

HISTORIC PRESERVATION, TOURISM AND LEISURE

Historic preservation in the United States has become linked to the tourist industry, which grew along with the increased leisure time of Americans. What follows is a chronology of how those developments took place and an evaluation of their impact on American society.

From the middle of the 19th century, preservation activity in the United States has been aimed at the education of a broad spectrum of the nation's people. The first historic house museums were intended to perpetuate the ideas of democracy. Many people who formed local historical societies hoped to fashion historic exhibits that would educate and elevate their fellow countrymen.

Before the 1920s, the homes of famous men and women were expected to inspire visitors with patriotic reverence. Thus when President Woodrow Wilson dedicated the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace in 1916, he found the legendary Lincoln cabin inside a Grecian temple, whose marble stairs symbolized each year of Lincoln's life. It seemed appropriate then that a shrine to commemorate Lincoln's humble beginnings should include a temple of patriotism.¹

After World War I, there appeared to be one overriding goal for the promoters of history: getting Americans to come and enjoy their heritage. Few roads were paved in 1921; and a mere 8 percent of the population owned automobiles.² At that time it would have seemed fantastic to consider the possibility of tourism on a scale so broad that it could actually threaten the rural appeal of a site such as the Lincoln birthplace area in Hodgenville, Kentucky.

Yet within two short decades, the preservation movement in the United States became part of a major industry, tourism. All the ingredients for popularizing a national culture were present: good roads, millions of motor cars, a working class that had won two-week vacations, a better educated citizenry, a national preoccupation with historical origins and a growing number of historical exhibition areas offering a variety of experiences to put 20th-century families in direct touch with their past.³

In 1921, Americans drove approximately 55 million miles; 20 years later the total annual mileage had increased to 424 million. Visitation figures for the historical parks under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, showed a similar explosion in just one decade; between 1932 and 1941 visitation increased from 400,000 to just over 4,000,000.⁴

By 1930, several factors had broken down the cultural differences separating rural society from urban society. All social classes had come under the influence of two powerful instruments that helped to direct their

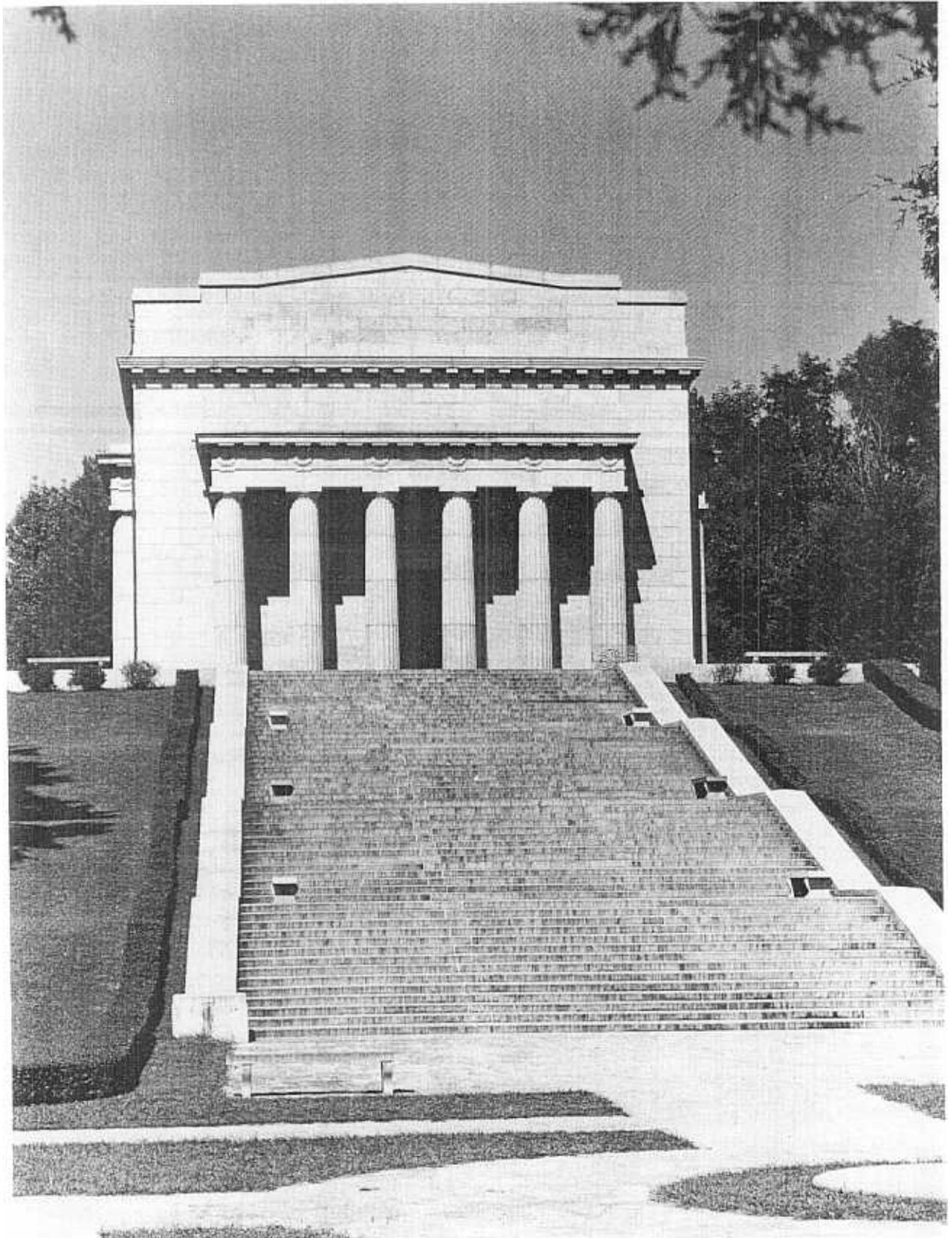
interests and desires: radio and the motion pictures. Nearly a quarter of the people in the nation owned cars and were able to take advantage of 700,000 miles of paved roads. Americans began to think more and more in terms of national progress. A large proportion of the school children in 1930 could expect to receive a high school education, as well as eventual professional employment and new homes in the suburbs. There was a widely held belief that the United States was about to achieve a standard of living that would become a beacon for the rest of the world.⁵

The long economic decline that marked the early years of the Great Depression destroyed this optimism and replaced it with a desire for a unifying national tradition. In 1932 and 1933, the first two large privately financed restoration efforts opened to the public: Henry Ford's Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr.'s Colonial Williamsburg in Williamsburg, Virginia. Although both of these projects had been conceived in the 1920s, the era of prosperity, they clearly showed that no matter how discouraging the present might be, the historical origins of the United States were sound. People who came to Greenfield Village in 1933 saw students attending one-room schoolhouses in an exhibition area that included inventor Thomas Edison's laboratories, various 19th-century shops with craft demonstrations and no automobiles.

A day in Henry Ford's Greenfield village must have left visitors with the conviction that inventors and scientists had greatly improved the lot of mankind through agriculture and the mechanical arts. Similarly, the crowds at the reconstructed Governor's Palace in Williamsburg listened intently to costumed hostesses who proclaimed the accomplishments of a generation of Virginia planters who had chosen the perils of self-government over the security of life under the British crown. There is no question that the carefully clipped lawns and the perfectly restored or reconstructed buildings of the old Virginia city fostered an idealized impression of 18th-century life.

THE FEDERAL ROLE AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

After the inauguration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933, the United States government became a major force in the field of historic preservation. Before the end of Roosevelt's first term in office, the results of the federal programs were evident in many areas of the country. For example, the owner of a 17th-century farmhouse in eastern Massachusetts might be approached by a team of architects who wished to measure and photo-



graph his home. The leader of the group would explain that the Historic American Buildings Survey was operating under the administrative direction of the National Park Service. While the draftsmen climbed through the attic and photographed the roof-framing, the homeowner would be assured that his house had been selected because it represented an important building tradition that should be recorded as a part of the national patrimony.

At the same time, halfway across the continent a station wagon might pull up in front of a historic house museum in Missouri. A historian, introduced to the curator as a staff member of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, would then carefully note on a card all the relevant information on the significance of the old building and of the collections lovingly exhibited by the county historical society.

In 1936, a resident of the small town of Lompoc, California, might turn off the nearby state highway to watch a company of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers shaping handmade adobe bricks for the reconstruction of a Spanish mission complex at La Purisima Concepcion. If the visitor walked around the grounds at La Purisima, an artist from the Federal Arts Project in San Francisco might be seen studying fragments of wall designs discovered in the ruins of the mission buildings. Other CCC enrollees would be in the mission garden, carefully reconstructing the ancient water system that fed a series of fountains. An atmosphere of adventure and accomplishment would have given the citizen of Lompoc the impression that some worthwhile aspects of California's past had been rediscovered in the life of a mission community.⁶

Although the schools generally tried to instill some understanding of important trends and persons in American history, the vast majority of visitors to Colonial Williamsburg and Greenfield Village (as well as the upper-middle-class patrons of the garden tours in the states of Virginia and Maryland and in Natchez, Mississippi) drew their ideas on life in the 18th and 19th centuries from a host of questionable sources. Since the early 1900's, many boys and girls had read historical

fiction in magazines and cheap publications disdainfully described as "dime novels." These literary efforts often pictured brave children outsmarting British officers or young men and women supporting the Union and Confederate armies in the American Civil War.

A few motion pictures released in the 1920s had also dealt with the American past and each major World's Fair in the United States, starting with the exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, featured some popularization of history. The fairgrounds at the Centennial of National Independence included a reproduction of a colonial kitchen that showed visitors to Philadelphia how much progress had been made since the inconvenient days of cooking over an open hearth. The World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 featured a small brick engine house that had been the focal point of John Brown's effort to lead a slave rebellion in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, just before the Civil War. And the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1904 included a small French log house from the village of Cahokia, Illinois, on the Mississippi River.

The planners of the St. Louis fair urged each of the state governments participating in the exposition to erect a building that was a copy of some famous structure in that state. Visitors may have been somewhat surprised to see a New Jersey building similar to the George Washington Headquarters in Morristown or a Virginia building that resembled Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, in Charlottesville.⁷ The Philadelphia Sesquicentennial celebration in 1926 included an exhibition area known as High Street, complete with houses and shops newly constructed in 18th-century style.

It was hoped that tourists who had enjoyed reproductions of important structures at these fairs would be better prepared to visit restored villages. Education and recreation began to fit together.

In the years immediately following the gas shortages of World War II, people in the United States traveled considerable distances in their new cars. The number of registered passenger cars jumped from 29 million in 1941 to 56 million in 1957. This last figure nearly doubled again by 1973.⁸ The natural response to this



The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site, Hodgenville, Kentucky, contains the log cabin revered as Lincoln's birthplace. (Allan Rinehart and Jack E. Boucher for the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service)

Le Site Historique National du Lieu de Naissance d'Abraham Lincoln, à Hodgenville, dans le Kentucky, renferme la cabane en rondins vénérée en tant que maison natale de Lincoln.

growth in mobile tourism was the development of outdoor museums, such as Old Sturbridge Village in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, and the Farmer's Museum, in Cooperstown, New York.

There had been some craft exhibitions at Williamsburg and Dearborn, but the principal focus of these projects had been the buildings themselves. There is a collection of old buildings at Sturbridge, but the primary interpretive goal there was the creation of an environment that would encourage an interchange between visitors and craftsmen. The latter worked with tools that spoke of an earlier age, producing objects that might have been common in the rural households of 19th-century America, as well as some modern items. The large stone barn at the Farmer's Museum in Cooperstown permitted a number of artisans to demonstrate their skills for crowds of school children who came from all over the northeastern United States.

Administrators of historic sites soon realized in the 1940s that their existing facilities were hopelessly inadequate to take care of the vast throng of tourists. Communities that had opened some of their privately owned houses for one day a year were discovering that there were enough travelers on the road to allow open house days for a week or more. The harried professionals in the National Park Service knew that successful management of a system of historical parks in the United States would require larger budgets than Congress had appropriated.

First, visitor reception areas required larger parking lots, self-guiding trails, picnic areas and campgrounds, outdoor and indoor museum exhibits and a coherent plan for introducing tourists to the sites. The projects carried out by the Civilian Conservation Corps and other agencies during the economic depression of the 1930s had proved that each historic building or site required a master plan, but those thousands who had flocked to the parks in the 1930s became millions by the late 1950s.

The most obvious result of these pressures was a National Park Service program entitled "Mission 66," commemorating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Park Service in 1916. Every site under the administration of the Interior Department developed or improved its visitor reception facilities between 1956 and 1966. These improvements had come at just the right time, because visitation recorded in the historic areas of the Park Service increased from 9 million in 1956 to 72 million in 1974.⁹

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG AND JAMESTOWN, VIRGINIA

The travel boom had its effects on Colonial Williamsburg as well as the National Park Service. Between 1947 and 1957 paid admissions to the Williamsburg attractions increased from 166,251 to 495,935.¹⁰ The staff prepared for this onslaught by constructing an enormous information center and planning a bus system that kept unnecessary automobiles out of the restored area during daytime hours. By 1957 the Park Service had also come

to realize the need for limiting the use of automobiles and controlling the parking facilities in many of its parks. The passenger car, the instrument for bringing so many people to America's historical attractions, had already become a curse.

The travel patterns of the American people have dictated important adjustments for the interpreters of historic sites. For example, along with weekends, the months of April, July and August have emerged as periods of peak visitation, especially for vacationing family groups. On the other hand, winter visitors have proved to be a completely different audience, since they are enticed by special events such as antiques forums and other semi-professional meetings.

Seasoned travelers who had seen Colonial Williamsburg before World War II must have been amazed when they came back to the colonial capital of Virginia 20 years later. The emphasis of the restoration had shifted to a remarkable degree, and the number of paid admissions had more than doubled. Hostesses who led the tours in prewar years had concentrated on the objects in each room of the restored and reconstructed buildings. The

Williamsburg was the capital of Virginia from 1699 to 1779. One of the earliest major restoration projects in the United States (1927), Colonial Williamsburg was funded by the Rockefeller family to recapture an authentic 18th-century environment, including the reconstructed Governor's Palace. (Colonial Williamsburg)

Williamsburg fut la capitale de la Virginie de 1699 à 1779. Objet de l'un des premiers projets importants de restauration aux Etats-Unis (1927), le vieux Williamsburg colonial a été fondé par la famille Rockefeller afin de recapturer l'atmosphère authentique du XVIII^e siècle, y compris le Palais du Gouverneur entièrement reconstruit.



town had been a quiet place for the middle class to contemplate the sedate life of the Virginia planters of the 18th century.

Tourists driving toward Williamsburg in the late 1950s encountered highway signs directing them to an information center. As they turned into one of the large parking lots adjacent to that center, they saw a sizable brick motel and cafeteria on the crest of the nearby slope. The information center welcomed visitors with an imposing lobby filled with desks and wall charts listing the special tours, dinners, musical events and other recreational features that could be worked into a stay at Williamsburg.

The newcomers then filed into one of the two adjoining movie theaters that featured continuous showings of the orientation film, "Story of a Patriot." Through this drama the Colonial Williamsburg staff made an effort to place the restored city's buildings in their historical context. The founders of the United States and their contemporaries could be seen deliberating the issue of American independence in the rooms that the visitors would soon be touring. After the movie, guests could enter the colonial town on one of a fleet of free buses.

A 1957 trip to Jamestown, Virginia, the setting of the first successful English colony in the New World, was also a surprise for those who had visited the area during the 1930s. Tourists from Williamsburg could venture down a new parkway that led them to two parks, one operated by the National Park Service and the other by the commonwealth of Virginia. The original site of Jamestown remained as a historical and archaeological exhibition of the mid-17th-century ruins of Virginia's first capital. If this vista did not sufficiently stir the imagination, there remained the Festival Park a mile or so up the road. Here visitors could wander through two buildings that explained the historical contributions of Virginia and the British Empire. They could stop in front of a reconstructed American Indian lodge, converse with some Indians, and then proceed to a small palisade replica of the first fort at Jamestown. As they looked out at the James River shoreline from the gate of the fort, they could see several boats moored to a dock. These vessels were copies of the first three ships that brought the English colonists across the Atlantic. Somehow people managed to maintain their equilibrium through the experience of seeing both a genuine site and a replica—each purporting to tell something meaningful about Jamestown.

By the middle 1950s, most persons charged with the responsibility for historic sites in the United States had concluded that the new hordes of tourists should experience some form of living history. In Williamsburg this encounter came in the form of a recreation of the meetings of the Virginia House of Burgesses (the state legislature) on the giant wrap-around screen of the information center movie theaters. At Jamestown the traveler could converse with a yeoman in 17th-century clothing constructing a cabin wall section inside the reconstructed fort. Thus some of the drama of history could be captured and made a part of the lives of ordinary 20th-century people.

The mill at Old Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts, is one of several restored and furnished buildings that has been relocated in this museum village. Miner Grant's General Store was built c. 1790 in Connecticut. (Old Sturbridge Village)

Le Moulin à Old Sturbridge Village, dans le Massachusetts, est l'un des nombreux bâtiments restaurés et remeublés qui ont été transportés dans ce village musée. Le Bazar de Miner Grant a été construit aux environs de 1790 dans le Connecticut.



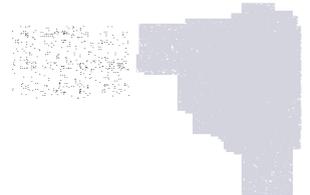


At Jamestown Festival Park, Virginia, located near the site of the original settlement, is the reconstructed James Fort. (Jamestown Foundation)

Au Parc des Fêtes de Jamestown, en Virginie, situé près de la colonie originelle se trouve le Fort reconstitué de Jamestown.

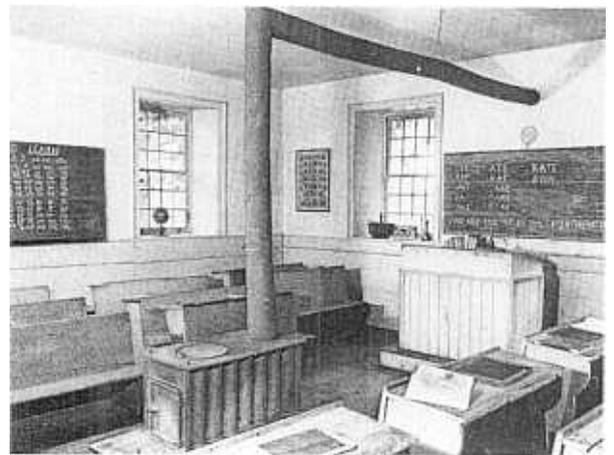
Jamestown National Historic Site, Virginia, commemorates the founding in 1607 of the first successful English colony in the New World. The location of the original settlement is preserved as an archaeological site. (Virginia State Travel Service)

Le Site Historique National de Jamestown, en Virginie, commémore la fondation en 1607 de la première colonie anglaise qui ait prospéré dans le Nouveau Monde. L'emplacement de la colonie d'origine est préservé en tant que site archéologique.



Cooperstown, New York, founded in 1786 by the father of the novelist James Fenimore Cooper, is the site of a historical museum. A collection of buildings has been moved here, including this school, a church, a country store, small offices, shops and a tavern. (Frank Rollins for New York State Historical Association)

La ville de Cooperstown, dans l'Etat de New York, fondée en 1786 par le père du romancier James Fenimore Cooper est le site d'un musée national. Un ensemble de bâtiments a été transporté ici, y compris une église, une école, un bazar, de petits bureaux, des magasins et une taverne.



DISNEYLAND

Two years before the completion of the information center at Colonial Williamsburg in 1957, an entirely different kind of three-dimensional journey into fabricated history opened to the public in Anaheim, California. Walt Disney, the creator of a whole magic world of cartoon characters, had decided to build an amusement park that went further into the realm of historical imagination than any exhibition up to that time. His creation, Disneyland, was an immediate success.¹¹

Although this park featured much fantasy and many flights into the future, there were clear references to the past as well. In fact, the first building visible beyond the ticket booths was a Victorian railroad station. After moving through tunnels located on both sides of the station, visitors entered a town square that formed one end of a "Main Street" of the 1890s—with ice cream parlors, horse-drawn trolleys and "antique" buses and cars moving slowly along the road to nostalgia. The new Victorian business district was constructed on a reduced scale that would not overwhelm younger tourists.

The effort to recreate a synthetic past did not stop with the Sleeping Beauty Castle that dominated the other end of Main Street. One of the principal avenues led to Frontierland, where people could ride on a reproduction of a Mississippi River steamboat or crouch inside a keelboat similar to ones used on western waters before riverboats were perfected. The view from the deck of the tour boat included a New Orleans square, a burning settler's cabin and an Indian village.

During the 1960s, the Disney Studios added a fully animated Hall of Presidents, where awe-struck citizens could gaze upon "living" models of their past chief executives. The performance in the Presidential Theater built up to a climactic moment when the figure of Lincoln rose from a chair and delivered a short speech to the audience.

Probably none of those who came to Anaheim actually believed they were participating in a restoration of 19th-century America. The buildings along Main Street were as new as the suburbs that replaced the orange groves around Disneyland. All of this was unreal, but the skill

and imagination of the Disney Studios had produced a most appealing, if sanitized, view of the past. The public did not have to cope with the odors of a turn-of-the-century town any more than the visitors in Colonial Williamsburg had to face the difficult reality of human slavery. In California, however, the recreation of history included some opportunities to ride through the past. By the middle 1960s, visitors to Disneyland could paddle a canoe along a replica of the Mississippi River and look over at the giant river steamer. Then they could walk a short distance and board a small boat that would take them through a seaport being sacked by a group of fully animated 18th-century pirates. Imagine the effect that journey had on a schoolchild riding under a bridge and looking up at a life-size pirate leering and brandishing a sword!

The success of Disneyland inevitably led to imitation. The early 1970s saw a host of commercial amusement centers springing up across the United States, and several of these included references to history. For example, Six Flags Over Texas and other parks using a similar theme gave visitors exciting boatrides through a legendary past. Nearly every exhibition of this type included simulated forts, animated Indians who regularly attacked travelers, and references to familiar literary themes such as Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer*, a story of life on the Mississippi River.

INNOVATIVE PRESERVATION

How did these commercial exhibitions affect the preservation field in America? The success of Disneyland and its imitators has not cut down the number of travelers who seek out genuine historic sites all over the nation. One reason is that preservationists have become increasingly aware of the need for bold and imaginative techniques for presenting old buildings to visitors.

The Civil War Centennial, which began in 1961, included a number of reenactments of actual battles, but these orchestrated efforts to engage in 19th-century combat were not entirely successful. Although horses were trained to remain in position when cannons were

fired, the throngs that filled the viewing stands found the heat of the midday sun a more serious problem than the noise of battle. It was also difficult to re-create a frightening atmosphere when so many people already knew what the outcome of each engagement would be.

Colonial Williamsburg and the National Park Service have both offered numerous demonstrations of military hardware. The Park Service, for example, has developed a small craft museum in Cades Cove (a valley in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee) where visitors can watch a Park employee load and fire an old rifle. Similarly, several times a week in the warmer months, the Williamsburg staff produces a militia muster on the Market Square. Civilian soldiers parade to the accompaniment of 18th-century martial music produced by a fife and drum corps, then go through a ragged manual of arms, followed by the firing of muskets and cannons. This ceremony, marked by great color and noise, has attracted large numbers of tourists to the center of Williamsburg.

At the Farmer's Museum in Cooperstown in the hills of upstate New York, groups of attentive visitors may watch guides demonstrate all the steps necessary to turn flax into linen. Children can pound the flax and see how their labors contribute to the production of a surprisingly soft and durable cloth.

Many people have found these excursions into living history both instructive and enjoyable. More important, the mobility of American society has made it possible for a family to witness in the same summer both the flax demonstration in the stone barn at Cooperstown and the militia muster at Williamsburg.

In their textbook *Interpretation of Historic Sites*, authors Alderson and Low offer this view:

"It would be unrealistic to assume that all visitors have a serious purpose. For many, the historic site is another form of entertainment, something different to do on a long weekend, a place to see old furnishings and furniture."¹²

However the authors add that these historical pilgrims have not necessarily driven long distances to see old buildings merely as a frivolous pastime. They want to be entertained, but they also want to gain some sense of

identification with the past, an understanding of the challenges their predecessors had to face and overcome.

RESPONSE TO PRESERVATION SUCCESSES

Until about 10 years ago, only a handful of historic spots in the United States were overcrowded. One of these was Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, located only a few miles from Washington, D.C. At that time, the mansion had become a full-fledged shrine. While it was possible to push as many as 13,000 people a day through Mount Vernon, this severe overcrowding made it difficult to interpret the plantation except by means of a guidebook.



Main Street U.S.A., at Disneyland, Anaheim, California, constructed in 1955 by the Walt Disney Corporation, is a representation of the nation's small towns c. 1900. (Walt Disney Productions)

La Grand' Rue des Etats-Unis (Main Street U.S.A.) à Disneyland, à Anaheim en Californie, construite en 1955 par la Corporation Walt Disney est une reconstitution des petites villes américaines aux environs de 1900.

At Disneyland, a mechanical pirate chieftain attempts to auction a mechanical maiden in a scene from "Pirates of the Caribbean." More than 100 Audio-Animatronic figures highlight this 15-minute show, which "takes guests back to the 1790s." (Walt Disney Productions)

A Disneyland, un capitaine de pirates mécanique tente de vendre aux enchères une jeune fille mécanique dans une des scènes tirées de "Pirates des Caraïbes." Plus de cent personnages automatisés animent cette représentation de quinze minutes qui replonge les visiteurs dans les années 1790.



For a while, those operating historic areas that lacked Mount Vernon's appeal sought to increase their visitation figures by almost any means available. Then a reaction to this popularization of history resulted, as it became clear that many of the historic sites in the nation

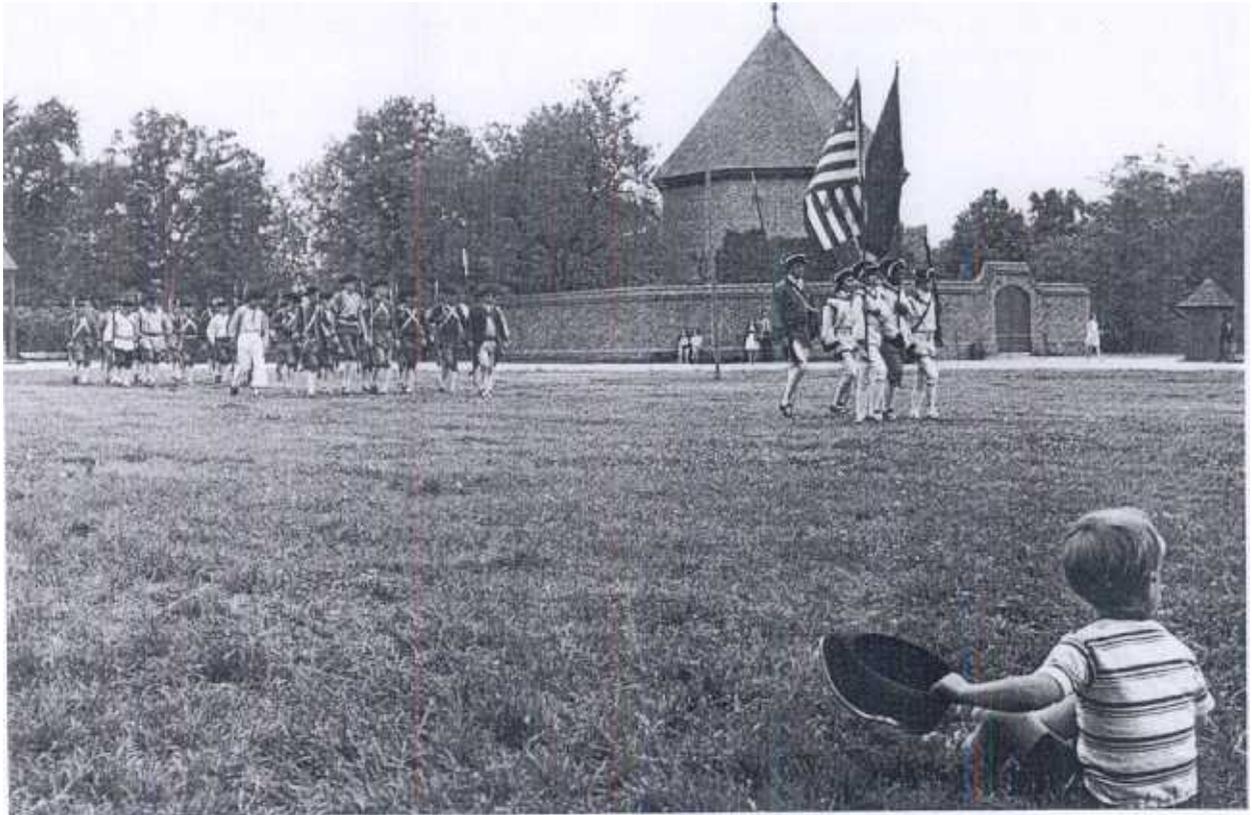
could be destroyed by the very people who would benefit from seeing them.

A common response was that of the rangers and archaeologists who worked with the major Indian ruins of the southwestern United States. They began to look for ways

Firearms of the 19th-century are demonstrated at Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee. (Fred R. Bell for NPS)

Démonstration d'armes à feu à Cades Cove, au Parc National des Smoky Mountains.





Performances of the Fife and Drum Corps of the Colonial Williamsburg Militia Company are part of the extensive interpretive program of Colonial Williamsburg. (Colonial Williamsburg)

Les représentations du Corps des Tambours et des Fifres de la Milice du Vieux Williamsburg Colonial font partie du programme varié offert par la vieille ville.

to cut down the numbers of visitors who climbed over the cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde National Park in southern Colorado. After considerable study, the park staff arrived at a figure that represented the maximum permissible daily visitation there. This decision meant that travelers would have to arrange for tickets in order to visit the ruins.

Similarly, planners and other preservationists have now begun to define the capacity of each historic site, recognizing (1) how many people occupying a certain space can actually hear the recounting of that space's history and (2) how many visitors can be admitted to an old structure without endangering it. Although a number of travelers are certain to be disappointed, historic site administrators have ruled that each visitor must have a chance to see an exhibit area without being crowded into a corner. The state of California, for example, requires ticketholders at the Hearst Castle in San Simeon

to park at the bottom of the mountain. They then proceed by bus or station wagon up to the Hearst residence and its attendant guest houses. The guide staff is thus able to control the number of visitors. It is an unfortunate necessity that this procedure could result in turning away families that have driven considerable distances to see the fabled pleasure palace of William Randolph Hearst, who built a newspaper empire at the end of the 19th century and became one of the wealthiest men in America.

There is another dimension of the growing realization that too many tourists can actually destroy an important site or building. If several thousand people a day dutifully troop through a historic house museum, it is essential that some way be found to shore up each story, strengthen the stairways and protect the ancient floorboards. However, when this process of renewal has gone on for years the public begins to encounter an object that resembles the legendary ship of Theseus in Athens. The form is identical to the original, but every splinter of wood in the structure is a replacement. Although the staff people can guarantee the authenticity of a particular site, they can no longer state that an exhibition area is anything more than a studied copy.

Interest in preservation has grown so quickly in the United States during the past quarter-century that there is a generally accepted notion that only a fairly small number of buildings should serve as individual historic house museums. One possible answer to the problem of what to do with other sites is the development of adap-



Mount Vernon, Virginia, the home of George Washington from 1752 until his death in 1799, accommodates up to 13,000 visitors a day, providing a major challenge to the administrators, guides and maintenance staff. (Mount Vernon Ladies Association)

Mont Vernon, en Virginie, la maison où vécut George Washington de 1752 jusqu'à sa mort, reçoit plus de 13 000 visiteurs par jour et se pose comme un véritable défi aux administrateurs, aux guides et à l'équipe d'entretien.

tive uses for old buildings—uses that may radically change the nature (but not the outward appearance) of the structures. For example, empty railroad stations have become antique shops, restaurants and offices. These techniques can result in the genuine satisfaction that comes from preserving a business district's historic and architectural integrity while maintaining its economic health.

PRESERVATION IN THE FUTURE

The preservation field in the United States will face some awesome challenges in the future. The professional staffs attempting to restore and interpret genuine historic preservation projects will be torn between the need to hold back excessively large crowds in peak seasons and a desire to resort to publicity approaches that could endanger the presentation of a sound and truthful picture

of the past. Fortunately, most historians, archaeologists, architects and administrators have resisted the temptation to turn America's historical museums into an imitation of the amusement parks. They have also chosen to control overcrowding with careful planning and development, required reservations, orientation programs, and higher admission fees.

Americans are increasingly aware of the vast breadth of their historic and architectural heritage. Surveys stimulated by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the activities connected with the Bicentennial of American independence have revealed many buildings around the country worthy of preservation, either in historic districts or as parts of historical exhibits. Also, the sharp increase in individual memberships in the National Trust for Historic Preservation probably reflects greater public participation in preservation work. Thus the affluent and well informed tourists of the 1970s will expect to be both entertained and educated. Probably they will also be sophisticated enough to distinguish between commercial exhibits that only mirror the past and genuine old buildings that accurately portray a developing nation—one whose story is written in bricks, stone, wood and adobe.

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RÉSUMÉ

La conservation des sites historiques aux Etats-Unis a toujours été une activité axée sur l'éducation des masses. Au cours des années 1920, il était devenu enfin possible, pour un grand nombre de voyageurs, de se rendre en automobile dans des régions éloignées du pays. Alors que la grande dépression des années 30 commençait à produire ses effets, des philanthropes privés et des responsables du gouvernement fédéral se lancèrent dans d'importants projets de restauration. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. à Williamsburg, en Virginie, et Henry Ford à Dearborn, au Michigan, procédèrent à une récréation historique destinée à donner aux visiteurs une certaine idée de la vie d'antan. Le Service des Parcs nationaux et plusieurs autres organismes du gouvernement commencèrent à photographier, expertiser et restaurer des sites dans l'ensemble du pays.

Au cours des décennies qui suivirent la Première Guerre mondiale, le peuple américain manifesta un regain d'intérêt pour son histoire et ce, par différents moyens: magazines populaires, livres, films cinématographiques, voire l'organisation d'expositions mondiales.

L'accroissement formidable de l'utilisation de l'automobile aux Etats-Unis au cours du dernier quart de siècle a entraîné une grande poussée vers les sites historiques ouverts au public. Les administrateurs qui assument la garde des villages musées ont essayé d'interpréter le passé dans le cadre de programmes éducatifs. Ces

responsables ont dû, parallèlement, trouver les moyens de limiter l'importance des foules à chaque endroit. Une solution consistait à diriger les touristes vers les reproductions d'anciens peuplements, tout en mettant les bâtiments originels à la disposition de ceux qui étaient désireux de les admirer, ce qui est le cas des deux parcs de Jamestown, en Virginie.

De nombreuses familles ont constaté qu'elles pouvaient conjuguer les agréments de voyage et la soif d'éducation en visitant les parcs d'attraction organisés autour de thèmes historiques, tels que Disneyland, à Anaheim, en Californie. Malgré le caractère entièrement synthétique des scènes offertes à la curiosité du public, l'utilisation de mannequins animés a permis au public d'éprouver le sentiment d'une certaine vraisemblance historique. L'aménagement de Disneyland et de ses imitateurs n'a pas sensiblement réduit le nombre de ceux qui souhaitent visiter de véritables sites historiques. Mais la nouvelle génération de touristes souhaite que le passé leur soit présenté avec un plus grand souci d'imagination, ce qui a conduit à ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler "l'histoire vivante". Les personnes chargées de la restauration et de l'interprétation du passé se trouvent devant la tâche difficile de conserver l'authenticité historique de chaque site tout en donnant au public l'occasion de participer à toutes les formes de reconstitution qui reflètent la vie des temps passés.

FOOTNOTES

1. Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Presence of the Past: A History of the Preservation Movement in the United States Before Williamsburg* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1965), pp. 144-145.
2. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 462.
3. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Historical Statistics*, pp. 458, 462, 463.
4. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Historical Statistics*, p. 222.
5. John D. Hicks, *Republican Ascendancy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), pp. 167-192.
6. Joseph H. Engbeck, Jr., *La Purissima Mission State Historic Park* (Sacramento, California: California Office of State Printing,

1970), p. 31; and Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age* (Unpublished manuscript), Chapters 13 and 14.

7. Hosmer, *Presence of the Past*, p. 140.

8. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1975* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 570.

9. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Statistical Abstract, 1975*, p. 209.

10. William T. Alderson and Shirley Payne Low, *Interpretation of Historic Sites* (Nashville, Tennessee: American Association for State and Local History, 1976), p. 22.

11. Christopher Finch, *The Art of Walt Disney* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1975), p. 150.