressing socio-economic issues by open platforms through Time Travels. Skills development and skills transfer.
- Promote decent values by facilitate artistic processes and intergenerational morality.
- Use different histories and perspectives.
- Research of sites to be documented, archived and published.
- Use national anthem and national symbols
- Accessibility and outreach programs. Involve museums and other structures.
- Engage Educational Department, Time Travel themes adapted to curriculum. Maths and Science in Time Travels.
- Funding for the Time Travel method through networking and engaging policy makers, Integrated Development Plans/ Budget
- Establish formalized Bridging Ages structures/ NPO
- Form integrating partnerships between countries.



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