INTERPRETATION OF MISSION 66 RESOURCES IN THE

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

by

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(Under the Direction of Wayde Brown)

ABSTRACT

Mission 66, a ten-year program intended to improve conditions in America's national parks, had a tremendous impact on the National Park Service. Many of the resources dating to the program are now considered historic; many more will become eligible within the decade. This thesis examines the methods and messages currently used by the National Park Service to interpret Mission 66 and Mission 66 resources and the challenges presented when interpreting the program and its resources. Interpretation is an important mechanism used by the National Park Service to inspire and educate visitors about their resources and management practices; interpretation also serves as an important tool to improve stewardship of park resources and encourage civic engagement. In light of the Mission 66 program's historic status, the thesis also presents opportunities to interpret the iconic program that will increase public awareness and stewardship of these important park resources.

INDEX WORDS: Mission 66, National Park Service, Interpretation, Cultural

                 Resources, Park Service Modern, National Register of Historic

                 Places, National Historic Landmark

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DEDICATION

To Laddy—for encouraging me when I was disheartened, and still wanting to marry
me in the midst of this.

To my mama—for always putting our needs above her own, for showing me what I was
capable of, and for never letting me settle for less.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1956, the National Park Service embarked on an ambitious park building effort

named "Mission 66." The ten-year program was intended to conclude the year of the

National Park Service's Golden Anniversary in 1966. Implemented to improve

conditions in the national parks, the Mission 66 program included road construction and

other infrastructure enhancements; modernization of park housing; increased

professionalization of service employees; and the construction of trails, campgrounds,

and other visitor facilities.

The construction of a new building type, the visitor center, was one of the most

enduring icons of the Mission 66 program and the foundation of the complete overhaul

and revamping of interpretive services in the National Park Service during Mission 66.

Interpretation, loosely defined as the act or process of communicating with a visitor in an

effort to forge an emotional and intellectual connection between the visitor and the

resource, has been an aspect of park operations since the inception of the National Park

Service. Interpretation gained a greater institutional presence during Mission 66,

however, through the development of visitor centers, an increase in interpretive staff, and

the development of a professional handbook that included the principles of interpretation

as well as practical advice regarding implementation.

Mission 66 was an iconic program that had a significant impact on the National

Park Service. In addition to new resource and resource types, Mission 66 was also

responsible for the creation of many new parks and park types. The public perception of America's national parks has also been shaped by the Mission 66 program; for several generations of Americans, the impact and legacy of the Mission 66 program has had a formative influence on how they approach and understand the national parks and the national parks concept. A scientific understanding of park resources and the relationships between resource communities, the shift to 'day use' visitation of the parks, and the concentration of use and impact to designated 'high impact' areas are all examples of Mission 66 legacies.

The Mission 66 program is now considered an historic event as it is in the midst of its fiftieth anniversary. Several resources built during the program have been deemed historically significant, and many more are quickly approaching the '50 year mark', the age criteria established by the National Park Service as a guide for determining historic significance. Mission 66 resources provide tangible examples of the iconic program; as historically significant resources managed by the National Park Service, these resources should be interpreted through a variety of methods and messages that will instill upon all park visitors the impact of the Mission 66 program and the formative influence it has had on the National Park Service. This thesis answers the questions, "what methods and messages are the National Park Service using to interpret Mission 66 and Mission 66 resources?" and "what are the challenges and opportunities presented when interpreting Mission 66 and Mission 66 resources?"

To answer these questions an initial review was undertaken of literature related to the National Park Service's history, park building, and architecture. Building portfolios, such as the *Portfolio of Representative Structures* and *Park Structures and Facilities,*

containing architectural plans, renderings, and explanations of important qualities of exemplary park structures were consulted. Other materials from the period, including various letters, memorandums, Mission 66 prospectuses, and a variety of historic brochures were analyzed. Notably, the *Mission 66 for the National Park System* report released by the National Park Service to highlight the dire need for the program and many facets of the intended solution. In addition, several mid-century national publications and academic journals were reviewed for historic references to the national parks and the programs of the National Park System, such as *National Parks Magazine*, *AIA Journal*, *Progressive Architecture*, and *Architectural Record.*

Supplementary secondary sources were also reviewed to provide a fuller understanding of the subjects; these included general histories of the National Park Service, park administrative histories, and works related to specific eras in the national park, such as Ethan Carr's *Mission 66: Modernism in the National Park Service*. Carr's book currently provides the most comprehensive analysis of the period and its legacy. The historic contexts developed by the National Park Service for the major eras of park growth, namely *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942* and the draft copy of "The Mission 66 Era of National Park Development, 1945-1972" were also examined.

A thorough review of interpretation literature was then conducted in order to understand its origins and evolution in the United States as well as within the National Park Service. An extensive review of interpretation textbooks was conducted in order to comprehend the development and changes in interpretative practice and theory. Bureau Historian Barry Mackintosh's *Interpretation in the National Park Service* was consulted to understand the evolution of interpretive practice and policy within the National Park

Service; several journal articles addressing the history of interpretation in the National Park Service were also examined. An extensive search of other books, essays, and journals related to interpretative practice and theory were also inspected; examples include the *Journal of Interpretation Research*, *The Public Historian*, and *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship*. Park policy documents were also examined; specifically, *Management Policies 2006, NPS-28 Cultural Resource Management Guidelines, Director's Order 6: Interpretation and Education,* and pertinent chapters of *Reference Manual 6: Interpretation and Education*.

Three case studies were then identified where the research questions could be applied. In all cases, personal contact with park service employees was made at each case study site to extract information, and in some cases, site visits were conducted. Examination of each case study site also included a review of the website and 'virtual' interpretive efforts. A series of questions which could be applied uniformly to each case study comprised a framework through which the case studies could be analyzed and from which, conclusions and recommendations could be drawn. Interpretation conducted by a ranger or other park employee, i.e. 'personal interpretation', is idiosyncratic, often unpredictable, and currently limited or nonexistent for Mission 66 resources in the National Park Service. Therefore, only 'nonpersonal interpretation', or interpretation that does not require the physical presence of a ranger or other NPS employee, was examined.

Consideration of the thesis questions requires an understanding of the general history of the National Park Service, its major periods of park buildings, its resources, and the Mission 66 period in particular; these are discussed in the second chapter. Chapter Three examines the definitions and origins of interpretation, as well as its

evolution in the National Park Service; the policies developed by the National Park

Service to manage and implement interpretation programs are also discussed. Chapter

Four identifies challenges the National Park Service faces when interpreting the Mission

66 period and its resources. Chapter Five identifies three case studies to examine the

current implementation and limitations of interpretation of Mission 66 resources. The

thesis concludes with an analysis of the methods and messages employed by the National

Park Service's interpretive program for Mission 66 resources, and the opportunities these

resources present for the agency.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: HISTORY, PARK BUILDING,

AND ARCHITECTURE

If Congress will but make the funds available for the construction of roads over which automobiles may travel with safety…and for trails to hunt out the hidden places of beauty and dignity, we may expect that year by year these parks will become a more precious possession of the people, holding them to the further discovery of America and making them still prouder of its resources, esthetic as well as material.

Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, 1916[1]

Prior to the formal establishment of the National Park Service, several individual parks were created and overseen by the Department of the Interior. The National Park Service was formed in 1916 as an agency within the Department of the Interior to manage these individual parks, as well as those continually added to the park system as the overarching purpose of the nascent service expanded and evolved into a sophisticated government agency responsible for managing over 84 million acres and over 394 sites.[2] The National Park System now comprises this vast number of holdings, ranging in designation from expansive natural parks to smaller national monuments and historic sites. Frequently, the official names of these sites indicate a difference in the size or primary type of resource for which the park was established. Often, however, the formal title of each site is a result of the legislative framework and political inclinations of those in office at the time each park site was established.

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[1] Franklin K. Lane, introduction to *The National Parks Portfolio*, by Robert Sterling Yard (New York: The Scribner Press, 1916).

[2] National Park Service, "Frequently Asked Questions," http://www.nps.gov/faqs.htm (accessed Feb 15, 2011).

The National Park Service is a multi-faceted system. Despite their formal titles, the lands managed by the NPS have many purposes and are frequented by a variety of user groups, each seeking a different experience. The National Parks encompass a number of interests and values embraced by the American public including: ecological or scientific interests; recreation and leisure opportunities; scenic or aesthetic values; and cultural and historic values. In any case, these sites or 'parks' contain a tremendous number of nationally important resources that Congress has deemed "…distinct in character…[and] united through their inter-related purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage."[3]

Influences and the Formation of Early Parks

The impetus for founding many of the early parks was a combination of westward expansion, increasing industrialization, and citizen exposure to the natural wonders of the West through the romantic artists and writers of the nineteenth century. As early as the 1830s, notable artists, such as Thomas Cole and George Catlin, presented "unspoiled nature" in a picturesque manner that inspired awe and appreciation of American landscapes, rather than the impulse to overcome or subdue the wilderness. Thomas Cole is considered the founder of the Hudson River School, a group of romantic artists that initially found inspiration in the wilderness areas of New England; while most of Cole's paintings were landscapes from the Catskills, Adirondack, and White mountain ranges (Figure 2.1), other members of the Hudson River School traveled around the United States finding inspiration in a variety of other landscapes.

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[3] National Park Service General Authorities Act of 1970 (16 U.S.C. § 1a–1).

Figure 2.1. Thomas Cole, *A View of the Mountain Pass Called the Notch of the White Mountains (Crawford Notch),* 1839, National Gallery of Art.[4]

George Catlin, born in the late eighteenth century, was a famous American painter, author, and traveler. A contemporary of Thomas Cole, Catlin was also renowned for his paintings of American landscapes; he illustrated his admiration for primitive landscapes, as well as for the American Indian and native plant and animal species through his painting and writing (Figure 2.2). Catlin is also credited for being the first person to explicitly mention the formation of national parks in 1832 when he wrote:

> And what a splendid contemplation too, when one (who has travelled these realms, and can duly appreciate them) imagines them as they *might* in future be seen (by some great protecting policy of government) preserved in their pristine beauty and wildness, in a *magnificent park*, where the world could see for ages to come, the native Indian in his classic attire, galloping his wild horse, with sinewy bow, and shield and lance, amid the fleeting herds of elks and buffaloes. What a beautiful and thrilling specimen for America to preserve and hold up to the view

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[4] Thomas Cole, *A View of the Mountain Pass Called the Notch of the White Mountains (Crawford Notch),* 1839, National Gallery of Art, http://www.nga.gov/fcgi-bin/tinfo_f?object=50727 (accessed February 3, 2011).

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of her refined citizens and the world in future ages! A *nation's Park*, containing man and beast, in all the wild and freshness of their nature's beauty![5]

Figure 2.2: George Catlin, *Buffalo Chase, a Surround by the Hidatsa*, ca. 1832-1833, Smithsonian American Art Museum.[6]

These images and ideas inspired an increasing interest in the vast, remaining tracts of unsettled land in the American West. At this time, several other painters began traveling, often joining exploratory excursions into the West; the massive landscape paintings they produced from their travels exposed the American public to scenic and

[5] George Catlin, *North American Indians: Being Letters and Notes on their Manners, Customs, and Conditions, Written during Eight Years' Travel amongst the Wildest Tribes in North America, 1832-1839* (London, 1880), 1:288-295, quoted in Roderick Nash, "An Artist Proposes a National Park," *The American Environment: Readings in the History of Conservation* (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1968), 9.

[6] George Catlin, *Buffalo Chase, a Surround by the Hidatsa,* ca. 1832-1833, Smithsonian American Art Museum, http://americanart.si.edu/images/1985/1985.66.409_1b.jpg (accessed February 2, 2011).

geologic wonders. Albert Bierstadt, born January 7, 1830, was a German-American painter also affiliated with the Hudson River School. He painted numerous landscapes in the 1860s and 1870s of the Yosemite Valley, the Sierras, and the Rocky Mountains, eventually becoming one of the most renowned landscape painters of the nineteenth century (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3. Albert Bierstadt, *Looking Down Yosemite Valley*, 1865, Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama.[7]

Romantic writers of the nineteenth century also began to advocate for nature and wilderness parks through their writing. Henry David Thoreau, an American author, poet, and essayist associated with the American transcendental movement, often extolled the virtues of nature in his writing. In an essay written in 1851 entitled "Walking," he lauded, "The West of which I speak is but another name for the Wild; and what I have

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[7] Albert Bierstadt, *Looking Down Yosemite Valley*, 1865, Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama, http://www.artsbma.org/collection/american-art (accessed February 3, 2011).

been preparing to say is, that in the Wildness is the preservation of the world."[8] In

another essay entitled "Huckleberries," he more explicitly outlined the idea of wild parks

when he wrote,

> I think that each town should have a park, or rather a primitive forest, of five
> hundred or a thousand acres, either in one body or several—where a stick should
> never be cut for fuel—nor for the navy, nor to make wagons—a common
> possession forever, for instruction and recreation.[9]

These types of declarations were joined by advocates of the burgeoning conservation

movement in calling for the establishment of great natural parks. Spearheaded by John

Muir, a naturalist and founder of the Sierra Club, conservationists frequently wrote of the

dire need for the protection of America's wild places. Muir, a Scottish-born American

naturalist traveled to California in 1868 at the age of thirty; after visiting Yosemite and

other scenic areas of the Sierras, Muir began advocating for the protection of large tracts

of the California wilderness. Writing of the Yosemite Valley in 1890, Muir avowed,

> Unless reserved or protected the whole region will soon or late be devastated by
> lumbermen and sheepmen, and so of course be made unfit for use as a pleasure
> ground. Already it is with great difficulty that campers, even in the most remote
> parts of the proposed reservation and in those difficult of access, can find grass
> enough to keep their animals from starving; the ground is already being gnawed
> and trampled into a desert condition, and when the region shall be stripped of its
> forests the ruin will be complete.[10]

The increased exposure resulted in a complex movement for natural parks.

The conservation writers, therefore, joined forces with a myriad of different interest

groups, who proclaimed a singular inclination—the establishment of great national parks.

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[8] Henry David Thoreau, *Henry David Thoreau: Collected Essays and Poems,* ed. Elizabeth Hall Witherell
(New York: Literary Classics of the United States, Inc.: 2001), 239.
[9] Ibid., 500.
[10] John Muir, "Features of the Proposed Yosemite National Park," *Century Magazine* 40, no. 5 (September
1890), 667.

Indeed, Yosemite was one of the first formal parks created, when the Federal government transferred a large tract of the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove to the State of California. The Yosemite Land Grant of 1864 indicated that the lands were to "be held for public use, resort, and recreation" by the State of California.[11] In other parts of the West, vast expanses of wilderness with unusual geological features or scenic value began to be recognized as potential sites for designation as national parks. Yellowstone, recognized as the first national park, was established in 1872, when Congress set it aside as a "public park or pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people."[12] Placed under the control of the Department of the Interior, Yellowstone set a precedent for several other natural areas to be set aside primarily for their scenic values under the Department of the Interior, yet no formal bureau or agency was created to oversee the protection of these resources, or the necessary development to facilitate visitors. As a result of poaching and vandalism, many of these parks were subsequently patrolled by the War Department. At that time, typical Army structures were constructed in the parks to facilitate the protection of the parks.

During the late 1800s, there were also advocates for the preservation and protection of the nation's prehistoric and historic properties including cliff dwellings, pueblo structures, and early Missions predominantly in the American Southwest. Advocates in scientific and historic circles felt the government needed to protect the nation's prehistoric, historic, and cultural property; as a result, Congress passed the Antiquities Act of 1906. The Act allowed the President to unilaterally designate any federally owned lands containing "historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures,

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[11] Yosemite Land Grant of 1864, (13 Stat. 325).
[12] Yellowstone Act of 1872, (17 Stat. 32), 16 U.S.C. § 21.

and other objects of historic or scientific interest" as "national monuments"[13]; these monuments could be held under the Department of the Interior, or remain under the agency who held the land.

In the late nineteenth century, development in and around national parks was also spurred by railroad companies, as railroads provided easy access to the otherwise isolated expanses of the American West. Partnering with the tourism industry, many railroad companies used concessionaires to operate large hotels and lodges within the parks, or in areas that were later designated as national parks. Many of the hotels, lodges, and accessory structures were romantic structures built by notable architects. Many have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, particularly for their architecture or affiliation with recreation, travel, and the tourism industry. Notable examples include the series of structures designed by Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, architect for the Santa Fe Railroad and its management company the Fred Harvey Company, as well as the work of the Northern Pacific Railroad in the Northwest (Figures 2.4 and 2.5). Noted for their fusion of the romantic with cultural, indigenous, and other regional references, these structures acted as a precursor to structures later developed by the National Park Service and its architects early in National Park Service history. These buildings, and many others like them, were heavily influenced by the American Arts and Crafts movement and the Swiss chalet style prevalent in the Adirondacks as well as by a variety of influences from California, including the works of Bernard Maybeck and Greene and Greene. The concessioner architecture became a formative influence for the later structures developed by the National Park Service.

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[13] 16 U.S.C. § 431.

Figure 2.4. Colter's Lookout Studio (1914) in Grand Canyon National Park, photo circa 1915.[14]

Figure 2.5. Old Faithful Inn (1903) in Yellowstone National Park, photo circa 1914.[15]

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[14] William C. Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere, and Henry G. Law, *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942* (San Francisco: National Park Service, 1977), under "In the Beginning: 1872-1916," http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/rusticarch/part1.htm (accessed January 7, 2011).
[15] Ibid.

Creation of the National Park Service

By 1916, several sites and parklands were held by the Department of the Interior with no uniform or programmatic method for preservation or protection; these included 14 national parks, 21 national monuments, and several cultural reservations.[16] The lack of a formal agency or policy made the national parks vulnerable to the actions of other agencies and interest groups, eager to exploit the parks for economic gain. The damming of the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park in 1913 engendered a deep divide within the conservation movement, pitting conservationists who approved of harvesting timber and active use of park resources against more strict preservationists who sought to keep the parks free of industry.

Stephen Mather, a Chicago businessman, outdoorsman, and park enthusiast, was conscious of the pressing need for an agency to provide oversight; he contacted Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane to discuss the development of an agency within the Department of the Interior to protect and administer the parks. Upon Lane's insistence, Mather reported to Washington to carry out this task, and he and Horace Albright, his top aide, launched an extensive public relations campaign. In addition to frequent articles in national magazines, Mather produced an illustrated publication entitled *The National Parks Portfolio* which was sent to influential citizens as well as members of Congress.[17]

Mather and Albright's efforts were successful; Congress passed the National Park Service Organic Act in 1916, formally creating the National Park Service. Paramount in its influence over development and management policies of the National Park Service, the Organic Act delineates the legislative purpose behind the National Park Service,

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[16] Barry Mackintosh and Janet McDonnell, *The National Parks: Shaping the System* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005), 20.
[17] Ibid., 21.

which is, "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."[18] The Act also granted the Secretary of the Interior, and those he employs, the ability to build facilities for the "accommodation of the public."[19]

After creation of the National Park Service, Stephen Mather was appointed as its Director and Horace Albright as Assistant Director. These men quickly developed and implemented a series of policies and directives to guide the growth and development of a national system of parks. Heavily influenced by the burgeoning profession of landscape architecture, National Park Service officials maintained close relationships with Frederick Law Olmsted and the American Society of Landscape Architects. A Landscape Engineer was employed to determine locations for the development of roadways as well as the siting of necessary park structures; this position was later developed into an entire Landscape Division. Over time, these landscape architects were assisted by architects and other design professionals and organized into regional design offices that oversaw building and construction within the national parks.

In the years following the passage of the National Park Service Act, additional parks were created, and many national monuments or holdings by other land agencies were moved under the control of the National Park Service. At this point, parks were largely confined to the West, and were included in the system for their aesthetic, natural, and geologic values. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, however, the National Park Service, under the direction of Horace Albright, began to make development of eastern

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[18] 16 U.S.C. 1-4.
[19] Ibid.

parks a priority within the agency; public support and accessibility was necessary to ensure appropriations and a future for the agency. Subsequently, the 1930s saw tremendous growth and change in the National Park Service. The national monuments held under the Department of Agriculture or the War Department, for example, were incorporated into the National Park Service in the 1930s. The National Park Service quickly became the primary agency for management and protection of the nation's cultural property and historic sites when President Franklin Roosevelt signed multiple executive orders in 1933 that moved the War Department's parks and battlefields into the fold of the National Park Service; National Capital Parks in Washington, D.C. and national monuments held by the Forest Service were also relocated and put under the control of the National Park Service.

Agency reorganization in 1933 under Roosevelt, and the massive addition of labor through New Deal programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Public Works Administration, contributed to expansion of the system, as well as a tremendous amount of park development and construction. The CCC was a labor force, mostly composed of young men, employed to undertake projects ranging from trail building to small construction projects. From 1933 until 1942, the New Deal programs provided funding and a workforce allowing for tremendous expansion of the national and state park systems. With the passage of the Historic Sites Act on August 21, 1935, the National Park Service further secured its role as the principal cultural resource agency in the nation. This Historic Sites Act declared that "it is a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance for the inspiration

and benefit of the people of the United States."[20] The Act then gave the Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service, the power to perform several duties, including but not limited to: securing, collecting, and preserving drawings, plans, and photographs of historic and archeological sites and buildings.[21] The Act also gave NPS the power to "make a survey of historic and archeological sites, buildings, and objects for the purpose of determining which possess exceptional value as commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States."[22] Several nationally important programs resulted from this Act and the New Deal programs, particularly for the field of historic preservation. The Historic American Building Survey (HABS), for example, was a New Deal initiative that employed many out of work architects to survey and document noteworthy historic structures throughout the United States. Following the passage of the Historic Sites Act, the National Park Service also developed a thematic framework through which to conduct the National Historic Landmarks program. This framework identified important themes and events in American history; NPS staff then intentionally sought to acquire and recognize sites holding national significance within each theme.

This period of time from 1916 to 1942 is recognized as one of the major eras of park building and construction in the history of the National Park Service. Deemed the "rustic" period for the type of architecture and landscape architecture practiced, the term was referenced by Albert Good in a portfolio of park structures issued in 1935:

> The style of architecture which has been most widely used in our forested National Parks, and in other wilderness parks, is generally referred to as 'rustic.' It is, or should be, something more than the worn and misused term applies. It is earnestly hoped that a more apt and expressive designation for the style may

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[20] 16 U.S.C. § 461.
[21] 16 U.S.C. § 462(a).
[22] 16 U.S.C. § 462(b).

evolve, but until it appears, 'rustic,' in spite of its inaccuracy and inadequacy, must be resorted to in this discussion.[23]

As limited development in the parks was necessary for visitor accommodation and administration, the agency wanted a consistent policy for the planning, management and construction of facilities and infrastructure in the parks. During the rustic period, the NPS worked its way toward a policy for its architecture and park structures, through a system of trial and error as well as several general policy statements. In 1918, Franklin Lane, Secretary of the Interior, issued a policy statement on the management of the parks. From these statements, a general practice developed within the parks with regard to the location of development and how it should look; in many parks, the notable early construction of concessioners had to be contended with, and those structures often provided challenges for park service architects, who attempted to build structures that would blend with the natural scenery as well as the existing structures. Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the National Park Service from 1933 to 1940, expressed the commonly held attitude toward development and construction in the national parks well when he said, "…every modification of the natural landscape, whether it be by construction of a road or erection of a shelter, is an intrusion."[24] He further explained the views of this generation by stating,

> A basic objective of those who are entrusted with development of such areas for the human uses for which they are established, is, it seems to me, to hold these intrusions to a minimum and so to design them that, besides being attractive to look upon, they appear to belong to and be a part of their setting.[25]

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[23] Albert H. Good, *Park Structures and Facilities* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, Government Printing Office, 1935), 3.
[24] Arno B. Cammerer, foreword to *Park Structures and Facilities,* by Albert H. Good (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, Government Printing Office, 1935), i.
[25] Ibid.

These ideas were codified into a series of publications that denoted what the Landscape Division considered "successful architecture." These portfolios of representative structures were produced by the Landscape Division in the 1930s, as CCC labor enabled more structures and other landscape features (e.g. campgrounds, amphitheatres, waysides) to be built. The portfolios gave examples of 'successful' and simple structures that could be emulated by the young, often unskilled CCC labor force.

The rustic style, as developed by the National Park Service, was characterized by the use of native materials like stone and timber in proper scale; the avoidance of rigid, straight lines; the avoidance of oversophistication; and achieving sympathy with natural surroundings and with the past (Figure 2.6). Often this meant that the structures resembled vernacular or indigenous forms (Figure 2.7). Though Albert Good declared the term 'rustic' inaccurate and inadequate, the terminology remained and was later affirmed by Tweed, Harrison, and Law when they developed a historic context statement for National Park Service rustic structures entitled *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942*.[26]

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[26] William C. Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere, and Henry G. Law, *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942* (San Francisco: National Park Service Western Regional Office, Division of Cultural Resources, 1977).

Figure 2.6. Madison Junction Museum (1929) at Yellowstone National Park, photo circa 1930.

Figure 2.7. Administration Building (1932) at Casa Grande National Monument, photo circa 1935.

World War Two and the Decline of the Parks

Park development was brought to a halt during World War Two, as appropriations for President Roosevelt's New Deal programs dwindled; the CCC program was formally abolished in 1942. Relative to the construction and employment levels that existed in the 1930s, the parks entered a standstill. Construction projects were minimal, and much of the parks' labor and available staff were redirected to the war efforts. The few structures built within the National Parks were frequently the result of private enterprise and fundraising. At the end of the War, as rationing ended and the American economy rebounded, Americans began purchasing automobiles in ever-increasing numbers. Compounded by a population boom and an increase in leisure travel, visitation to America's national parks increased dramatically.

The park visitation statistics were astounding. The number of visitors increased from 385,000 in 1916—the year of formal establishment of the National Park Service— to 11,990,000 in 1936. This number jumped to 50,000,000 by 1955, and visitor expectation for 1966—the intended year of Mission 66's conclusion—was estimated at 80,000,000 in 1956 when the program was initiated.[27]

By the 1950s, the National Park's facilities were severely outdated, and increasingly overcrowded; many of the structures built in the rustic period no longer suited the 'modern' lifestyle to which American's were accustomed.[28] Writing about the situation of the parks in *Harper's Magazine* in 1953, Bernard DeVoto stated that the NPS was "suffering from financial anemia" and that as the "financial stepchild of

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[27] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Mission 66 for the National Park System* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956), 2a, 5a, 10.

[28] Ethan Carr describes some of the perceived deficiencies of NPS facilities in more detail in *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Service Dilemma* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 88-94.

Congress…the lack of money has now brought our national park system to the verge of crisis."[29] Among the litany of ills facing the national parks, DeVoto mentions sewage and infrastructure problems, park employee housing and compensation deficiencies, lack of proper facilities for visitor enjoyment including campgrounds and restrooms, and natural areas overrun by well-meaning but ignorant tourists (Figures 2.8 and 2.9). DeVoto's sentiments were shared by other writers during this time; in *Reader's Digest,* Charles Stevenson warned visitors: "Your trip is likely to be fraught with discomfort, disappointment, and even danger."[30]   Stevenson also describes the "slum-like" conditions of campgrounds and cabins, as well as the "hazards" of broken guard rails and "washboard" roadways. While the authors of these articles posed different solutions, they agreed upon the basics: overcrowding and a lack of funding were detrimental to the parks and the park experience.

The astounding park conditions and negative reviews circulating in American publications were certainly noticed by officials at the National Park Service. By 1956, Director Wirth wrote to the Secretary of the Interior, insisting that

> Continued operation of the System without more nearly adequate provision for public use can only mean, at best, progressively less satisfaction to those who use it and, at worst, destruction or impairment of the natural and historic heritage of the American people.[31]

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[29] Bernard DeVoto, "Let's Close the National Parks," *Harper's Magazine* 207, no. 1241 (October 1953), 49.
[30] Charles Stevenson, "The Shocking Truth About Our National Parks," *Reader's Digest* 66, no. 393 (January 1955), 45.
[31] Director Conrad L. Wirth to Secretary of the Interior, memorandum, January 6, 1956.

Figure 2.8. Postwar congestion in Yellowstone.[32]

Figure 2.9. Park visitors waiting to use an outhouse.[33]

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[32] Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 5.

Mission 66 and Modernism

A solution to the problems facing the NPS was brought before Congress in 1956. Developed under Director Conrad Wirth, Mission 66 was an attempt by the National Park Service to develop an efficient, streamlined agency that could facilitate the demands of the modern era. Mission 66 included not only construction efforts, but also a sweeping overhaul to the planning, interpretive, and education protocols of the NPS. Wirth, a landscape architect by training and a career NPS employee, joined the NPS in the 1930s. He was responsible for the CCC efforts in the state parks; recreational demonstration areas; and the nationwide park, parkway, and recreational area study in the 1930s. Wirth was well aware of not only the NPS mandate, but also the methods, policies, and requirements developed by the park service over the years to meet these ends. To rectify the decline of the National Parks, Wirth and the NPS secured promise by Congress of a ten-year increase in park appropriations for a massive building program, one that promised to increase efficiency and the ability to facilitate prospected number of visitors by the 1966 Golden Anniversary.

Mission 66 was the second era of major park development, as the ten-year program included the construction of a variety of new facilities built for parks visitors, most notably a new building type—the visitor center. Mission 66 also marked the advent of a new architectural style—Park Service Modern.[34] In the lull in construction within the parks from 1945 to 1955, the few structures that were built contained elements of

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[33] Ibid.

[34] Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: History of a Building Type* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2000), 22. In this work, Allaback discusses visitor centers as a new building type originating during Mission 66, as well as using the term "Park Service Modern" to describe facilities built during the Mission 66 period.

modernism. In the post-war era, limited labor and resources yielded a different methodology to park service construction. Furthermore, cultural, architectural, and scientific influences created an entirely different concept and approach to park construction, as well as other facets of park administration.

Structures developed during Mission 66 were characterized by the use of modern materials like concrete, steel, and glass (Figure 2.10). These materials were used in experimental ways, often as both structural and aesthetic elements, such as in the design of Quarry Visitor Center at Dinosaur National Monument (Figure 2.11). Mission 66 structures also embraced pre-fabricated and pre-cast materials. The use of modern materials allowed Mission 66 structures to have sinuous, winding forms, and greater variety and openness in plan (Figure 2.12). The structures, intended to be inconspicuous and low-maintenance, were typically tinted in earth tones, low in profile, and set in strategic spots within the park, often at entryways and places of high use. Economics, a greater awareness of the limited availability of natural resources, and a scientific understanding of siting informed the building methods and locations.
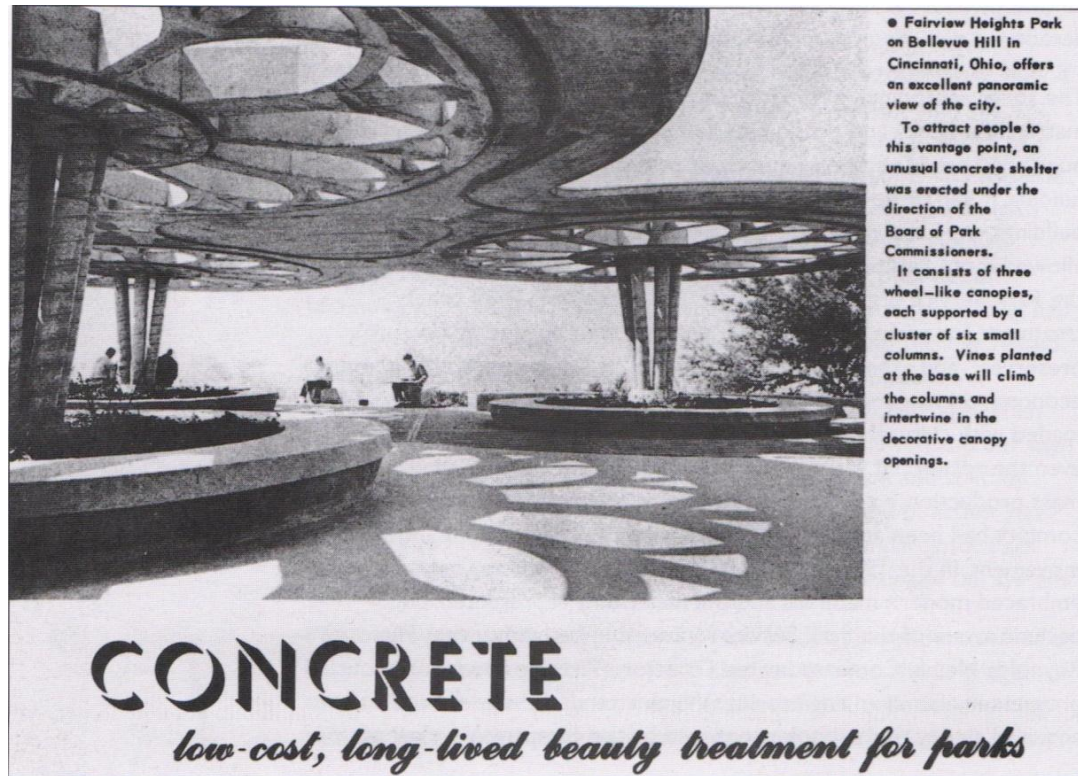
Figure 2.10. An advertisement for the use of concrete in park facilities.[35]
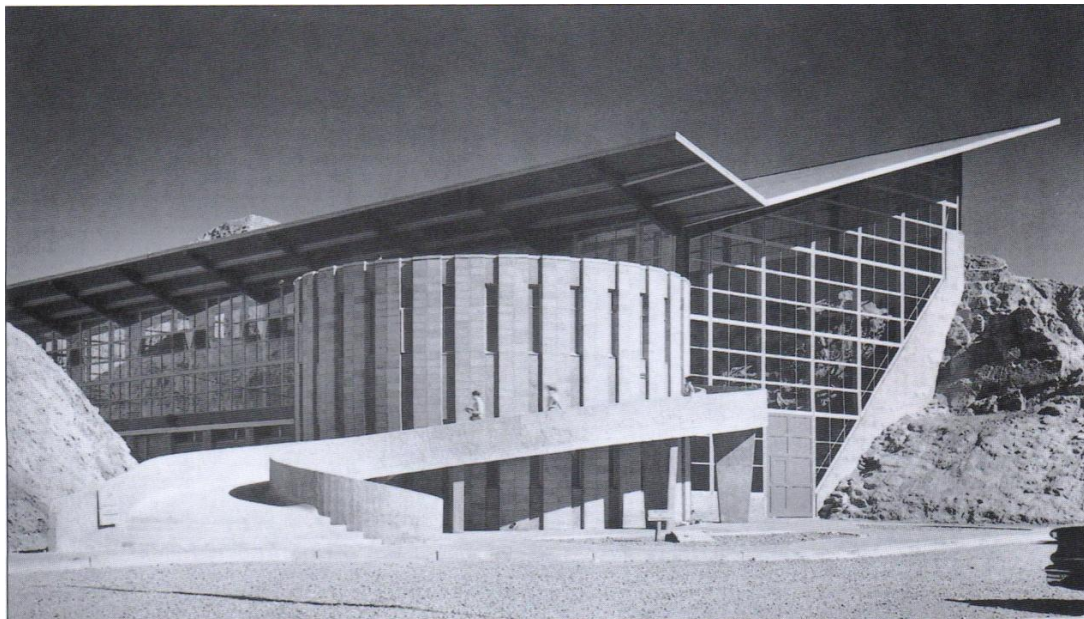
Figure 2.11. Quarry Visitor Center at Dinosaur National Monument.[36]

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[35] Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type*, 14.
[36] Ibid., 55.
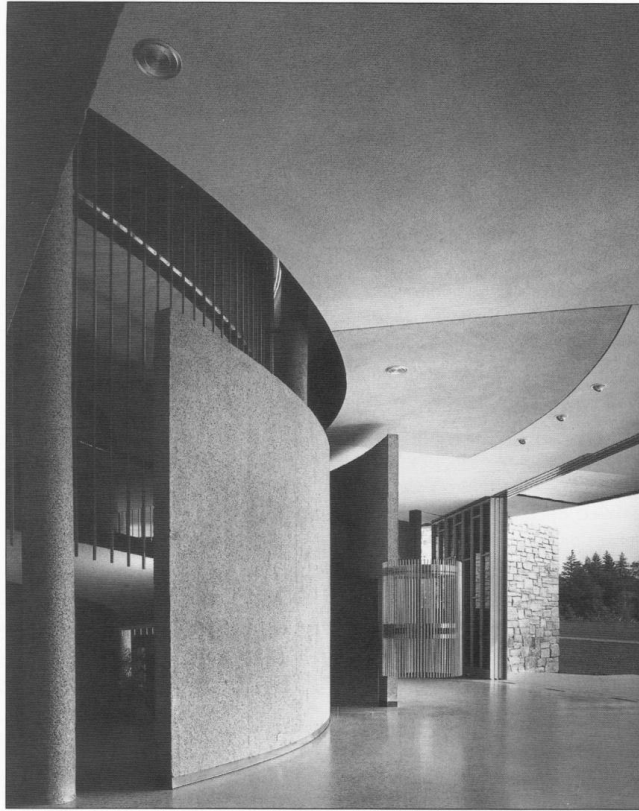
Figure 2.12. Sinuous curves and smooth surfaces at the Cyclorama Building, Gettysburg National Military Park.[37]

While Mission 66 is known by many as a construction program, it was a major era of 'park building' because of the improvements to infrastructure, visitor amenities, and housing, but also due to the great expansion to the National Park System. Many new 'parks' were created under various designations; some of these designations were unique to the Mission 66 period. There was also a renewed effort to create standards and an identity for the National Park Service. Essentially an effort at park branding, the arrowhead logo was officially recognized as the logo of the NPS during Mission 66. There was also an increase in interpretive efforts, not just for knowledge about major resources, but in an effort to promote resource protection and agency public relations.

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[37] Ibid., 130.

While some have opposed the use of interpretation for these purposes, such uses were

outlined in great detail by Wirth[38], and remain imbedded in NPS policies.

Mission 66 shaped the way Americans think about and use parks today; creation

of the visitor center, localizing use in less sensitive areas, 'day use' visitation, the growth

of gateway communities, and the expansion of designated wilderness areas are all

products of Mission 66. Wirth stepped down as Director prior to the formal conclusion

of the program, and Mission 66 was extended by his successor, George B. Hartzog, Jr.,

into the Parkscape Program, which concluded in 1972.

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[38] These ideas were outlined by Director Conrad L. Wirth in a memorandum to All Field Offices, April 23, 1953, with the subject line, "Securing Protection and Conservation Objectives Through Interpretation." Wirth continued to reference interpretation as a tool for the protection of park resources and a way to explain park management decisions throughout the Mission 66 program.

CHAPTER 3

INTERPRETATION: DEFINITIONS, EVOLUTION, AND

IMPLEMENTATION

> I find in the park service administrative manual a concise and profound statement, and my heartiest thanks go to whoever it was that phrased it: "Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection."
>
> Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*[39]

Definitions of Interpretation

There are many definitions of interpretation provided by various organizations that maintain natural, historic, and cultural property; these types of organizations that employ some form of interpretation vary and include museums, parks, nature centers, aquariums, zoos and other historical and cultural sites. Though these organizations may manage different resources, the general concept of what each organization or entity is attempting to accomplish through interpretation is largely the same. This overarching group of heritage professionals joined to form professional organizations and professional journals that are dedicated to the development and improvement of interpretive practice. The National Association of Interpretation (NAI), for example, is a professional organization that is dedicated to advancing the profession of heritage interpretation. Composed of more than 5,000 members in over thirty countries, it defines interpretation as "a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual

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[39] Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage,* ed. R. Bruce Craig, 4th ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 65. The book was initially published under the full title *Interpreting Our Heritage: Principles and Practices for Visitor Services in Parks, Museums, and Historic Places* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957).

connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the

resource."[40] The American Association of Museums, alternately, defines it as "a planned

effort to create for the visitor an understanding of the history and significance of events,

people, and objects with which the site is associated."[41]

Academics have suggested other definitions; Peter Howard, founder and former

editor of the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* and professor of Cultural

Landscape at Bournemouth University, defines interpretation as "deciding what to say

about the heritage, and how, and to whom, to say it."[42] Others in academia have

determined that a definition is unattainable; Larry Beck and Ted Cable, advisory board

members for the *Journal of Interpretation Research* and professors of park and recreation

management, conclude that though "we have been working with the concept of

interpretation for about 25 years and have had some ideas and have written some

definitions and principles…we still don't fully know what interpretation is."[43]

According to the National Park Service, though the word interpretation can mean

many things, "in the National Park Service…interpretation is the process of providing

each visitor [with] an opportunity to personally connect with a place."[44] While that

particular definition is given on their website, the National Park Service's concept of

interpretation has been most directly influenced by Freeman Tilden in his book

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[40] National Association for Interpretation, "Mission, Vision, and Core Values," About NAI, http://www.interpnet.com/about_nai/mission.shtml (accessed Jan 24, 2011).
[41] Alderson, W.T. and S.P. Low, *Interpretation of Historic Sites*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History), as quoted by Douglas Knudson, Ted T. Cable, and Larry Beck, *Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources* (State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc., 1995), 4.
[42] Peter Howard, *Heritage: Management, Interpretation, Identity* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2003), 244.
[43] Larry Beck and Ted Cable, "The Meaning of Interpretation," *Journal of Interpretation Research* 7, no.1 (2002): 7.
[44] National Park Service, "Interpretation and Education," http://www.nps.gov/learn/ (accessed on January 24, 2011).

Interpreting Our Heritage. Written expressly for the National Park Service, Tilden defined interpretation as "an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information."[45]

Evolution of Interpretation in the National Park Service

The use of the term "interpret" to mean the appreciation and understanding of natural resources is credited to John Muir, who wrote in a notebook in 1871, "I'll interpret the rocks, learn the language of flood, storm, and the avalanche. I'll acquaint myself with the glaciers and wild gardens, and get as near the heart of the world as I can."[46] This usage is credited as the precedent for the subsequent use of the term "interpretation" by the National Park Service.[47] Muir was certainly focused on the understanding of the natural and geologic features of the west; however, over time, the concept of interpretation within the National Park Service expanded to include the understanding of many different resource types.

An early example of this expansion occurred in 1905 when Frank Pinkley, custodian of Casa Grande Ruin Reservation, modern day Casa Grande National Monument, developed another category of interpretation; he collected prehistoric artifacts from the archeological excavations in the ruin and put them on display. According to

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[45] Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* ed. R. Bruce Craig, 4th ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 33.
[46] John Muir, as quoted in Linnie Marsh Wolfe, *Son of the Wilderness: The Life of John Muir* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), 144.
[47] C. Frank Brockman, "Park Naturalists and the Evolution of National Park Service Interpretation through World War II," *Journal of Forest History* (January 1978), 26.

NPS Bureau Historian Barry Mackintosh, "Pinkley's display has been called the forerunner of national park museum exhibits."[48]

While museum exhibits and prehistoric artifacts were exhibited at these early cultural parks and reservations, a wholesale move into historic interpretation did not happen until the 1930s as historical parks and battlefields were added to the National Park System. At that time, Director Albright successfully advocated for the inclusion of historical areas in the National Park Service. This move "gave the service a vast new field of interpretive activity."[49] Albright also encouraged the growth of interpretation by establishing the Branch of Research and Education in Washington; this branch would change titles and organizational structure several times during bureaucratic restructuring, but would never cease to exist in some form within the National Park Service after that time. Verne E. Chatelain, the NPS's first chief historian, declared that "historical activity is primarily not a research program but an educational program in the broader sense."[50] He asked for other park historians to distribute information related to these sites in an interesting manner; examples given included brochures and monthly publications similar to those being issued by park naturalists.[51] With the passage of the Historic Sites Act of 1935, historic interpretation gained a permanent footing. The Act required the NPS to "develop an educational program and service for the purpose of making available to the

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[48] Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service History Division, 1986), 3.
[49] Mackintosh, "The National Park Service Moves into Historical Interpretation," *The Public Historian* 9, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 51.
[50] Verne Chatelain, historical conference record, November 27, 1931, History Division, quoted in Mackintosh, "The National Park Service Moves into Historical Interpretation," 53.
[51] Ibid.

public facts and information pertaining to American historic and archaeologic sites, buildings, and properties of national significance."[52]

Interpretive themes continued to expand and contract over time, and were generally a reflection of cultural events and societal values at any given time. For example, during World War II and again during the Cold War, messages of patriotism and American ideals were emphasized at many parks. In November of 1940, the Secretary of the Interior's Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments issued a resolution stating that

> The Advisory Board believes the National Park Service's interpretive program in the national park areas…is one of the most valuable contributions by any Federal agency in promoting patriotism, in sustaining morale, and understanding of the fundamental principles of American democracy, and in inspiring love for our country.[53]

The resolution continues by calling on the NPS to include these patriotic messages in its programming in all possible interpretive mediums.

In the 1960s, the rise of the environmental movement led to calls from NPS employees to include an environmental education component to their interpretive programs. Concepts of ecology, the 'web of life', and environmental problems as well as mitigation methods were interpreted, even at parks with no express environmental purpose. Director Russell Dickenson later questioned this practice in 1982, when he endorsed and circulated a paper written by another NPS employee that emphasized interpretation of resources and themes of the parks, not "special causes."[54] Nonetheless,

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[52] Historic Sites Act, 16 U.S.C § 462(j).

[53] Advisory Board records, History Division, quoted by Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service,* 75-76.

[54] Dame, "The Role and Responsibility of Interpretation in the 1980s," enclosure to memorandum, Dickenson to Regional Directors and Superintendents, March 29, 1982, "Interpretation and Visitor Services," quoted in Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service*, 71-72.

environmental education remains an element of many parks formal interpretive programming.[55]

By the time of Newton B. Drury's directorship in the 1950s, interpretation and naturalist guides were a fixture within the national parks; however, the National Park Service did not have any official codified standards, professional manuals, or guidelines to direct their interpreters. Drury approached Tilden, whom he met at the Players Club in Manhattan.[56] By the conclusion of their discussion, the two agreed that Tilden would travel the parks, study interpretation, and arrive at a document that would give direction to the park service's interpretive efforts (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. Freeman Tilden, photo by M. Woodbridge Williams.[57]

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[55] Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service*, 71.

[56] R. Bruce Craig, introduction to *Interpreting Our Heritage,* 4th ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2007), 6.

[57] National Park Service photo by M. Woodbridge Williams, in *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 4th ed., xii.

Tilden was a journalist and foreign correspondent in the early twentieth century;

his writing interests soon expanded into fictional writing, and he authored a variety of

short stories, poems, and novels. Eventually, Tilden developed his own newsletter that

presented his viewpoints on a variety of political and cultural topics.   Drury approached

Tilden at a point in his career where he was seeking his next great challenge, and the

result of this effort was Tilden's book, entitled *Interpreting Our Heritage*.[58] In the book,

Tilden developed a definition for interpretation as well as six principles of interpretation

(Appendix A), each with a corresponding chapter elaborating upon the principles and

providing practical advice or examples of what he considered successful and

unsuccessful attempts at interpretation. Four of the principles especially relevant for

discussion of nonpersonal interpretation of Mission 66 resources; these are:

> 1. 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.
>
> 2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
>
> 4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
>
> 5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.[59]

This text is still used by the National Park Service, and it is included in the

Interpretive Development Program (IDP), a training program conducted by the NPS for

park service interpreters. In the years following Tilden's contribution, and at the

insistence of Tilden in *Interpreting Our Heritage,* several academics have contributed

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[58] R. Bruce Craig, introduction to *Interpreting Our Heritage,* 4th ed., 6.
[59] Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 34-35.

additional principles and ideas about interpretive philosophy.   Most notably, Cable and

Beck introduced nine additional principles in their work *Interpretation for the 21st

Century.*[60] Drawing upon Tilden's principles, they expand upon his work, using research

and scholarship conducted since Tilden's era. The expanded sections mostly pertain to

current scholarship and theory regarding interpretation, the use of modern technology,

and recent psychological studies that have discovered new insights into the way people

learn and comprehend information.

The methods and forms of interpretation within the National Park Service have

also evolved and expanded over time. Some interpretive methods have been used since

the creation of the National Park Service; these include walking tours, publications and

brochures, and 'trails' complete with interpretive labels. Others methods for

interpretation within the National Park Service developed exclusively with the inclusion

of historic sites. According to Barry Mackintosh, former NPS bureau historian, early

interpretive efforts by the NPS at historic sites often attempted to interpret "stories" or a

sequence of events and "commonly attempted to narrate the park stories through exhibits,

heavy with text, laid out in sequential fashion."[61] These methods, deemed the 'book on

the wall' syndrome, were challenged when George B. Hartzog became Director of the

National Park Service in 1964. To mitigate this problem, Hartzog hired William Everhart

as Chief of Interpretation; these men reorganized the Division of Interpretation and

Visitor Services and hired specialists in motion picture technology and advertising in an

attempt to make more stimulating and visually appealing interpretive materials. That

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[60] Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Publishing, 2002).
[61] Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service*, 48.

year, the Harpers Ferry Center in West Virginia also became the headquarters of park design efforts.

Criticism of the 'book on the wall' method also led to the development of 'living history', or 'living interpretation' as it later came to be known. Most fashionable in the 1960s, 'living history' began in the National Park Service with attempts to recreate historic environments through historic farm programs, battle reenactments, and other forms of demonstration where participants were invited to 'step into the past'. The level of accuracy often varied in these programs; and eventually met with criticism from many historians, who asserted that the programs were often superficial and misleading to the public. Writing in a National Park Service publication in 1976, Marcella Sherfy, an NPS historian, explained:

> Even having steeped ourselves in the literature of the period, worn its clothes, and slept on its beds, we never shed perspectives and values. And from those [present] perspectives and values, we judge and interpret the past. We simply cannot be another person and know his time as he knew it or value what he valued for his reasons….Time past has, very simply, passed."[62]

A similar criticism was hurled at the interpretive efforts at Booker T. Washington National Monuments historic farm when Frank Barnes, former interpretive specialist for the NPS in the Northeast Region, called it "a charming scene, of course, complete with farm animals with picturesque names, with almost no indication of the social environmental realities of slave life (indeed, how far can you go with 'living slavery'?)."[63] Years later, this question was answered at Colonial Williamsburg, where a controversial living history demonstration included the buying and selling of slaves in its

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[62] Marcella Sherfy, *In Touch* (May 1976): 5, quoted by Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service*, 65.

[63] Frank Barnes, "Living Interpretation," (April 1973), National Park Service History Collection, quoted by Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service*, 62-63.

interpretive programming.[64] This debate between factual information, narrative, and alternate methods of presentation (e.g. 'living history') is one that continues to challenge historic site interpretation and historians, and each retains a place within in practices of the National Park Service.

The stated purposes of interpretation also evolved and developed over time. While John Muir's statement about interpreting park resources certainly underscores the idea of protecting park resources, these ideas were developed and expanded upon over time. A 1945 manual for the custodians of Southwestern National Monuments, for example, declared that "the effective custodian is the one who can include in his interpretation an explanation of the need for protection and instill in the visitor sincere sympathy with the National Park Service protection and conservation philosophy."[65] Director Conrad Wirth firmly endorsed this concept in a memorandum issued to all field offices in the National Park Service. Entitled "Securing Protection and Conservation Objectives Through Interpretation," Wirth outlined the legal basis for carrying out interpreting programs for protection and preservation and then listed the ways in which interpretation aids park conservation. Among these, Wirth states,

> To lead the visitor into an interest in and an understand of park objectives, as contrasted with other perhaps more familiar patterns of thinking about land resources and use, he must be given a background of park philosophy as well as a background of natural history. The origin and growth of the national park idea; the principles, policies, and objectives of national park use; some of the obstacles encountered in attaining those objectives; how a park is managed; and the source of authority and resources for that management—all of these are part of the

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[64] Cary Carson, "Colonial Williamsburg and the Practice of Interpretive Planning in American History Museums," *The Public Historian* 20, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 11-51.
[65] Interpretive Programs file, History Division, quoted by Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service*, 77-78.

background of national parks and monuments that the visitor must have for full understanding.[66]

This idea of interpretation as tool for explaining park management issues and protecting park resources was eventually codified into National Park Service management policies.

Technological advances are another important aspect in the evolution of interpretive methods. Over time, advancing technology has informed actual interpretive methods as well as the design and access to interpretive materials. While some of these interpretive methods have fallen by the wayside, many have found permanent use within the field. In the 1930s, automotive tours became a method of interpretation in the National Park Service, with a lead car often communicating interpretive themes via a mounted loud speaker to visitors following behind in their personal automobiles; this method ultimately proved unmanageable. Also, elaborate light and sound displays were often used by the National Park Service in the 1960s; these were discontinued due to cost effectiveness as well as founded criticism that these displays were not interpretation but sheer entertainment.[67] Many of the other, productive audiovisual improvements have remained. Motion picture, orientation films, recorded audio content are all technological advancements that have expanded possibilities and the range of visitors able to access interpretive programs of the National Park Service. Most recently, the use of computers, first with on-site computer activities, now with "virtual visitors" which access interpretive material by the use of websites and online exhibits, have proven cost-effective, accessible avenues of interpretation. These programs are also becoming

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[66] Conrad Wirth to All Field Offices, memorandum, April 23, 1953, "Securing Protection and Conservation Objectives Through Interpretation."
[67] Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service*, 38-45.

increasingly accessible through media created for smart phones and portable electronic

devices, such as web applications and podcasts.

Interpretive Policy within the National Park Service

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, interpretive programs typically operate

under a broad mission statement; in the National Park Service, this statement is

understandably broad. It is not, however, without meaning and value. According to the

National Park Service,

> Interpretive programs are the methods the Service uses to connect people to their
> parks, with opportunities for all visitors to form their own intellectual, emotional,
> and physical connections to the meanings and values found in the parks' stories.
> Facilitating those opportunities through effective interpretive and educational
> programs will encourage the development of a personal stewardship ethic and
> broaden public support for preserving and protecting park resources so that they
> may be enjoyed by present and future generations.[68]

As with all aspects of government operations, the National Park Service shapes and

implements its interpretive programs based upon the law and through a system of

management policies, guidelines, and directives.

In the most current overarching policy document, the 2006 *Management Policies*,

the NPS cites the 1916 Organic Act and its mandate to "provide for the enjoyment of the

same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for future

generations" as the lawful basis for its interpretive program. In *Management Policies*,

the NPS declares that their interpretive and educational programs advance that mandate

by "providing memorable educational and recreational experiences that will (1) help the

public understand the meaning and relevance of park resources, and (2) foster

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[68] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Management Policies 2006* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2006), 89.

development of a sense of stewardship."[69] In an effort toward stewardship the

Management Policies call on each park to "provide understandable interpretation of the

major features in the parks and the events that occurred there, with an emphasis on

experiences that will lead visitors to appreciate the park's authentic qualities."[70] Along

these lines, the *Management Policies* also assert that

> Every park will develop an interpretive and educational program that is grounded
> in (1) park resources, (2) themes related to the park's legislative history and
> significance, and (3) park and Service-wide mission goals. The intent will be to
> provide each visitor with an interpretive experience that is enjoyable and
> inspirational within the context of the park's tangible resources and the meanings
> they represent. In addition, visitors should be made aware of the purposes and
> scope of the national park system.[71]

The interpretation of the National Park Service is also intended to "encourage dialogue"

based upon information that is "current, accurate, based on current scholarship and

science, and delivered to convey park meanings." Additionally, "interpretive services

will help employees better understand the park's history, resources, processes, and

visitors."[72]

In addition to establishing the mission and purpose of interpretive programs

within the National Park Service, the *Management Policies* also identify the responsible

parties for carrying out interpretive programs. In particular, the policies declare that

interpretation is a shared responsibility, and should include the Washington and regional

offices, park superintendents, chief interpreters, field interpreters, noninterpretive staff,

and other partners. In order to carry out an interpretive program, the *Management*

Policies requires the development of General Management Plans (GMPs) and

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[69]Ibid., 90.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.

Comprehensive Interpretive Plans (CIPs); these documents are to serve as the "backbone of interpretive and educational program planning and direction."[73] When developing CIPs, the park staff follows a process of "defining themes, determining desired visitor experience opportunities, identifying challenges, and recommending which stories to tell, how to tell them, and how to reach specific audiences." [74] All interpretive and educational services within each park are to be based on and coordinated with the comprehensive interpretive plan. This process, initiated by each park superintendent, should be repeated every 7-10 years. The 2006 *Management Policies* also refer to additional guidelines and directives for the implementation of interpretation in *Director's Order 6* and *Reference Manual 6*. These documents discuss in greater detail the processes and methods used to develop interpretive plans and carry out interpretive programs. The nuances of some of these policies as they relate to specific interpretive challenges will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Implementation of Interpretation within the National Park Service

Grant W. Sharpe, a professor of natural history interpretation at the University of Washington, suggested the basis for an interpretive program is the "the visitor, the resource, and the interpretive medium."[75] This simplistic explanation, however, becomes far more complicated when it is applied to a multi-faceted bureaucratic agency. Indeed, the interpretive medium within the National Park Service takes many forms, depending not only upon the resource being interpreted, but also subject to the policy and guidelines of the agency. In addition to outlining the purposes and appropriate uses of interpretation within the National Park System, the policies and guidelines for interpretation and

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[73] Ibid., 91.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Grant W. Sharpe, *Interpreting Our Environment* (New York: John Wiley & sons, Inc., 1976), ii.

education outline various forms of implementation within the National Park Service. These can be broken into two major groups: personal and nonpersonal interpretation; both personal and nonpersonal interpretation have been in practice since the inception of interpretive programs in the National Park Service.

Perhaps the most recognizable form of interpretation to visitors, personal interpretation includes any contact a visitor makes with a park employee. Personal interpretation can fall into categories of formal and informal interpretation. Formal interpretation is the planned, programmatic interpretation conducted by park interpreters. These forms of interpretation often include walks, talks, tours, campfire programs, and curriculum-based education programs.[76] Many of these programs are the most popular with park guests; however, many other methods are actually employed by the National Park Service when communicating with the public. Informal interpretation is the term given to contact between park employees and visitors where the result is instruction, yet no formal programming is offered. This typically is the result of a visitor asking a park employee a question about the park or its resources. These interactions typically differ substantially, often as a result of the knowledge level and interests of the specific visitor, and park employee with whom they make contact. Though idiosyncratic in nature, informal interpretation is nonetheless a valuable tool for communicating the mission and values of the National Park Service, as well as its resources.

Nonpersonal interpretation refers to the interpretive messages that do not require the presence or direct interaction with park personnel. There are also two major categories within nonpersonal interpretation; these are tangible and intangible. Tangible interpretation is any touchable material distributed or produced by the National Park

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[76] *Management Policies 2006*, 91.

Service for the purpose of interpretation and can include wayside exhibits, handouts, brochures, park newspapers, and other physical signage. Intangible interpretation includes the use of films, web-based programs, and virtual exhibits. Intangible interpretation is perhaps the fastest growing method of NPS interpretation because it is a cost-effective way to reach large audiences with consistent quality; it does, however, lack some element of dialogue between multiple parties. For this reason, the NPS asserts in *Management Policies* that "used in conjunction with personal services, [nonpersonal services] will provide opportunities for visitor information, orientation, and personal connections to park resources."[77]

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[77] Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

CHALLENGES FOR INTERPRETING MISSION 66 RESOURCES

Knowing the past is as astonishing a performance as knowing the stars.
Astronomers look only at old light. There is no other light for them to look at.
This old light of dead or distant stars was emitted long ago and it reaches us only
in the present…Astronomers and historians have this in common: both are
concerned with appearances noted in the present but occurring in the past.

George Kubler, *The Shape of Time*[78]

Books on the Wall, Living History, and the Historic Interpretive Dilemma

Interpreting Mission 66 resources in the National Park Service presents several

challenges. Some of these challenges are common to all historic resources, some unique

to those of Mission 66. While no single challenge is insurmountable, together they

present a complex and difficult task, compounded by the difference between cultural and

natural resources. Although interpretation developed within the National Park Service

largely to address the natural, scientific, and geologic phenomena within the national

parks, interpretive efforts expanded to include cultural and historic resources. These

cultural resources, however, require a different approach if interpretation is to be

successful.

In the National Park Service, emphasis is often put on formal interpretive

programming devoted to the natural and scenic resources of the national parks. These

programs allow visitors to hike and recreate while discovering new scenic vistas,

geologic formations, and wildlife while making intellectual and emotional connections on

their own. There are often a number of opportunities for interpreters to more fully

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[78] George Kubler, *The Shape of Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 19.

discuss and engage visitors about the resources they may encounter—either by observing the physical specimen, hearing their calls, or observing the physical markings left behind. Waterfalls, geysers, and volcanic eruptions are all examples of dynamic natural resource events that allure visitors and make interesting opportunities for National Park Service rangers to interpret the natural, biological, and geological phenomena.

Although Freeman Tilden's interpretive principles to apply to cultural, historic, and natural resources, historic resources are still inherently different from natural resources. Historic interpretation has theoretical underpinnings related to the study of history that present unique historic interpretive challenges. A lack of sensitivity to the requirements of historic interpretation can result in the mistaken viewpoint that the resources are 'dry and dusty' relics of the past. Similar sentiments were espoused early in the NPS when developing historic interpretation. In 1941 Superintendent John R. White of Sequoia National Park stated,

> With due respect to historians all battlefields look much alike and there is monotony in the lines of overgrown trenches or battery sites; as there is in museums with exhibits of arms, bullets, and records...For the average visitor it is necessary to compress the event into a comprehensive whole, and if possible to color and dramatize it to create interest and make lasting impressions.[79]

While not fully agreeing with that statement, Barry Mackintosh concedes that "although many historical parks have aesthetic appeal and some accommodate active recreation, few can be greatly appreciated without some explanation of who lived there or what occurred there."[80] While the need for interpretation is readily recognized, making cultural and historical interpretation engaging has proven to be challenging.

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[79] Superintendent John R. White to Director, memorandum, December 6, 1941, History Division, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., quoted in Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service*, 19.
[80] Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service,* 18.

Attempts to interpret cultural and historical sites in the past have resulted in a debate, essentially over the theoretical foundations of the study and presentation of history. In an effort to present the full story authentically and accurately, many historians attempted to interpret sites using tremendous amounts of facts and information. Critics of this method have indicated that it is "overly technical" and "slanted to the specialist rather than the layman."[81] Others have deemed these text-laden displays "dry as dust."[82] According to Michael J. Ettema, social historian and former curator of domestic life at the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan,

> In interpretive exhibitions, the ideas and information end up in labels that are too long for the attention span of most visitors. Objects seem to take second place, becoming illustrations for the labels rather than significant elements in the learning process…..Social history exhibits, runs the complaint, are merely "books on walls."[83]

Overwhelmed by facts and technical information, these 'book on the wall' interpretive programs often cease to be effective, as the visitor is rendered either incapable or unmotivated to learn what the interpreter is attempting to convey.

Some historians have defended their position and methods, nonetheless, stating that other 'dynamic' attempts at historical interpretation are superficial, disingenuous, and only of entertainment value. These 'dynamic' methods often include presentations of 'living history' or 'living interpretation' and include battle reenactments, craft demonstrations, and impersonations of actual historical characters. These methods inevitably provide visitors with less factual information, but often manage to spark some level of imagination or excitement in the visitor. Nonetheless, many of the 'dynamic'

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[81] Ibid., 25.
[82] Thomas A. Woods, "Getting Beyond the Criticism of History Museums: A Model for Interpretation," *The Public Historian* 12, no. 3 (Summer 1990): 77.
[83] Michael J. Ettema, "History Museums and the Culture of Materialism" in *Past Meets Present*, ed. Jo Blatti (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987), 77.

methods have also met with various levels of criticism. Patricia Mooney-Melvin, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Public History Program at Loyola University in Chicago, claims that "numerous professional historians seem to hold almost any presentation of the past outside the pages of an academic monograph" as "plastic history."[84] Thomas A. Woods, a former historic site manager and head of the Historic Sites Department for the Minnesota Historical Society, adds that criticism from academic historians often decry similar presentations as "superficial, filiopietistic shows of color and motion" that have "oversimplified and distorted history."[85] For this reason, some historians uphold the 'book on the wall' methods as the more acceptable method to convey depth and authenticity. Others historians have suggested that authentic *and* dynamic interpretations are possible. Historian James M. McPherson, for example, suggests that "most professional historians do not oppose such simulations if they are done with accuracy and sensitivity to the complexities and ambiguities of historical reality."[86] What exactly constitutes 'historical realities,' or the fact that true historical reality is impossible further complicates these issues.

Removing the personal methods (e.g. 'living history,' battle reenactments, and demonstrations) from consideration, nonpersonal interpretive programming still faces similar interpretive challenges, balancing a need to present factual information, while also creating a visually appealing and thought provoking display. The potential of nonpersonal interpretation is not always perceived or fully explored, and therefore results

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[84] Patricia Mooney-Melvin, "Beyond the Book: Historians and the Interpretive Challenge," *The Public Historian* 17, no. 4 (Fall 1995), 75.
[85] Thomas A. Woods, "Getting Beyond the Criticisms of History Museums: A Model for Interpretation," *The Public Historian* 12, no.3 (Summer 1990): 77, 79.
[86] James M. McPherson, quoted in "A House Divided: Historians Confront Disney's America," *OAH Newsletter* 22, no. 3 (August 1994), 1.

in unoriginal interpretive waysides that provide pure information with little to no

interpretation. Though Freeman Tilden's second principle of interpretation claims

information is not interpretation, but revelation based upon information, the tendency of

interpretive media to rely solely upon information is common.[87] Moreover, the depth

and amount of information provided on interpretive displays is a point of contention;

some interpreters argue for factual information while others suggest it should merely

'light a spark'. According to Mackintosh, in the National Park Service dissension

persists due to this underlying issue:

> whether Service interpreters and interpretive media should communicate depth to
> the relative few receptive to such presentations (in which significance was
> sometimes buried in factual detail) or hit only the highlights digestible by the
> lowest common denominator (giving something to everyone but risking scorn for
> superficiality).[88]

Jo Blatti, former director of research and interpretation at the Minnesota

Agricultural Interpretive Center and Program Officer at the New York Council for the

Humanities, discussed the balance between the presentation of authentic, factual

information and dynamic, engaging display methods in her essay *Past Meets Present:

Field Notes on Historic Sites, Programs, Professionalism, and Visitors.* Blatti reviews the

Vietnam Vetermans Memorial in New York City, highlighting its innovative approach

and the ability to create "engagement and absorption."[89] The memorial consists of a

green, glass block wall sixty six feet long and sixteen feet tall, located inside the plaza of

a skyscraper in Manhattan. The glass blocks are filled with inscriptions from a variety of

songs, poetry, news sources, and letters related to the Vietnam War or occurring

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[87] Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage,* 34.
[88] Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service,* 29.
[89] Jo Blatti, introduction in *Past Meets Present: Essays about Historic Interpretation and Public Audiences*,
ed. Jo Blatti (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987), 13.

concurrently. The inscriptions are in a variety of typefaces and sizes, and all contribute to a moving and thought provoking interpretation of the event's context in American history. Notably, the display contains the text, "Mother, I am cursed. I'm a soldier when soldier's aren't in fashion," taken from a poem by a sergeant in the United States Army.[90] Blatti indicates that the points of view are not confined to those of soldiers, however, but also account for nonveterans and citizens whose viewpoints were shaped by domestic issues; therefore, the presentation manages to simultaneously present multiple perspectives on the past using primary sources. Blatti also praises the material choices made by the memorial designers, who chose glass blocks that would be varyingly illuminated throughout the day. According to Blatti, these types of careful interpretive displays "embody complexity and changing angles of vision in [its] physical form" as well as "communicating a clear sensibility yet offering space for private interpretation."[91]

As historic resources within the National Parks, Mission 66 resources face these interpretive challenges. Effective interpretation of Mission 66 resources is perhaps even more problematic than the museum and historic site interpretation literature implies, as the Mission 66 resources often stand as a lone resource in any given area, and do not have the benefit of being a part of a museum collection where related elements can be brought together and interpreted accordingly.

Constructing Interpretive Stories and Contentious Pasts

Another major challenge facing the interpretation of any resource, particularly cultural resources, is the notion that interpreters are always constructing a story. What story to tell and from what perspective is a decision that all interpreters must make. This

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[90] Ibid., 14.
[91] Ibid., 17.

is task becomes increasingly challenging when a multitude of interested parties disagree on the facts of the event, or at least the interpretation and presentation of those facts. Carl Becker, American historian and former Professor of History at Cornell insisted, "the facts of history do not exist until a historian creates them."[92] In his seminal work *What is History?*, historian E.H. Carr explains that "history means interpretation…it is necessarily selective."[93] Professors G.J. Ashworth and J.E. Tunbridge, renowned professors of geography, tourism, and heritage studies, reach similar conclusions, indicating that both history and heritage make a selective use of the past for current purposes and transform it through interpretation.[94] Pointing out commonly held historical fallacies with irony, Thomas Schlereth, professor of American Studies and History at the University of Notre Dame, states, "History is consensus; the good old days had no disagreements or conflicts. History is simple; the past lacks complexity, and there is one version of the past that is right."[95] This notion of the past makes the selection of which stories to tell, which facts to use, and how to tell it all the more important, and subsequently, more challenging. Particularly for a government agency like the National Park Service, an agency tasked with protecting, managing, and interpreting the heritage of an increasingly pluralistic society.

The concept of the past as 'inharmonious' or as a 'resource in conflict' is most often discussed when very controversial topics or historic events are being interpreted; for the National Park Service, this has most often included sites with ties to slavery,

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[92] Carl Becker, as quoted in E.H. Carr, *What is History?* Ed. by R.W. Davies (London: Macmillian Press, 1986), 15.
[93] E.H.Carr, *What is History?* (Chicester, Wiley & Sons:1961), 23.
[94] J.E. Tunbridge and G.J. Ashworth. *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict* (Chichester: Wiley and Sons, 1996), 5-6.
[95] Thomas J. Schlereth, "It Wasn't That Simple," *Museum News* (January/February 1978), 36, as quoted by Thomas A. Woods, "Getting Beyond the Criticism of History Museums: A Model for Interpretation," *The Public Historian* 12, no.3 (Summer 1990), 80.

Native American history, or the treatment of other minorities and ethnic groups in the United States. In 1991, for example, Congress passed a law requiring Custer Battlefield National Monument, named for American General Custer, to be renamed Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, the site where General Custer and his troops fought the Cheyenne Indians; Congress also lawfully mandated that the park "present a more equitable and balanced interpretation of the battle."[96] Nevertheless, there was still dissension amongst the public regarding the new interpretive programming.[97]

Similar issues were raised when the NPS acquired and developed Manzanar, a National Historic Site established to protect and interpret the resources associated with the internment of Japanese Americans at a War Relocation Center during World War II. Writing about the interpretation of Manzanar Historic Site, Superintendent Frank Hays explains the conflict thus,

> How the National Park Service (NPS) tells the story of the internment is an issue currently being address at Manzanar. Some people advocate an active role for the NPS in informing social conscience through its interpretations of the internment of Japanese Americans at Manzanar. Although an image of the NPS's role as social conscience resonates with many, a recent letter to the park reflects the opposite sentiment. Calling the National Park Service "a groveling sycophant," the writer of the letter suggests that the NPS has succumbed to the "Japanese American propaganda machine" and neglects and even refuses to tell the truth about the War Relocation Centers.[98]

To further complicate matters, there are often dissenting opinions even within a particular ethnic group. At Manzanar, for example, the Japanese American community has split over the naming of the site. For some Japanese Americans, anything other than the title

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[96] Dwight t. Pithcaithley, "Confronting Contentious Pasts: The Challenges of Interpreting 'Controversial' Subjects at America's Historic Sites," *Forum Journal* 18, no. 3 (Spring 2004), http://www.preservationnation.org/forum/resource-center/forum library (accessed February 22, 2011).
[97] Ibid.
[98] Frank Hays, "The National Park Service: Groveling Sycophant or Social Conscience: Telling the Story of Mountains, Valley, and Barbed Wire at Manzanar National Historic Site," *The Public Historian* 25, no. 4 (Autumn 2003): 74.

of "concentration camp" is euphemistic and disingenuous; oppositely, a former internee "is dead set against referring to the relocation camps as 'concentration camps.' He was in Manzanar."[99]

While not reflective of such issues as relocation, oppression, and enslavement, Mission 66 resources also face the challenge confronting the interpretation of all resources: deciding what story to tell and how. Doing so is even more challenging in light of the controversial nature of the program, both historically and currently; its legacy is currently being shaped and written. In the 1950s, many national park enthusiasts and wilderness advocates were staunchly opposed to Mission 66. National park enthusiasts in the 1950s and 1960s, nostalgic for the national parks of the past, were critical of Wirth's Mission 66 program. Devereux Butcher, an author, editor, and executive director of the National Parks Association (now National Parks and Conservation Association) from 1942-1950 was perhaps one of its most vocal opponents. Writing in that organization's *National Parks Magazine*, Butcher continually chided the program and the construction efforts that took place during Mission 66. Ethan Carr notes Butcher's distaste for modernism in the national parks as early as 1952, though Butcher's critiques continued well into the actual Mission 66 program:

> As early as 1952, Butcher wrote of his horror at finding contemporary buildings in Great Smoky Mountains and Everglades national parks and criticized the Park Service for abandoning its "long-established policy of designing buildings that harmonize with their environment and with existing styles." Among the eyesores he discovered were a curio store with "blazing red roof and hideous design," a residence "ugly beyond words to describe," and a utility building that he felt might as well have been a factory.[100]

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[99] Ibid., 79.
[100] Sarah Allaback and Ethan Carr, "Rocky Mountain National Park Administration Building." National Historic Landmark Nomination (Denver: National Park Service, September 1, 2000), 11.

Of construction in the Hidden Valley winter recreation area of Rocky Mountain National Park, Butcher declares a new structure "hideous in design and color."[101] He goes on to assert that, "on the first day we visited the [Hidden Valley] project, a sign advertised it as a Mission 66 project. Next day the sign was gone, we were glad to see, for the whole affair constitutes a violation of national park integrity…."[102] Butcher had similar critiques of new construction in Yellowstone National Park, where he deemed a new concessioner's building "colossal and of freak design."[103] Butcher gets at the heart of his aesthetic distaste for Mission 66 projects by stating, "Man here is creating a 'feature' that will compete with the park's natural wonders for public attention."[104] The perception that these modern projects were 'competing' for attention with the scenic features was a common refrain, despite Butcher's claim just a paragraph earlier that the Mission 66 removal of older structures and "clutter" from the rim of the Grand Canyon was "a most worthwhile project."[105]

Not everyone agreed with these aesthetic criticisms; in fact, architectural publications of the 1950s and 1960s frequently applauded the Mission 66 designs as an example of modern architectural progress. A 'news report' in *Progressive Architecture* noted,   "the design of visitors' facilities provided for national tourist attractions seems to be decidedly on the upgrade, at least as far as the work for National Park Service is concerned. Disappearing one hopes, are the rustic-rock snuggery and giant-size 'log

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[101] Devereux Butcher, "Sunshine and Blizzard: Afield With Your Representative," *National Parks Magazine* 31, no. 128 (January 1957):24.
[102] Ibid., 26.
[103] Ibid., 28.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid., 27-28.

cabin' previously favored."[106] Others went farther, expressing a very different theoretical

understanding of the 'new architecture' of the parks. Emerson Goble, editor of

Architectural Record, expressed distaste for the prevailing notion within the NPS that

"buildings necessarily profane the parks" and that "architecture cannot dare to express its

artistic convictions."[107] Writing against the trend to build rustic buildings obscured

behind a barrier of trees and landscaping, Goble issued a manifesto of sorts:

> Let us not decide, just because we cannot draw it on the back of an envelope, that
> the great and sympathetic architecture cannot exist. I shall have to insist that the
> effort to achieve or acquire great architecture has almost never been tried. The
> whole habit of thinking in the parks is the other way. We have not dared to let
> man design in the parks; we have not asked to see what he might do. We have
> slapped his hand and told him not to try anything.[108]

In the pattern of many other architectural commentators of the 1950s and 1960s, Goble

praised attempts made by architects commissioned for Mission 66 projects, such as the

"courageous" design by Anshen and Allen at Dinosaur National Monument (Figure 4.1).

In 1957, an article in *Architectural Record* labeled the design as "arresting and

appropriate."[109] One year later, another article in *Architectural Record* declared the

structure was "significant as good architecture and as an imaginative solution of the

parks' building needs."[110] Each article also emphasized enthusiastic NPS and public

response to the project. Anshen and Allen's work at Dinosaur National Monument was

just one of the highly praised efforts during Mission 66. In 1964, architectural critic

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[106] "Two Visitors' Centers Exemplify New Park Architecture," *Progressive Architecture* 40, no. 2 (February 1959): 87, quoted in Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: History of a Building Type* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2000), 77, and Allaback and Carr, "Rocky Mountain National Park Administration Building," National Historic Landmark Nomination (Denver: National Park Service, September 1, 2000), 13.
[107] Emerson Goble, "Architecture (?) For the National Parks" *Architectural Record* 121, no. 1 (January 1957): 174.
[108] Ibid., 184.
[109] "Visitor Center for Dinosaur National Monument." *Architectural Record* 121, no. 1 (January 1957): 187.
[110] "Current Work of Anshen and Allen." *Architectural Record* 124, no. 3 (September 1958): 171.

Wolf Van Eckardt praised several NPS Mission 66 structures as "outstanding contemporary buildings by outstanding modern architects."[111] These included the Wright Brothers Visitor Center by Mitchell and Giurgola, the Gettysburg visitor Center and Cyclorama Building by Richard Neutra, and a series of shade structures on Cape Hatteras by Cabot and Benson (Figure 4.2).
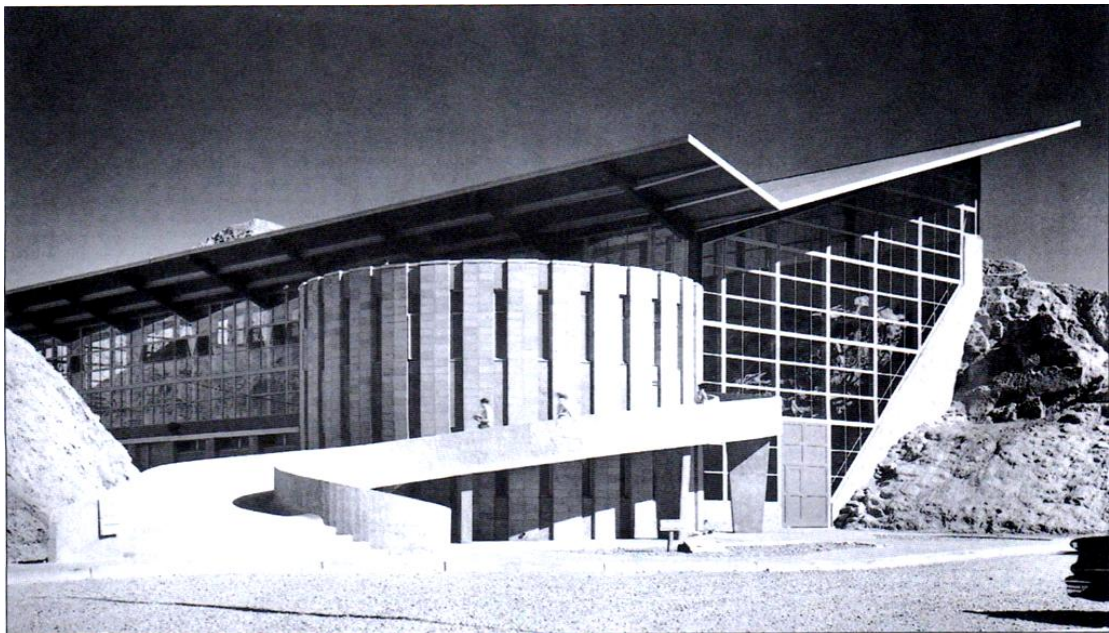

Figure 4.1. Anshen and Allen's Quarry Visitor Center in Dinosaur National Monument.[112]

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[111] Wolf Van Eckardt, "The Park Service Dares to Build Well," *Washington Post,* March 29, 1964, quoted by Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Service Dilemma,* 161.
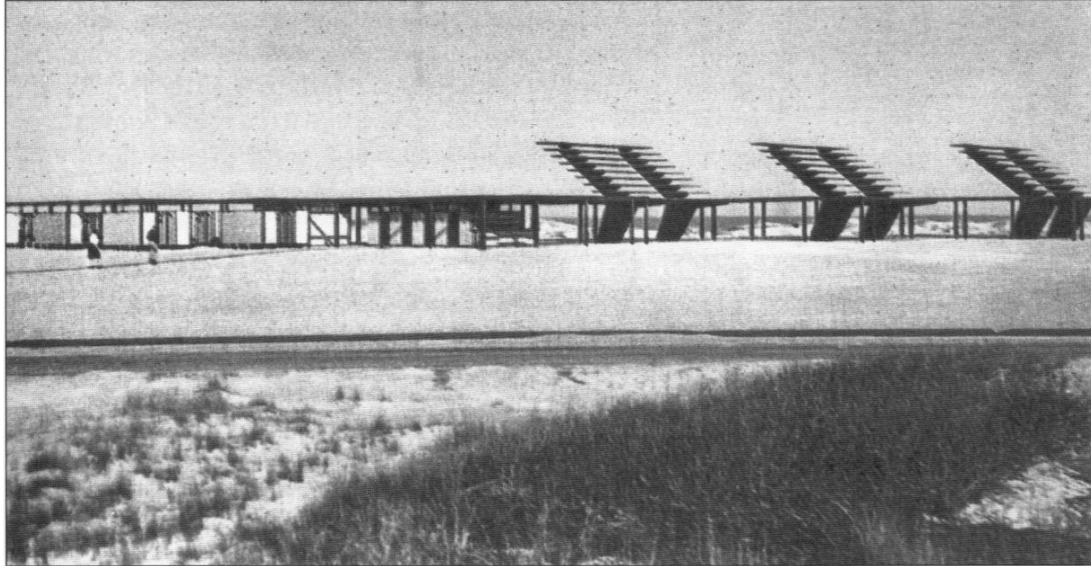[112] Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66: History of a Building Type,* 55.

Figure 4.2. Cabot and Benson Coquina Beach Shade Structures on Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, as pictured in an undated postcard from the collection of Donald Benson. The facilities were destroyed a storm in the early 1990s.[113]

Not all detractors of Mission 66 were critical of aesthetics; many were more concerned with conservation and the impacts of road construction on the park 'wilderness'. David Brower, president of the Sierra Club, was a major spokesman for the emerging wilderness movement in the 1950s and 1960s; like most wilderness advocates, Brower saw increased road construction and development of recreation areas within the National Park System during Mission 66 as an attempt to pave over the national parks and ruin the last remaining expanses of 'primitive wilderness' left in the United States (Figure 4.3). Though wilderness legislation was discussed before the advent of Mission 66, the program served as a catalyst for vocal wilderness advocacy, ultimately resulting in Congressional legislation. Passed in September 1964, the Wilderness Act was seen by many as a direct response to the Mission 66 Program; the act encouraged the designation of federally owned backcountry areas as official "wilderness areas." Thus, ensuring that

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[113] Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: History of a Building Type,* 15.

they would remain without roads, development, and "untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."[114] Incidentally, Director Conrad Wirth stepped down the same year.
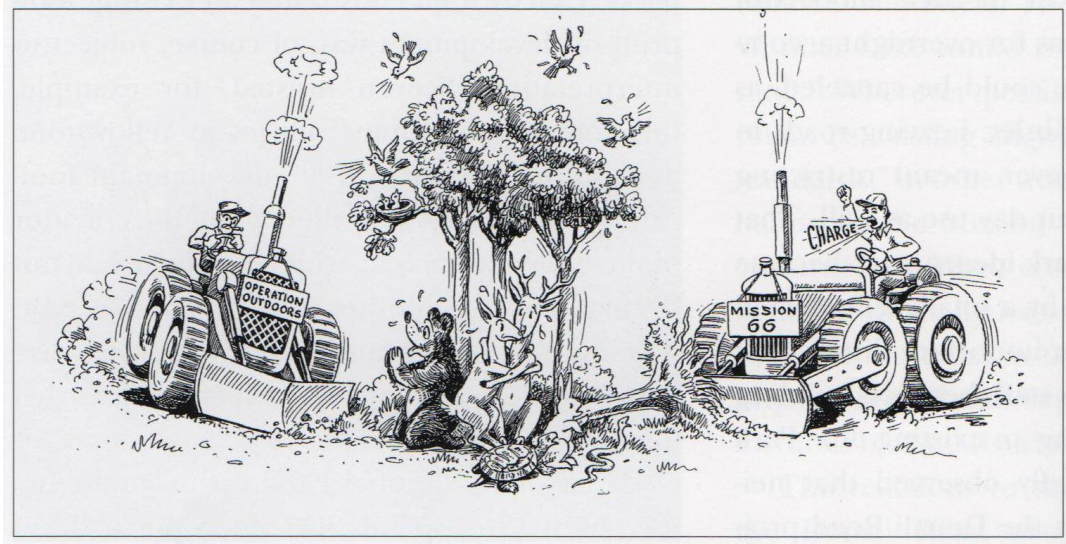
Figure 4.3. A contemporary cartoon by Dave Bixby illustrating perceptions of the Mission 66 program. "Operation Outdoors" was a similar program instituted by the U.S. Forest Service in 1957.[115]

Though many of these opinions were expressed in the 1950s and 1960s, the multitude of disparate ideas concerning Mission 66 and its legacy remain. As recently as 1997, Mission 66 architecture has been criticized as "intrusive."[116] Architect, city planner, and professor of architectural design at Syracuse University Harvey H. Kaiser wrote that "although Mission 66 was the well-intentioned fiftieth anniversary program designed to improve visitor services, it resulted in some regrettable architectural legacies for the national parks."[117] Perhaps more importantly,

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[114] The Wilderness Act, 16 U.S. C. 1131-1136.
[115] Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Service Dilemma*, 288.
[116] Harvey Kaiser, *Landmarks in the Landscape: Historic Architecture in the National Parks of the West* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1997), 41.
[117] Ibid.

> A historical consideration of Mission 66 very quickly hits on some of the most hotly contested topics in park management today. This helps explain why many park advocates, environmentalists, and current Park Staff often hold negative opinions about Mission 66: it represents the "tradition" that many of them have spent their professional careers overcoming.[118]

Moreover, according to Carr, "many at the Park Service remain convinced that Mission 66 design was too hurried and standardized, that materials were substandard, and that climate or other local conditions were not considered."[119] These notions represent only a fraction of the misconceptions and contested legacies of the Mission 66 program, which undoubtedly provide challenges for interpretation today.

National Park Service Policy and Perceptions

Another challenge that exists for many of the National Park Service's significant architectural resources, i.e. Rustic and Mission 66, is that in doing so, the NPS is interpreting resources that are not the primary purpose or resources for which the parks were established. Essentially disputing the purpose of interpretation within NPS, many critics may argue it is inappropriate to dedicate funding or time to interpret twenty first century modernist resources when it is counter to the enabling legislation or 'park purpose'. Mackintosh points out many NPS employees' displeasure at expanding the interpretive focus beyond the primary themes of the park in his discussion of additional programs added to primary programming for patriotic and environmental education issues in *Interpretation in the National Park Service.* Service employees at historic sites, for example, were unhappy about environmental education being interpreted at their sites, as they were not the primary themes or reasons for the park's establishment.[120]

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[118] Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Service Dilemma,* 338-339.
[119] Ibid., 339.
[120] Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service,* 68-69.

Hank C. Warren, the Chief Naturalist with extensive experience as a ranger-naturalist, offered a similar opinion in *Interpretive Views*, a published collection of essays. In his essay, "'What' Comes Before 'How'," Warren states that the NPS has "lost sight of the forest for the trees," indicating that the parks were not created so that they could interpret resource management.[121] He elaborates by stating that "clearly it is the historical events and personalities represented at Independence Hall that deserve prime attention interpretively—not the techniques of preserving historic buildings" and concludes that the primary goal of interpretive programming should be the "resource around which the site was established."[122]

This point of view is often reinforced by the management policies of the National Park Service and the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) process, which emphasize interpretive themes based upon enabling legislation and "park purpose." The 2006 *Management Policies* state that interpretive services should provide understandable interpretation of the "major features in the parks and the events that occurred there."[123] It then requires that every park "develop an interpretive and education program that is grounded in (1) park resources, (2) themes related to the park's legislative history and significance and (3) park and Service-wide mission goals."[124] *Management Policies* indicates that General Management Plans (GMPs) and Comprehensive Interpretive Plans (CIPs) are to serve as the "backbone of interpretive and education program planning and direction." The CIP process is intended to guide the park staff in defining these themes

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[121] Hank C. Warren, "'What' Comes Before 'How'," *Interpretive Views: Opinions on Evaluating Interpretation in the National Park Service* (Washington, D.C.: National Parks and Conservation Association, 1986), 41.
[122] Ibid., 42.
[123] National Park Service, "*Management Policies 2006*" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2006), 90.
[124] Ibid.

and all interpretive and educational programs are "based on and coordinated with the comprehensive interpretive plan."[125] Further instructions on the CIP process are listed in *Directors Order 6: Interpretation and Education* and *Interpretation and Education Reference Manual 6.*[126]

Reference Manual 6 outlines the CIP process the most thoroughly; it indicates that the CIP will communicate "the park's purpose, national significance, and interpretive themes."[127] This manual also indicates that the background for the planning process should be based upon the parks "purpose" and "significance." The document provides this explanation of "purpose:"

> The reasons that the park was set aside as a part of the National Park System provide the most fundamental criteria against which the appropriateness of all planning recommendations, operation decisions, and actions are tested…specific reasons for establishing a particular park are usually stated in the park's enabling legislation. If these reasons are vague and open to interpretation, the purpose statements need to go further than simply restating the law; they need to document the shared assumptions about what the law really means...these assumptions can often be found in the legislative history for the enabling legislation or in the parks historical record.

Likewise, a park's "significance" should "clearly define the most important things about the park's resources and meanings, based on park purpose." These significance statements "are based on park-specific legislation" and should "capture those attributes that make the park resources and meanings important enough to warrant National Park

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[125] Ibid., 91.

[126] National Park Service, *Directors Order #6: Interpretation and Education* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, January 19, 2005) http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/DOrder6.html (accessed February 5, 2011), and National Park Service, "Chapter #4: Interpretive Planning" *Interpretation and Education Reference Manual 6* (Washington D.C., Government Printing Office, January 1, 2009) http://www.nps.gov/indu/parkmgmt/upload/DO%206%20RM%206%20Interpretive%20Planning.pdf (accessed February 5, 2011).

[127] National Park Service*, "*Chapter 4: Interpretive Planning," *Reference Manual #6*, under "The Comprehensive Interpretive Planning Process."

System designation."[128] From these statements of park purpose and significance,

interpretive themes are identified and serve as the "building blocks" and "core content"

on which the interpretive program is based.

Altogether, these policies present an effective method to plan and prioritize

interpretive activities; however they also present challenges to interpreting Mission 66

and Mission 66 resources. Developed as a response to park management problems,

Mission 66 is certainly not in the "park purpose" or enabling legislation, as they represent

a unique type of cultural resource within the agency (i.e. ones that have been constructed

by the agency and have subsequently become historic). Therefore, despite the

widespread and overarching impact on the National Park Service as a whole, Mission 66

resources are neglected with regard to interpretation; on the individual park level, they

fail to represent a major theme or resource around which park interpretive plans are

based.

Proper Scholarship and Scope of Existing Research

Interpreting Mission 66 resources is also challenging because they are resources

of the "recent past," that is, resources younger than or just at the 50 year old mark. As

such, these resources face a number of interrelated challenges. Currently, one of the most

significant challenges facing the interpretation of recent past resources is a dearth of

proper scholarship and the limited breadth of existing research. Proper scholarship is

always important to successful interpretation. Tilden, in his seminal work on

interpretation, cites, Edward P. Alexander of Colonial Williamsburg:

> Research is both a continuing need and the life blood of good preservations. Both
> historical authenticity and proper interpretation demand facts. Research is the

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[128] Ibid.

way to obtain these facts. There is no substitute for it, and no historic preservation should be attempted with research.[129]

There is also an emphasis on proper research and scholarship in academia. Patricia Mooney-Melvin bluntly states, "while everyone can participate in the telling about the past, the story that ultimately gets told will only be as good as the research and analysis that precedes the telling."[130]

This emphasis on research and scholarship is corroborated in the mission and professional ethics statements of interpretive organizations. For example, the American Association of State and Local History's *Statement of Professional Ethics on Historical Interpretation* asserts that "interpretation must be based on sound scholarship and accurately reflect the facts as they have been documented."[131] National Park Service policy also reflects the need for research and scholarship in *Management Policies*. Under the requirements for all interpretive and educational services, the NPS states that "interpretive and educational programs will be based on current scholarship and research about the history, science, and condition of park resources, and on research about the need, expectations, and behaviors of visitors."[132]

As resources from the recent past, there is a dearth of research and scholarly evaluation for Mission 66 and its resources. For many years, proper scholarship did not exist regarding Mission 66 or the resources constructed during the program. This lack of research has improved in the past ten years, and a few academic works of scholarship

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[129] Edward P. Alexander, as quoted in Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage,* 27.

[130] Patricia Mooney-Melvin, "Beyond the Book: Historians and the Interpretive Challenge," *The Public Historian* 17, no. 4 (Autumn 1995): 77.

[131] Marie C. Malaro, *Museum Governance: Mission, Ethics, Policy* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994), quoted by Nancy Mahaney and John R. Welch, "The Legacy of Fort Apache: Interpretive Challenges at a Community Historic Site," *Journal of the Southwest* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2002):44.

[132] National Park Service*, Management Policies*, 93.

have been published. Several Master's theses were written in the 1980s and 1990[133];

however, the first widely published contribution to a body of knowledge regarding

Mission 66 was Sarah Allaback's book *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: History of Building

Type*, published in 2000. In this book, Allaback outlined a history of Mission 66 as well

as several case studies of specific Mission 66 visitor centers. The work included

appendices that proposed National Register guidelines and submission for registering

these properties.   Her work was certainly significant, and in 2001, four visitor centers

recognized in her book were listed as National Historic Landmarks. However,

Allaback's work was limited in its development of an overall historic context for Mission

66 and its resources, and the visitor center was the only resource type identified.

Moreover, only a handful of visitor centers were specifically examined. In a "research

report" published in 2003, lead historian for the NPS Park Historic Structures and

Cultural Landscapes Program Timothy M. Davis acknowledged the lack of scholarly

analysis of the Mission 66 program and indicated that the NPS was launching a research

effort. According to Davis, "not only are the basic outlines of the program imperfectly

understood, but there is considerable debate about whether Mission 66 and its physical

legacy should be treated with the same institutional reverence afforded earlier eras in

national park history." [134] In 2007, Ethan Carr expanded upon Allaback's work by

publishing a more extensive and well-rounded view of the Mission 66 period. Carr's

work included an explanation of the context within which Mission 66 was developed, the

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[133] For example, Jonathan Searle Monroe, "Architecture in the National Parks: Cecil Doty and Mission 66" (master's thesis, University of Washington, 1986) and Christine L. Madrid, "The Mission 66 Visitor Centers, 1956-1966: Early Modern Architecture in the National Park Service" (master's thesis, University of Virginia, 1998).
[134] Timothy M. Davis, "Mission 66 Initiative," *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* 1, no. 1 (Fall 2003), http://www.crmjournal.cr.nps.gov (accessed October 6, 2010).

reception of the program, the multitude of programs and initiatives established during

Mission 66, and an expanded look at resource types constructed within the period.

These two works were heavily drawn upon in an attempt to develop a historic

context and 'multiple property submission nomination,' which remains in draft form.[135]

The delay in releasing a final draft of the historic context is particularly problematic, as it

creates a situation where resources continue to be altered, demolished, and remain

without meaningful interpretation. The release of such a document would do well for

recognition, and the establishment of interpretative programs addressing these resources.

Lack of Acceptance

A related challenge that often faces recent past resources is a lack of acceptance.

Frequently, the public does not to accept resources from the recent past as historic, often

because they grew up in the resource or were living when it was constructed. In a

bulletin developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) on the recent

past, Jeanne Lambin affirms,

> Much of the architecture of the recent past carries aesthetic baggage as well. For many it is difficult to understand and appreciate. Most "old" and appreciated architectural styles have an abundance of ornament and decoration; the perceived "simplicity" of much post-war architecture conflicts with established notions of what "historic" architecture should look like. Modern architecture is very familiar, but it is often poorly understood.[136]

Richard Longstreth, Professor of Architectural History and Director of the Graduate

Program at Washington University, discusses this phenomenon in an article in *Forum*

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[135] Carr, Ethan, Elaine Retondo-Jackson, and Len Warner, "The Mission 66 Era of National Park Development, 1945-1972," Draft Multiple Property Documentation Form (Oakland, CA: National Park Service, January 2006.

[136] Jeanne Lambin, *Preserving Resources from the Recent Past* (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2007).

Journal. Comparing the redevelopment of the Southwest area of Washington D.C. with

Shopper's World, a modernist shopping complex in Massachusetts, he writes:

> Like the Southwest, it [Shopper's World] embodies beliefs that the old order
> could not meet contemporary needs, that radical new solutions were needed, in
> this case in a setting far removed from the traditional urban core. Like the
> Southwest, Shopper's World should be a National Historic Landmark, although
> arguing the point is now academic because it was leveled in December, 1994—for
> a parking lot.[137]

Longstreth continues by identifying three overarching causes for this approach to modern

architecture. The first is his claim that "often we do not 'see' the landmarks of the mid-

twentieth century."[138] One reason for this inability to "see" these landmarks is the lack of

"visual coherence" in the resources. Longstreth indicates that modern architecture was

not built or sited in the ways of past architecture; they do not "monumentally crown a

hill" or "terminate a major street."[139] This is certainly true of the majority of Mission 66

architecture, which designers intentionally attempted to build low in profile and in

locations that would not obscure the natural features of the park. Another reason offered

by Longstreth for this inability to "see" modernist landmarks is that they "often cannot be

understood, let alone appreciated, from seeing one or two exterior elevations."[140] He

follows by indicating that

> Movement around and through the building, or the building complex, may be
> essential to grasp the salient qualities of its design. Just as the experience is
> frequently more internal and private than external and public, so space is often
> accorded primary over form. To understand modern architecture, one must look
> beyond motifs and veneers. Modern architecture did not just eliminate ornament;
> it did not just eschew references to the past; it did not just emulate a machine

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[137] Richard Longstreth, "I Can't See It; I Don't Understand It; And It Doesn't Look Old to Me," *Forum Journal* 10, no. 1 (Fall 1995), http://www.preservationation.org/forum/resource-center/forum-library/members-only/ (accessed February 2, 2011).
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.

aesthetic; it entailed challenges to theretofore basic assumptions about the properties of design.[141]

Once again, these observations are particularly poignant in reference to Mission 66 resources, which were designed by planners who were told to ignore references to the past and former park practices in favor of fresh solutions to the parks dilemma. Moreover, the most enduring icon of Mission 66, the visitor center, was the building type most informed by this line of thought. According to NPS architects and designers during Mission 66, "circulation [was] …the 'backbone' of any plan and should guide the visitor and help him make decisions." Moreover, these architects provided examples of "visitor flow" diagrams that were ultimately responsible for the design of visitor center floor plans.[142]

Longstreth also points to the individualistic approaches to design that dominated modern architecture. Two examples he points out are "the geometric organicism of Frank Lloyd Wright" and "the abstractionism of Richard Neutra."[143] Both of these examples exist within Mission 66 resources. The geometric organicism of Frank Lloyd Wright is present in the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center, designed by his successors in Taliesin Associated Architects; the abstractionism of Richard Neutra likewise is present in the Cyclorama Building at Gettysburg National Military Park. These resources become challenging and problematic to interpret when lumped into one recognized architectural style (i.e. Park Service Modern) with no overarching historical or cultural context yet written to accompany it.

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[141] Ibid.
[142] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Visitor Center Planning,* 1-20, 45-48, quoted by Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Service Dilemma,* 149.
[143] Ibid.

The correlation between these statements and the circumstances of Mission 66 resources in the National Park Service is striking. In the National Park Service, resource managers, park officials, and many sectors of the public often do not want to accept these resources as significant cultural resources. Many times, these employees have been with the park since Mission 66—they saw these structures being constructed; to designate these resources as historic goes against fundamental notions of what is 'historic'. Until that status is recognized, it is difficult to interpret, or even convince many interpreters, that these resources are worthy of preservation, much less interpretation.

Reticence to recognize, register, preserve, or interpret many Mission 66 resources is witnessed through the management and treatment of those resources. In the late 1990's, many of these resources were slated for demolition. The Wright Brothers National Memorial Visitor Center at Wright Brothers National Memorial in Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, for example, was slated for demolition in 1997[144]; the work of architects Mitchell and Giurgola, the visitor center demolition was ultimately reconsidered when it was registered on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998 and as a National Historic Landmark in 2001, ostensibly the result of inclusion in Allaback's book. The Cyclorama building at Gettysburg National Military Park was also slated for demolition in the park's 1998 General Management Plan. This proposed demolition led to a long battle between the NPS and the Recent Past Preservation Network, DOCOMOMO US[145] and a litany of other preservationists and architectural

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[144] Romaldo Giurgola, Architect to Carol D. Shull, NPS, March 4, 1997, available at "Mission 66: Modern Architecture in the National Parks," http://www.mission66.com (accessed January 15, 2011). The proposal for demolition is also referenced by Christine Madrid French, "The Emergence of the Mission 66 Visitor Centers," under "Preservation or Demolition: Debating the Future of Mission 66 Visitor Centers," http://www.mission66.com/documents/intro.html#preserve (accessed January 15, 2011).

[145] DOCOMOMO US is the acronym of the committee for the Documentation and Conservation of buildings, sites, and neighborhoods, of the Modern Movement in the United States.

historians. Though deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in 1998

by the Keeper of the National Register, the fate of the Cyclorama Building remained in

jeopardy. The proposed demolition was most recently addressed by the United States

District Court, when it ruled in favor of the Recent Past Preservation Network, Dion

Neutra, and Christine Madrid French and indicated that the National Park Service must

comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and cannot demolish the building at

this time.[146] While the fate of the Cyclorama building is temporarily secure, for many

others a lack of appreciation has already led to demolition or dramatic alteration.

Interpreting an Interpretation

Perhaps the most interesting challenge facing the interpretation of Mission 66

resources is that an overwhelming number of these resources are directly related to

interpretation and education. In this sense, interpreting Mission 66 resources is

interpreting resources constructed *for* interpretation. In a 1971 article for the *AIA*

Journal, Robert Koehler writes,

> Interpretation, considered one of the Park Service's most important
> responsibilities, began before 1920 with nature guiding and the development of
> small museums; today, this function and architecture are inseparable. Every
> visitor facility in the National Park System is in some way related to
> interpretation, whether it is simply oral information at the entrance, a display or
> two in a shelter, a great exhibit hall, a viewing platform. One must complement
> the other and so some of the more interesting architectural work in the park
> Service is oriented to interpretation.[147]

As Koehler pointed out, the essence of many resources dating to Mission 66 is

interpretation, and this includes more than just the visitor centers. Observation towers,

for example, were another construction of Mission 66 which intimately tied design to

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[146] *Recent Past Preservation Network v. Latschar,* 701 F. Supp. 2d 49 (D.D.C., 2010).
[147] Robert Koehler, "Our Park Service Serves Architecture Well," *AIA Journal* 55, no. 1 (January 1971):
19.

interpretation and education. Writing about Clingmans Dome Observation Tower in

Great Smoky Mountain National Park, NPS Historian Cynthia Walton remarks that its

design was "indicative of the professionalization of interpretive services instituted by

Mission 66. The tower's main purpose is to engage and inspire visitors by allowing them

to view, unobstructed, the landscape of the Great Smoky Mountains."[148] McClelland

explains this idea further, indicating that the walls of the structure were designed to a

height that would allow visitors to have clear views over them, and the spiraling ramp to

the top would allow unobstructed and ever-changing panoramic views all the way to the

top, upon which, visitors could view 360 degrees of unobstructed views.[149]

In her book *Building the National Parks*, McClelland stated,

> Education took on particular importance in Mission 66. Through new visitor
> centers, information stations, publications, exhibits, campfire talks, conducted
> trips, roadside displays, and audiovisual presentations, Mission 66 endeavored to
> develop the informational and interpretive programs of the parks to help visitors
> enjoy the parks and use them wisely.[150]

It is this legacy from Mission 66 that both raises the need to interpret park stories, and is

also the interpretive message in this instance. Interpretation of these resources is

particularly challenging with regard to the visitor centers, which were built as the hub of

interpretive activities for the park. It is a convoluted task to interpret the center where

you go to receive interpretation, perhaps running the risk of over-interpretation; this

duality certainly presents challenges to interpreting these Mission 66 resources

effectively.

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[148] Cynthia Walton, "Clingmans Dome Observation Tower," National Register of Historic Places
Nomination Form, (Atlanta, GA: October 26, 2009), Section 8, page 19.
[149] Linda McClelland, *Building the National Parks: Historic Landscape Design and Construction*
(Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 471.
[150] Ibid., 465-466.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDIES

When Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in 1966, it implemented the most ambitious nationwide preservation program in the United States to date. Having conducted the Historic Sites Survey and the National Historic Landmarks program since the passage of the Historic Sites Act in 1935, the National Park Service had already developed a general framework for the documentation and preservation of nationally significant historic resources. As the harbinger of the federal preservation program, the National Park Service was a natural choice to develop the various programs and requirements outlined in the NHPA. Thus, the National Park Service established and oversaw the National Register program as well as the creation of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation and technical standards, including the Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The National Park Service continues to act as the preeminent preservation organization in the United States, operating survey and identification programs such as the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), and the Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS).

As provisions of the NHPA, Section 106 and Section 110 require federal agencies to identify, evaluate, and nominate any significant cultural resources within their agency. These provisions were a direct response to the practice of many agencies to disregard the historic resources within their own agency. For example, none of the NPS's structures,

facilities, or landscapes in the National Park System were considered for landmark designation, regardless of whether they were in a historic, natural, or recreational park until 1976. In November of that year, Director William Briggle wrote a memorandum indicating that "a resource whose primary significance is not related to its park's purpose can be designated a National Historic Landmark."[151] The following year, Director William Whalen expounded on the prior memorandum by issuing a directive which stated that "nationally significant historic properties in the System but not in historical parks and such properties in historical parks whose national significance is unrelated to their parks' primary themes are now eligible for landmark designation."[152] In conjunction with amendments to the NHPA, these directives began a slow, but enduring tradition within the NPS of evaluating its own agency resources.

Today, the National Park Service, like other federal agencies, is required to continually identify, evaluate, and register significant cultural resources within park boundaries, including properties built by and for the National Park Service that have subsequently become historic; this includes structures, facilities, and landscapes created by the agency in its nearly 100 years of existence. Writing of the developments of the late 1970s, Park Historian Barry Mackintosh wrote, "no longer would important sites and structures be denied public awareness of their national historical significance because they lay within national parklands."[153] Since the time of Mackintosh's writing, many of

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[151] Briggle to Regional Directors, memorandum, Nov. 8, 1976, Historic Resources Briefing Book, quoted by Barry Mackintosh, *National Historic Sites Survey and National Historic Landmarks Program: A History,* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1985), 96.
[152] Whalen to Washington Office and Field Directorate, Special Directive, 77-9, Oct. 26, 1977, ibid.
[153] Barry Mackintosh, *National Historic Sites Survey and National Historic Landmarks Program: A History,* 97.

the National Park Service's landmarks have been lawfully recognized through the National Register and National Historic Landmarks programs.

There is currently a small number of Mission 66 resources listed on or deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Three of these resources are also listed as National Historic Landmarks: the Quarry Visitor Center at Dinosaur National Monument, Wright Brothers National Memorial Visitor Center at Wright Brothers National Memorial, and Beaver Meadows Visitor Center at Rocky Mountain National Park. St. Mary Visitor Center, Logan Pass Visitor Center, and the Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop at Glacier National Park have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places for their architectural significance and affiliation with Mission 66. In addition to these resources, the Visitor Center and Cyclorama Building at Gettysburg National Military Park was deemed eligible by the Keeper of the National Register. The visitor center at Sitka National Historical Park and Salt Pond Visitor Center at Cape Cod National Seashore were also determined eligible for the National Register by their respective State Historic Preservation Officers; likewise, a nomination for Clingmans Dome Observation Tower at Great Smoky Mountain National Park has been deemed eligible by both the Tennessee and North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) and is currently under review in Washington, D.C.

For the purposes of comparison and analysis, the three "national parks" containing formally registered or nominated resources were chosen as case studies to examine the methods and messages currently in use to interpret Mission 66 resources. In addition to presenting a geographic range, the case studies were also chosen because the sites had interpretive materials available, or had other interpretive material on site, and

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therefore, presented opportunities for inclusion or expansion of interpretive efforts. In

order to examine and analyze these methods and messages systematically and equitably,

a list of questions were identified through which analysis and conclusions could be

drawn. The questions applied to each case study are:

- What factual information does the interpretation provide? (Examples include: architect, year built, modern architectural features, etc.)

- Does the interpretation provide audiovisual media related to the resource? What types of audiovisual media does it provide? Examples can include historic photographs of resource exterior, modern photographs of resource exterior, historic interior photos, contemporary interior photos, floor plans, elevations, architectural details, other historic photographs of events on site (i.e. groundbreaking, dedication ceremonies, grand openings, etc.), audio recordings, video clips?

- Does the interpretation associate the resource with the Mission 66 period?

- Does the interpretation contain factual information about the Mission 66 period? If so, what types of information about the period does it include? (For example, how long, purpose of campaign, etc.).

- Does the interpretation address or acknowledge multiple points of view regarding Mission 66 or its legacy?

- Does the interpretation acknowledge the resource as a National Historic Landmark or as listed or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places?

- Does the interpretation acknowledge the resource is a significant cultural resource (in the field of history, architecture, culture)? If so, what elements or aspects does it identify as significant?

- Does the interpretation relate Mission 66 or the resource to current resource management challenges?

Rocky Mountain National Park and the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center

Rocky Mountain National Park was established when Congress passed the Rocky Mountain National Park Act in 1915. Signed by President Woodrow Wilson, the legislation creating Rocky Mountain National Park (ROMO) indicated the territory was:

> dedicated and set apart as a public park for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States…with regulations being primarily aimed at the freest use of the said park for recreation purposes by the public and for the preservation of the natural conditions and scenic beauties thereof.[154]

Located in the north-central region of Colorado, ROMO is situated approximately 30 miles northwest of Boulder and approximately 60 miles northwest of Denver. Encompassing approximately 265,770 acres, the park protects a portion of the Front Range of the Southern Rocky Mountains and contains a "mixture of massive peaks, long ridges, and incised valleys."[155] The park includes Long's Peak, the only 14,000 foot peak in the park, and an abundance of ecosystems, from wooded forests to mountain tundra (Figure 5.1).

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[154] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Rocky Mountain National Park: Final Master Plan*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1976), 1, citing 16 U.S.C. 1 § 191.
[155] Ibid., 6.

Figure 5.1. Sprague Lake in Rocky Mountain National Park.[156]

While the park's management emphasis has historically been on the "perpetuation of natural processes," the park includes evidence of Native American inhabitants as well as remnants of nineteenth century mining, hunting, and ranching activity.[157] In addition to these groups, homesteaders and tourists began to flock to Rocky Mountain in the late nineteenth century. In order to facilitate tourists, several land owners developed lodges, trails, and campgrounds. The park was eventually established as a result of efforts by local lodge owners, most notably Enos Mills, a naturalist, nature guide, and friend of John Muir. Having moved to Longs Peak Valley in 1886, Mills spent the early twentieth century writing letters, conducting traveling lectures, and lobbying Congress to establish Rocky Mountain National Park. Backed by the Estes Park Protective and Improvement Association, a local conservation group, as well as the Denver Chamber of Commerce and other civic leaders, Rocky Mountain was eventually recognized as a national park

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[156] Rocky Mountain National Park, "Lakes/Waterfalls Gallery," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/romo/photosmultimedia/Lakes_Waterfalls_Gallery.htm (accessed February 27, 2011).
[157] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Rocky Mountain National Park: Final Management Plan*, 1.

just one year prior to the creation of the National Park Service. The resources present in the park at that time included the ranches, lodges, trails, and campsites of former or existing inhabitants.

Though somewhat remote, ROMO was not immune to the lack of funding and increased visitation pressures that spurred Mission 66; in fact, visitor counts in Rocky Mountain increased from 339,928 in 1945 (the conclusion of World War II) to 1,587,405 in 1956 (the commencement of Mission 66).[158] Therefore, Mission 66 had an active presence within ROMO. In addition to significant road construction and road improvements, ROMO also invested in other infrastructure improvement, like water and sewage systems. During the first four years of Mission 66, ROMO spent over three million dollars, largely on these types of infrastructure improvements.[159] The park also purchased inholdings (i.e. land and resources held by other entities within the park) during Mission 66; the purchased inholdings included Fern Lake, Bear Lake, and Sprague Lodges as well as other guest ranches, hotels, and chalets. Many of these were subsequently demolished to promote wilderness conservation.[160] Other notable improvements during Mission 66 included the construction of new ranch-style housing for park employees, improvements to existing campgrounds, and the construction of additional campgrounds. Moreover, the interpretive programs and facilities for interpretation at ROMO were overhauled. The biggest physical expression of Mission 66 at ROMO was the construction of three new visitor centers; these were the Kawuneeche Visitor Center on the west side of the park, the Alpine Visitor Center at Falls River Pass

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[158] Rocky Mountain National Park, "Park Statistics," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/romo/parkmgmt/statistics.htm (accessed February 8, 2011).
[159] Allaback, 184.
[160] Ibid.

high in the mountain tundra, and Beaver Meadows Visitor Center, positioned on the east side of the park, just outside of the park boundary.

Beaver Meadows Visitor Center was developed just outside of the park boundaries in an attempt to improve relationships with the citizens of Estes Park, a town just three miles from the park on the east side.[161] The visitor center was designed by Taliesin Associated Architects, a firm founded by Frank Lloyd Wright's apprentices and senior fellows. Completed in 1967, the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center (also known as Headquarters and the Administration Building, Figures 5.2 and 5.3) was a comprehensive structure, designed to house an amphitheatre, auditorium, offices, administrative spaces, lobby, information desk, and restrooms. The building was constructed of pre-cast concrete panels (Figure 5.4) with large pieces of embedded sandstone, expansive window walls, exterior balconies, exposed Cor-ten steel[162] (Figure 5.5), and concrete floors with a terrazzo finish. The Beaver Meadows Visitor Center does not appear to have received a lashing from critics of the 'new architecture' in the National Park Service like many other structures from the period, perhaps due to the 'organicism' or the project's connection to Frank Lloyd Wright.[163]

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[161] Allaback and Carr, "Rocky Mountain National Park Administration Building," National Register Nomination Form (Denver: National Park Service, September 1, 2000), 25.

[162] Cor-ten, a registered trademark of the United States Steel Corporation, is a weathering steel developed to obviate the need for painting. The steel alloy, designed to be low maintenance, forms a rust-like 'protective coating' when exposed to weathering for many years.

[163] No articles criticizing the building could be found in *National Parks Magazine*, where critiques of other structures were routinely given. Also, in Harvey Kaiser's *Landmarks in the Landscape,* Beaver Meadows Visitor Center receives high praise, despite Kaiser's other comments about the "architectural misadventures" and "regrettable legacies" of Mission 66.

Figure 5.2. Entrance to Beaver Meadows Visitor Center, 1999.[164]

Figure 5.3. Rear façade of Beaver Meadows Visitor Center, 1999.[165]

[164] Allaback and Carr, "Rocky Mountain Headquarters Building," National Register Nomination Form (Denver: The National Park Service, September 1, 2000).

Figure 5.4. Precast stone and concrete panels being hoisted by crane, 1965.[166]

Figure 5.5. Exposed Cor-ten steel frame structure, 1966.[167]

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[165] Ibid.

[166] Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: History of a Building Type,* 196.

The park offers several forms of tangible interpretation within the park. One is a wayside exhibit outside of the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center (Figure 5.6, Appendix B). The wayside identifies the architect and architectural firm responsible for design and construction of the visitor center (i.e. Tomas Casey of Taliesin Architects) as well as Frank Lloyd Wright's affiliation with that firm. The wayside also identifies several architectural features, including precast wall panels and the use of Cor-ten steel. With regard to visual media, the BMVC wayside provides two black and white historic photographs related to the BMVC. One photograph, dating to 1955, is of several of the architects who constructed BMVC, including Tom Casey and Frank Lloyd Wright; the other, dating to 1966, is of a construction worker moving one of the precast wall panels using a crane. A full color historic photograph shows one elevation of the visitor center, circa 1965. In addition, the wayside provides full color photographs of several architectural details, including the stone and concrete wall panel in relation to its surroundings, and the Cor-ten steel decorative elements on the exterior. While the wayside identifies BMVC as a National Historic Landmark for its "unique contribution to architecture in the National Park Service," it makes no mention of Mission 66 or BMVC's affiliation with the period. The wayside does mention that using precast wall panels was an "amazing new construction technique;" however, it does not affiliate this new technology with Mission 66 or the program's use of modern building techniques.

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[167] Ibid., 197.

National Historic Landmark

Beaver Meadows Visitors Center:
A Legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright

The Beaver Meadows Visitor Center reflects the legacy of one the world's most creative architects, Frank Lloyd Wright.

Park Headquarters - Beaver Meadows Visitor Center, circa 1965.

Tom Casey is seen here, top center, in a 1955 photograph as Frank Lloyd Wright, seated left, teaches his team.

After Wright's death the firm he founded, Taliesin Architects, designed the building you see before you.

Architect Thomas Casey, who designed the visitor center, was apprenticed to Wright. Casey incorporated many of Wright's design principals into its creation.

Today, the building is a National Historic Landmark in recognition of its unique contribution to architecture in the National Park Service.

Frank Lloyd Wright Design Principles

1. The building blends with the natural setting.

Look at the way colors and textures of the rock and steel complement the natural surroundings.

2. The building departs from traditional "box" architecture.

One hundred and one wall panels were precast on the ground and hoisted into place, an amazing new construction technique.

3. Materials are chosen for their weathering effects over time.

The weathering corten steel and moss rock have aged to a rich patina requiring almost no maintenance.

Figure 5.6. Wayside Exhibit outside Beaver Meadows Visitor Center (Courtesy Rocky Mountain National Park).

ROMO also developed a two page informational flyer, available upon request at the visitor center (Appendix C). This flyer contains similar information as the wayside, though it is lengthier and more thorough. The flyer indicates many basic facts about the building, including the dates of construction, the architectural firm responsible for design and construction, and once again, their affiliation with Frank Lloyd Wright. Within the text of the second page, the flyer identifies Casey as the "lead architect."[168] The flyer also describes many of the architectural features and building materials, for example "the long horizontal roofline, the projecting rock walls, ample use of glass and natural rock" among others. It indicates these features "show that the building is linked to the master

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[168] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Beaver Meadows Visitor Center and Headquarters," Rocky Mountain National Park Flyer, under "Interior Features."

architect [Wright]."[169] The second page of the flyer discusses interior features; it also

identifies elements of the structure's floor plan and how the design aspects relate to the

structures intended use by visitors. In essence, these elements are discussing the

interpretive vision of Mission 66, though this reference is not forthrightly stated. The

flyer provides a tremendous amount of narrative description of the features of the site,

primarily through the lens of Frank Lloyd Wright and his design principles.

With regard to visual media, two black and white sketches are included on the

flyer. One sketch is of the Cor-ten steel architectural ornament, the other is a perspective

drawing of the building's exterior. Neither sketch indicates where the sketches

originated. There is no mention of Mission 66, or BMVC's affiliation with Mission 66.

The flyer, like the wayside, also mentions that the BMVC is a historic resource; it

indicates, "Because of the building's connection to Frank Lloyd Wright, the National

Park Service is dedicated to preserving its original design elements. The building is

listed on the National Register."[170] Though not dated, the flyer was presumably prepared

in the period between the initial registration on the National Register as part of the Utility

Area Historic District in 1982 and the site's individual recognition as a National Historic

Landmark in 2001.

In addition to these tangible elements, Beaver Meadows Visitor Center and

Mission 66 receive "virtual" interpretation on the Rocky Mountain National Park

website. The park website is currently the only form of interpretation of the Mission 66

program and Beaver Meadows' relationship to the program. The information available

through the park website is, however, somewhat limited and is typically found within

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[169] Ibid., under "Exterior Features."
[170] Ibid., under "Interior Features."

other information about the park and its history.   However, the website does contain

information about the Mission 66 program, and the information provided draws

relationships between the program and improvements in Rocky Mountain, specifically.

The "History and Culture" webpage, for example, indicates that although the park was

established for "scenic and natural wonders" it still has "cultural treasures." It also

explains that,

> After World War II, with park visitation increasing across the country, the
> National Park Service implemented Mission 66, a nationwide development and
> improvement program. Rocky, like many parks, suffered from outdated facilities.
> Mission 66 brought new comfort stations, overlooks, employee housing,
> campgrounds, and visitor centers to Rocky Mountain National Park.[171]

The narrative continues by explaining that during the 1960s, Congress passed a number

of significant environmental laws to protect the American landscape, many of which have

affected the management of natural and cultural resources within the National Park. The

interpretation then adds that "every year, more cultural resources are identified and

protected in Rocky Mountain National Park. Today, a team of cultural and natural

resource specialists work together to protect the park's resources."[172]   On an affiliated

webpage, entitled a "Brief Park History," a more detailed explanation of the Mission 66

program and specific resources at Rocky Mountain National Park is given. On that

webpage, the NPS explains that during World War II visitation to the park declined

dramatically; however, an increase of baby boomers who visited in the years after the war

found the facilities outdated and in disrepair. It goes on to state,

> Congress agreed and soon approved the Mission 66 program, which aimed to
> improve facilities by 1966, the centennial of the National Park Service. A new
> kind of centralized facility, called a visitor center, sprang up in Rocky.   At the

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[171] Rocky Mountain National Park, "History and Culture," National Park Service,
http://www.nps.gov/romo/historyculture/index.htm (accessed February 5, 2011).
[172] Ibid.

new Beaver Meadows, Kawuneeche, and Alpine Visitor Centers, guests could watch a movie, talk to a ranger, and get oriented to the park.[173]

On the website, the NPS also briefly mentions Mission 66 and the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center in its "Timeline of Historic Events." On this webpage, the date 1955 is listed beside a text box indicating that in that year "National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth announces Mission 66, a construction program designed to bring the National Parks into modern conditions for increasing amount of visitors."[174] Later, 1968 is indicated as the year that the Beaver Meadows Headquarters building was completed. It adds that it was "declared [a] National Historic Landmark in 2002 as the only building in the National Park Service designed by the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture."[175] This is one of a few references to Beaver Meadows Visitor Center as a National Historic Landmark on the park website. Perhaps the most detailed explanation comes on the "Historic Buildings" webpage where in an initial paragraph, the NPS indicates,

> For much of the twentieth century, the National Park Service considered Rocky Mountain a natural park, and therefore management decisions aimed to return the landscape to pre-contact conditions. Though some buildings were protected, not until 1988 was the "natural" designation lifted and a new mandate towards historic preservation embraced. Since then, numerous park buildings have been restored or rehabilitated.[176]

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[173] Rocky Mountain National Park, "Brief Park History," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/romo/historyculture/brief.htm (accessed February 5, 2011).
[174] Rocky Mountain National Park, "Timeline of Historic Events," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/romo/historyculture/time_line_of_historic_events.htm (accessed February 5, 2011).
[175] Ibid.
[176] Rocky Mountain National Park, "Historic Buildings," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/romo/historyculture/historic_buildings.htm (accessed February 5, 2011).

The NPS explains that "historic buildings" are defined as those "on or eligible for the

National Register of Historic Places."[177] After a few paragraphs discussing resources

associated with ranching and tourism as well as several examples of rustic architecture

within the park, the NPS delivers the most extensive interpretation of the Beaver

Meadows Visitor Center on the website:

> In January 2001, the Secretary of the Interior designated the Beaver Meadows
> Visitor Center a National Historic Landmark, the highest historic designation
> reserved for just 2400 properties across the nation. Built in 1967, it is nationally
> significant for its contribution to the National Park Service Mission 66 program
> and for its embodiment of modern National Park Service architecture. Mission 66
> was a park building program that began in 1956. Its goal was to transform the
> National Park Service to meet postwar conditions, including modernizing visitor
> facilities. Beaver Meadows Visitor Center also embodies National Park Service
> modern architecture. Tom Casey of Taliesin Architects, a design firm started
> after Frank Lloyd Wright's death in 1959, designed the building. It exemplifies
> Wright's belief in organic architecture, which attempts to integrate a building into
> its surroundings. Taliesin Architects therefore continued the tradition of rustic
> design in Rocky Mountain National Park—utilizing modern materials—into the
> 1960s.[178]

While an informative review of BMVC and its relationship to Mission 66, the final

sentence identifies the structure as a part of the "tradition of rustic design" in Rocky

Mountain National Park. This sentence is interesting, as it is perhaps misleading at best,

if not wholly inaccurate. While building materials were certainly selected to blend with

the natural environment, the building is an example of Park Service Modern architecture

and is nominated as such; it is not "rustic," which embodies an entirely different set of

historical references and connotations.

Nevertheless, the webpage provides a succinct review of the Mission 66 program,

predominantly from a positive standpoint, and does not mention any negative reviews of

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[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.

the program. The interpretation available on the website does not specifically mention current resource management challenges, though it does recognize that Mission 66 was a response to resource management problems; it is possible that audience members could make a correlation between modern improvement projects in the park, and a current management struggles of the NPS. The website also interprets the current stewardship of cultural resources by resource specialists within the National Park Service through its discussion of identification and protection on the "History and Culture" webpage as well as the references to "restoration and rehabilitation" on the "Historic Buildings" webpage.

Glacier National Park: St. Mary Visitor Center, Logan Pass Visitor Center, and the Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop

Glacier National Park, the nation's tenth national park, was established in 1910 when President Taft signed a bill establishing the park as a "pleasure ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States."[179] Founded for "aesthetic, inspirational, and scientific values," the park includes high peaks, glacial valleys, alpine meadows, clear glacial lakes, and an abundance of plant and animal life.[180] Located in north-central Montana, Glacier National Park rests on the border with Canada and comprises in excess of one million acres of land.[181]

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[179] 16 U.S.C. 1 §161.

[180] Donald H. Robinson, *Through the Years in Glacier National Park: An Administrative History*, ed. Maynard C. Bowers (Glacier Natural History Association, Inc. and National Park Service, 1960), under "Chapter 3: History as a National Park," subheading "Mission 66," http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/glac/chap3.htm (accessed February 12, 2011).

[181] Glacier National Park, "Fact Sheet," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/glac/parknews/fact-sheet.htm (accessed February 12, 2011).

Figure 5.7. Hidden Lakes Area of Glacier National Park.[182]

Glacier, like many other national parks, was also initially inhabited by Native Americans, including the Blackfeet, Salish, and Kootenai. Eventually Europeans traveled to the area, first in a quest for beavers and pelts, and later to log, mine, and homestead. Mining operations ultimately ceased when it was found that the coal being extracted was of such low grade that it was not economically beneficial to continue extracting it.[183] When the Great Northern Railway traversed the area, it provided easier access to northwest Montana. By the turn of the century, an increasing number of settlers were developing small towns; as with many other parks, by the late nineteenth century, many travelers were noticing the unique scenic and geologic features. Citizens, such as George

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[182] Glacier National Park, "Glacier Scenics," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/glac/photosmultimedia/Glacier-Scenics.htm (accessed February 12, 2011).
[183] Donald H. Robinson, *Through the Years in Glacier National Park: An Administrative History,* under "Chapter 1: Discovery & Exploration," subheading "Voyage of the Steamer 'Oakes'," http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/glac/chap1.htm (accessed February 12, 2011).

Grinnell, began pushing for the creation of a national park. Grinnell, considered the father of the movement to establish Glacier as a national park, first came to the area in 1885. He returned frequently, studying the landscape, exploring Glaciers, and befriending many Native American tribes.[184] In 1901, he published an article in *Century Magazine,* entitled "The Crown of the Continent," extolling the virtues of the area and calling for national park status.[185]

Glacier National Park became very popular as a tourist destination in the early twentieth century; a number of lodges and chalets were developed by concessioners, such as the Great Northern Railway, who built a number of hotels and camps including permanent buildings at Two Medicine Lake and the Many Glacier Hotel in East Glacier (Figure 5.8).[186] In 1932, the park was declared the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, as the park adjoins Waterton National Park in Alberta, Canada. Though the designation was primarily a symbol of friendship between the two nations, formal resolutions were passed in both nations legislative bodies. The Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park was also inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 1995.

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[184] Ibid., under subheading "George Bird Grinnell."
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid., under "Chapter 3: History as a National Park," subheading "Glacier Park Hotel Company," http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/glad/chap3.htm (accessed February 12, 2011).

Figure 5.8. Many Glacier Hotel, looking west toward Grinnell Point, 1975.[187]

Though Glacier National Park was established in 1910, by 1956 it still "had no facilities for interpretation."[188] Therefore, three visitor centers were planned for the park during Mission 66. Of the three planned visitor centers, only two were actually constructed; these were the Saint Mary Visitor Center and the Logan Pass Visitor Center. In addition to the new visitor facilities, Mission 66 improvements in Glacier National Park included new park housing at both Saint Mary and West Glacier on the east and west sides of the park, respectively. Additional improvements in Glacier National Park included the construction of new utility and maintenance buildings, road improvements, and the construction of the Goat Haunt Ranger Station. Several concession buildings

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[187] Photographer Steve Boerner (West Glacier, Montana: Park Headquarters, Glacier National Park, July 1975, Photo no. 9459).

[188] Rodd L. Wheaton, "Logan Pass Visitor Center," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (West Glacier, Montana: The National Park Service, April 15, 2008) Section 8, Page 8.

were also constructed; these included the Rising Sun restaurant and the Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop.[189]

Saint Mary Visitor Center, Entrance Station and Checking Stations; Logan Pass Visitor Center; and the Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop are currently the only Mission 66 resources nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in Glacier National Park. All three structures were designed by Burt L. Gewalt of Brinkman and Lenon, Architects and Engineers of Kalispell, Montana. In each project, Gewalt adapted his designs under the supervision of Architect Harry Schmantz. Moreover, many of the designs featured similar construction techniques, building materials, and design elements. For example, both the Saint Mary Visitor Center and associated structures and the Logan Pass Visitor Center contained the use of stone embedded concrete walling, Glu-lam beams[190], and large window walls with mullions and muntins irregularly placed.

The Logan Pass Visitor Center, designed to provide orientation to visitors in the high country, was sited on Going-to-the-Sun Road on the site of the Park Service Rustic Logan Pass Checking Station, which was removed to make room for the structure. Though conceptualized in 1960, construction of Logan Pass Visitor Center did not officially begin until June 1963. This delay was the product of continual revisions, as the preliminary design was provided by Cecil Doty of the Western Office of Design and Construction (WODC); it was later given to the commissioned architect Burt Gewalt, who made additional design changes.[191] The structure was not completed until August 1966.

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[189] Ibid., Section 8, Page 8.
[190] Glu-lam is glued laminated timber, a structural timber product comprised of several layers of wood laminations glued together to create single, large structural timbers.
[191] Ibid., Section 7, Page 3.

In its finished form, the structure consisted of a main "exhibit building" and a stairway that lead to a "comfort station" (i.e. restroom facility). In all, the structure combined office functions with an auditorium, exhibit space, and restrooms. In addition to the multiple functions of the building, the emphasis on the flow of visitors in the design of its plan and several design elements made the structure a significant example of Mission 66 and Park Service Modern. These features included exaggerated gable roof over the main "exhibit building" and a long perpendicularly sloped roof canopy over the stairway leading to the "comfort station." It also featured window walls that provided expansive views of the mountain scenery beyond. The foundation was formed by concrete masonry and the walls were made of stone embedded concrete, which were intentionally kept very rough.

Figure 5.9. Original architect's drawing of northern elevations, c. 1963.[192]

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[192] Rodd L. Wheaton, "Logan Pass Visitor Center," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (West Glacier, Montana: The National Park Service, April 15, 2008).

Figure 5.10. Western elevations of Logan Pass Visitor Center showing upper building with original window glazing, c.1977. The windows have since been replaced, with regularized placement of muntins and mullions.[193]

Figure 5.11. Logan Pass Visitor Center, 2006.[194]

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[193] Photographer Betsy Graff, c.1977, Digital Image Database, Glacier National Park, in Rodd L. Wheaton, "Logan Pass Visitor Center," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (West Glacier, Montana: The National Park Service, October 14, 2008).

The Saint Mary Visitor Center, Entrance Station, and Checking Stations were designed and built in the years 1964-1965 and 1967-1968. Gewalt was not given a preliminary design for this structure and was therefore allowed to draw completely upon his own imagination. The visitor center is principally a one-story, irregular T-shaped structure with a dramatic sloping roof; it contains a small second-story with office space, and mechanical and projection rooms. The Entrance Station and Checking Stations are rectangular in plan and made of similar materials to the visitor center including concrete with embedded stone; they have similar rooflines and eaves overhangs of the main visitor center.

Figure 5.12. Northeast Elevation of St. Mary Visitor Center.[195]

[194] Photographer Rodd L. Wheaton, Ibid.

[195] Photographer Rodd L. Wheaton, "Saint Mary Visitor Center , Entrance Station, and Checking Stations," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (April 15, 2008).

Figure 5.13. Southeast Elevation of St. Mary Visitor Center.[196]

Figures 5.14 and 5.15. St. Mary Entrance Station (left) and Checking Stations (right).[197]

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[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.

Figure 5.16. Expansive windows at St. Mary Visitor Center revealing scenery beyond. These would not have originally been impeded by commercial operations.[198]

Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop is perhaps the most unique of these three nominated structures because it was designed as a facility for use by concessioners. Designed and constructed from 1964-1965, the building was constructed on a site selected by the NPS. It had originally been open space located between Going-to-the-Sun Road and the historic Lake McDonald Lodge. Drawing from the theme of the Swiss chalet, Gewalt designed the structure with a low gabled roof with clipped end gables. The coffee shop was built on a concrete foundation, and the walls were clad in cedar battens on plywood with wooden framed glazing and stucco panels. It also contained a roof structure supported by steel columns, which were exposed in some locations and enclosed within the wall structure at other locations in the building. Constructed

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[198] Ibid.

specifically to operate as a concessioner structure, the Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee

Shop is one of the rarer resource types constructed during Mission 66.

Figure 5.17. Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop Exterior.[199]

Figure 5.18. Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop Interior (Photo by Lon Johnson).[200]

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[199] Glacier National Park, "Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop Listed in National Register," National Park Service (November, 17 2008), http://www.nps.gov/glac/parknews/lake-mcdonald-lodge/coffee-shop-listed-in-national-register.htm (accessed February 9, 2011).

Glacier National Park also has one wayside exhibit interpreting one of its Mission 66 visitor centers. Located outside St. Mary Visitor Center at the park bus stop for the area, the wayside exhibit provides general park information, wayfinding, and an interpretation of the visitor center (Figure 5.19, full wayside Appendix D).

Figure 5.19. Top Portion of Saint Mary Bus Stop Interpretive Sign. Courtesy of Glacier National Park.

The wayside mentions the "architectural features" of St. Mary Visitor Center, and indicates that the features "like the roof line compliment and mimic the surrounding landscape." The wayside is visually appealing and contains a large, modern, color image

[200] Kurt Repanshek, "Glacier National Park Coffee Shop Honored For Its Mission 66 Style," *National Parks Traveler: Commentary, news, and life in America's Parks* (November 28, 2008), http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2008/11/glacier-national-park-coffee-shop-honored-its-mission-66-style (accessed March 3, 2011).

of the resource. Additional text affiliates St. Mary VC with Mission 66, and then

explains several other pieces of information related to Mission 66, including the general

time frame (i.e. 1950s; to be completed by 1966), and the purpose of the program (i.e.

build up visitor service infrastructure). The wayside includes an original quote, dating to

Mission 66, which is to "launch the Park Service into the modern age." The wayside also

indirectly mentions that the structure is historic: "In keeping with the historic nature of

the era, the building remains the original color." The wayside does not mention that the

visitor center is listed on the National Register of Historic Places; it is possible that the

wayside predates the building's inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places in

2008. The interpretive text addressing St. Mary Visitor Center concludes by indicating

that the visitor center is the main information portal for visitors entering the park on the

east side and hosts a variety of interpretive exhibits and programs. Though not directly

referencing current management practices or challenges, it does place the visitor center in

its proper context as an interpretation-based facility, dating to the Mission 66 period.

Interpretation of Mission 66 and its resources also has a virtual presence at

Glacier National Park. On the park website, a subset of the "History & Culture"

webpage, entitled "Places," opens with a large photo of St. Mary Visitor Center and a

caption that reads, "St. Mary Visitor Center, one of Glacier's 375 historic properties."[201]

The text then indicates that the parks historic buildings are listed on or eligible for the

National Register of Historic Places. The webpage text then explains the requirements to

be on the National Register (i.e. "significant to history in architecture, archaeology,

engineering or culture, and generally at least 50 years old.") It goes on to distinguish that

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[201] Glacier National Park, "Places," National Park Service,
http://www.nps.gov/glac/historyculture/places.htm (accessed February 9, 2011).

of the 375 historic properties, six are National Historic Landmarks, as they "possess

exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United

States."[202] On this webpage, the "National Register of Historic Places" and "National

Historic Landmark" text are linked to the official webpages for these programs.[203] The

webpage also includes links to learn more; one link is to search for resources by park or

resource name. An additional link directs the visitor to a site with additional information

about some of Glacier's NHLs and other historic structures at "Parkitecture in Western

National Parks" where rustic resources can be researched and learned about by park or

resource type; this online exhibit does not contain any information about Mission 66

resources.[204]

The only additional mention of Mission 66 on the Glacier National Park website

are catalogued news releases—including a news release announcing the listing of Lake

McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop on the National Register of Historic Places. The news

story combined this information with interior and exterior photographs of the structure.

An additional article announces that the "Park Visitor Centers Named to National

Register of Historic Places" and includes two color photographs of these visitor

centers.[205] These news articles are informative, but they could easily be considered as

providing pure information rather than interpretation; moreover, access to these materials

[202] Ibid.

[203] "National Register of Historic Places" links to http://www.nps.gov/nr. "National Historic Landmark" links to http://www.nps.gov/nhl/.

[204] National Park Service, "Parkitecture in Western National Parks," http://www.nps.gov/history/hpd/exhibits/parkitect/ (accessed February 9, 2011).

[205] Glacier National Park, "Lake McDonald Lodge Coffee Shop Listed in National Register," National Park Service (November, 17 2008), http://www.nps.gov/glac/parknews/lake-mcdonald-lodge-coffee-shop-listed-in-national-register.htm (accessed February 9, 2011), and National Park Service, "Park Visitor Centers Named to National Register of Historic Places," Glacier National Park (July, 15, 2008), http://www.nps.gov/glac/parknews/news08-34.htm (accessed February 9, 2011).

require significant 'digging' on the website by a user that is already aware of the resource name or other keywords.

Great Smoky Mountain National Park and Clingmans Dome Observation Tower

Great Smoky Mountain National Park (GSMNP) was authorized by Congress in 1926, though not formally established until 1934. Private citizens, school groups, the states of North Carolina and Tennessee, and the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund all contributed money to purchase land for the park, which was subsequently donated to the federal government. The enabling legislation of the park called for the land to be "set apart as a public park for the benefit and enjoyment of the people."[206] In 1998, the park's Government Performance and Results Act defined a more specific park purpose in its Strategic Plan, establishing that the park is to "preserve its exceptionally diverse natural and cultural resources, and to provide for public benefit from and enjoyment of those resources in ways that will leave them basically unaltered by modern human influences."[207]

Great Smoky Mountain National Park, comprising over 500,000 acres of land in the Southern Appalachian mountains, contains a tremendous amount of plant and animal species, including roughly 100 species of native trees, 1,500 flowering plants, over 200 species of birds, and over 60 species of mammals.[208] Named "Smoky" for the blue mist-like haze given off by its plant life, the park also consists of lakes, streams, waterfalls, fertile valleys, and old homesteads (Figure 5.20). GSMNP has also been recognized as

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[206] 16 USC § 403.
[207] 1998 Government Performance and Results Act 5-year Stratetic Plan Mission Statement, quoted in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Division of Resource Education, "Comprehensive Resource Education Plan," National Park Service (January 2001), 2.
[208] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Great Smoky Mountain National Park,* brochure (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2009).

an International Biosphere Reserve and a World Heritage Site for its remarkable

diversity. In addition to the natural resources of GSMNP, the park has a strong cultural

legacy that includes Cherokee Indian inhabitation and settlement by European groups in

the late eighteenth century. When the park was created in the early twentieth century,

many European settlers moved from their land, as it was included within the boundaries

of the new park. Others established land leases that allowed them to live out their life in

the park; upon their death, the land was ceded to the federal government. Both of these

cultural groups still maintain strong ties to the park, and physical evidence of both groups

is evident throughout the park, including one of the nation's largest collections of log

structures (Figure 5.21).[209] The Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians now inhabits a

reservation that borders the national park; and many residents of nearby counties have

ancestors who once lived in modern day GSMNP.

Figure 5.20. Scene from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, with famous mist-like haze.[210]

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[209] Ibid.

[210] Photo obtained from Great Smoky Mountain National Park, Division of Resource Education, "Comprehensive Resource Education Plan," National Park Service (January 2001), 4.

Figure 5.21. Example of log structures extant in GSMNP.[211]

Like other parks, Mission 66 was evident in GSMNP. Most notably, Sugarlands Visitor Center was constructed in a meadow just outside of Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Other visitor service improvements included the construction of an observation tower on Clingmans Dome, the highest point in the GSMNP as well as the State of Tennessee.

Constructed in 1959, the tower was designed by the firm of Bebb and Olson, Architects from Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The tower went through several design iterations and compromises before the final design was agreed upon. Constructed of reinforced concrete on site, the tower featured a flagstone pavilion at the base, and a concrete spiraling ramp supported by massive concrete columns. The tower terminates at a round base with a covered canopy, supported by a massive 45foot tall cylindrical column

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[211] Photographer Mary Ann Kressig, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Great Smoky Mountain National Park,* brochure (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2009).

(Figure 5.22). The tower replaced a wooden fire tower that dated to the 1920s; by the 1950s, the former tower was obsolete and posed a safety hazard. Though there were discussions of adding a fire cab atop the Clingmans Dome Observation Tower, the addition was ultimately ruled out, as the location was not going to be actively used for fire surveillance and the location had proven disadvantageous for doing so.[212]
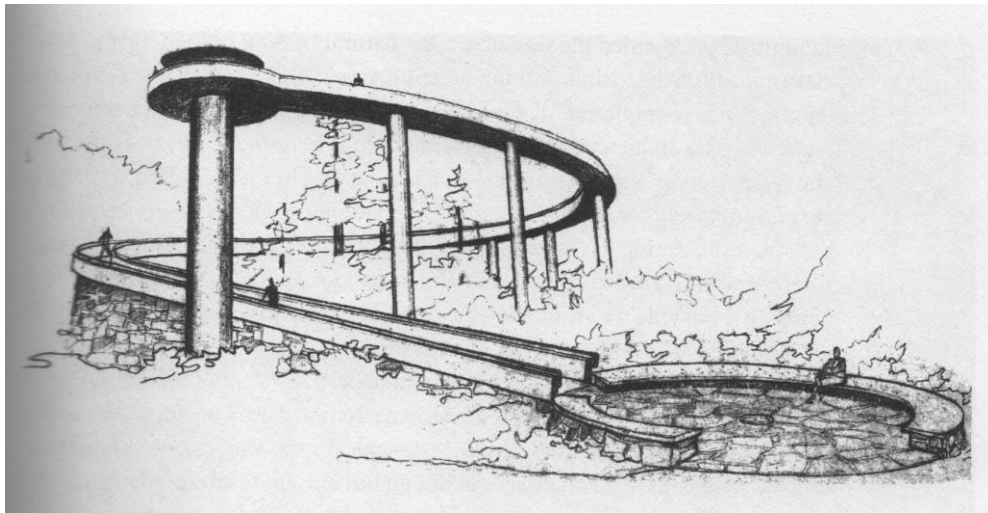
Figure 5.22. Conceptual Sketch of the Clingman's Dome Tower or "Skypost" in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.[213]

Once completed, the Clingmans Dome Observation Tower was just one of the Mission 66 projects that met with a number of conflicting responses, though the architects on the project felt it was appropriate (Figure 5.23). Herbert Bebb, the principle architect "explained that the tower's unprecedented design resulted from the architects' desire to creation a site-appropriate structure that could provide access for a growing number of visitors and be built using low-cost, readily available materials."[214] The Park

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[212] Cynthia Walton, "Clingmans Dome Observation Tower," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Atlanta, GA: National Park Service (October, 26, 2009), Section 8, Pages 11-12.
[213] Linda McClelland, *Building the National Parks,* 471.
[214] Ibid., Page 12.

Service commended it; according to Linda McClelland, the NPS praised its "sweeping free-flowing lines of contemporary architecture" and its "ability to move people quickly and safely, 'making it possible for visitors to enjoy the view as they moved up and down.'"[215] Despite this reception, many outside of the project ridiculed it. In an article in *National Parks Magazine*, Anthony Wayne Smith labeled the tower "flashy and conspicuous."[216] Other insults claimed the structure was "unnecessarily large" and "extravagantly expensive."[217] In the National Register nomination form, Cynthia Walton indicates that, "according to Conrad Wirth, criticism of Mission 66 revolved around two projects: Tioga Road in Yosemite National Park and Clingmans Dome tower in GRSM."[218]
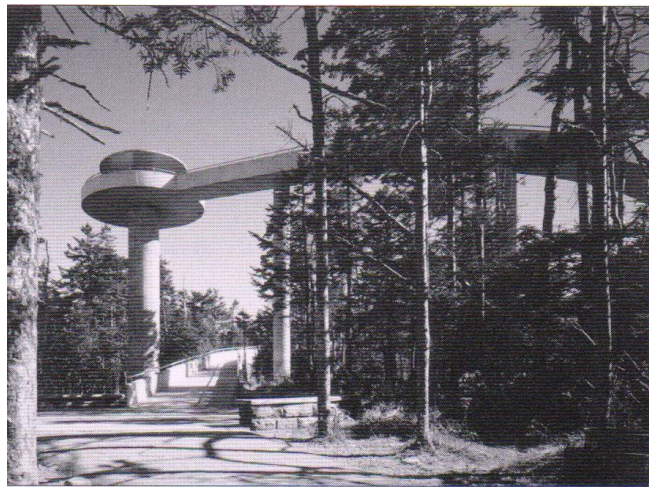
Figure 5.23. The Completed Clingmans Dome Tower[219]

[215] Linda McClelland, *Building the National Parks,* 472, quoting "A 'Sky-Post' for the Smokies," *National Parks Magazine* 33, no.137 (1959): inside front cover and Hubert Bebb, "The Architect's Rebuttal," *National Parks Magazine* 33, no. 139 (1959):16.
[216] Anthony Wayne Smith, "Clingmans Dome," *National Parks Magazine* 33, no.137 (1959): inside back cover.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Cynthia Walton, "Clingmans Dome Observation Tower," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Section 8, Page 15, quoting letters housed in the archives of Great Smoky Mountain National Park, Sugarlands Library, Clingmans Dome Observation tower correspondence box and in box 26, RG 79, National Archives, Mid-Atlantic Region, Philadelphia.
[219] Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Service Dilemma,* 301.

There is currently no interpretation available at Great Smoky Mountains National Park identifying Clingmans Dome Observation Tower as a historic resource, which could be at least partially due to the fact that the National Register nomination is currently under review in Washington, D.C. There are also no waysides or interpretive materials addressing Mission 66. There are, however, a number of interpretive signs on-site that interpret issues related to Clingmans Dome. An interpretive sign located at the base of Clingmans Dome Trail and the Clingmans Dome Tower identifies facts related to the site, such as the length of the trail climb, elevation at the top, and climate conditions at the summit of Clingmans Dome. Other resource management issues visible from the tower are addressed as well, including the loss of Fraser firs due to balsam woolly adelgids and air quality issues (Figure 5.24). Multiple signs at the top of the tower interpret the scenic vistas and what the visitor may see on a clear day, as well as what they are missing when it is foggy (Figure 5.25). These interpretive signs include the identification of peaks, landforms, and their respective elevations as well as a variety of additional interpretive messages.

Figure 5.24. Interpretive Sign at the base of Clingmans Dome Trail and Clingmans Dome Observation Tower.[220]

[220]"Clingmans Dome," photo taken by Ben Ramsey,
http://www.flickr.com/photos/benandliz/256908634/sizes/o/in/photostream (accessed March 1, 2011).

Figure 5.25. Interpretive sign on Clingmans Dome Observation Tower.[221]

There is also minimal virtual interpretation offered; only one page on Park

website currently discusses Mission 66. On a page entitled "Cultural Resources

&Archeology: April-May 2009," under the heading "Recording the present:

photographing culturally significant comfort stations," there is a brief explanation of a

project underway by GSMNP Cultural Resource staff members. According to the text,

many of the bathrooms or "comfort stations" in GSMNP are relics of Mission 66, a

"refurbishment period." It goes on to state that "during the 1960s, funds helped parks

around the country to build much needed infrastructure; many had not had new buildings

since the flurry of construction by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s." It then

notes that the visitor may notice similar architectural style and features like "low, stone,

and natural colors such as browns and tons" in the park housing, visitor centers, and

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[221] Photo by Rebecca DiSciacca, 2007, authors personal collection.

comfort stations of this era. The paragraph concludes by identifying a GSMNP Cultural

Resource Specialist who documented these comfort stations in the park.[222] This webpage

provides the only interpretation of Mission 66 or the types of resources in the park

affiliated with it; however, like the Glacier National Park news stories, the GSMNP

website is difficult to find.

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[222] Great Smoky Mountain National Park, "Cultural Resources & Archeology: April- May, 2009," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/grsm/naturescience/dff309-researchcultural.htm (accessed February 11, 2011).

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONCLUSIONS

As the case studies indicate, there is very little interpretation of Mission 66 or its resources currently implemented in the National Park Service. Tangible nonpersonal interpretation is limited to a handful of examples; many of those are not indicative of each resource's relationship to Mission 66, therefore missing a crucial element to understanding the resource's cultural, historic, and architectural significance.

Far more prevalent is the use of "virtual" or intangible interpretation through the National Park Service's websites and individual park websites. Individual websites and webpages provide a more comprehensive explanation of Mission 66 and its relationship to the park history and park resources; more could be done, however, particularly with regard to audiovisual media, which the virtual interpretations now lack. In addition to information related on individual park website, a wider range of online books and resources about Mission 66 are available on webpages hosted by the National Park Service; however, none of these are linked to the individual parks websites.

Though the challenges presented in Chapter Four certainly inhibit the interpretation of Mission 66 and Mission 66 resources, many opportunities still exist to interpret Mission 66 and its resources in the National Park Service. While current NPS policy favors the interpretation of primary purpose and significance themes within the parks; the policy also allows for the inclusion of Mission 66 interpretation through several avenues. Among other purposes, the 2006 *Management Policies* require that

every interpretive program is grounded in "park and Service-wide mission goals" using

the "park's tangible resources and the meanings they represent."[223] It also addresses

"resource issue interpretation" and indicates that "park managers are increasingly called

upon to make difficult resource decisions, some of which may be highly

controversial."[224] According to the 2006 *Management Policies*, interpreting these

resource-based issues allows opportunities for civic engagement as well as an open

dialogue about these issues and the broad initiatives within the National Park Service by

its constituents.[225] These ideas are reiterated in *Director's Order 6* which states,

> Interpretive and educational programs can build public understanding of, and
> support for, resource management decisions, and for the NPS mission in general.
> Therefore, parks should thoroughly integrate resource issues and initiatives of
> local and Service-wide importance into their interpretive and educational
> programs.[226]

The CIP process addresses these "resource-based issues" and designates a certain portion

of the final CIP to these topics (albeit with considerably less emphasis than park purpose

or significance themes). In the *Comprehensive Resource Education Plan* for Great

Smoky Mountain National Park, for example, "air quality," "the introduction of

extirpated species," and "exotic plants" are listed as resource-based issues. "Cultural

resource issues" is also listed, with the qualifier, "such as historic structures in Elkmont,

Cataloochee, and Cades Cove, archeological surveys."[227] The listed areas are those with

development predating the park and there is no specific mention of Rustic or Mission 66

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[223] National Park Service, *Management Policies 2006*, 90.
[224] Ibid., 93.
[225] Ibid., 93.
[226] National Park Service, *Director's Order #6: Interpretation and Education*, under "Requirements for all Interpretive and Educational Services."
[227] Great Smoky Mountain National Park, *Comprehensive Resource Education Plan*, 13-14.

resources in the document; however, these sections indicate the potential for future

inclusion of Mission 66 and similar resources.

It is also important to note that the interpretive planning process within the NPS is

not rigid; interpretation policy specifically addresses and includes a certain amount of

flexibility, stating that the interpretive planning process, in particular, should be goal-

driven and specific while remaining flexible.[228] Furthermore, interpretive policy

documents in the NPS address and encourage consultation with diverse constituencies to

"improve content and accuracy" and to "identify multiple points of view and potentially

sensitive issues." Consultation with knowledgeable parties is potentially one avenue that

will increase scholarship and input related to Mission 66 resources and modernist

resources. Similarly, the 2006 *Management Policies* specifically encourage the

development of partnerships with willing and able organizations with compatible

purposes, such as historical societies, museums, and colleges and universities, among

others. Partnerships are often made with cooperating associations that are non-profit

organizations dedicated to supporting park programs; however, these statements indicate

the potential to develop meaningful partnerships with knowledgeable organizations like

the Recent Past Preservation Network, DOCOMOMO US, and TrustModern, a

subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation that advocates for modernist

resources and preservation of the recent past.[229]

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[228] National Park Service, "Chapter 4: Interpretive Planning," under "Introduction," *Interpretation and Education Reference Manual 6*.
[229] Recent Past Preservation Network (RPPN) "promotes preservation education and advocacy to encourage a contextual understanding of our modern built environment." http:www.recentpast.org (accessed March 3, 2011). DOCOMOMO US is "the official working party of the United States for the international documentation and conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the Modern movement." http://www.docomomo-us.org (accessed March 3, 2011). TrustModern, is a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation that "challenges the nation to change how we view, steward, and preserve the

Mission 66 was a formative program in the National Park Service; it was instrumental in shaping the park landscape as well as the public concept of the national parks. As such, the program and its resource deserve interpretation that is not limited to the current brief sections of text or mentions on a wayside exhibit. While inclusion on waysides and existing signage is important, interpreting these resources through a variety of methods with a full range of messages would give all visitors the opportunity to more fully understand the parks and the park resources. Mission 66 was a dynamic program with a wide range of values and impacts on the national parks; the interpretive efforts geared towards its resources could provide a variety of messages about the scope of the program, ask meaningful questions of the visitor, and therefore appeal to the wide range of values held by those who visit the national parks each year.

From a practical standpoint, virtual interpretation provides perhaps the most promising method of interpretation of Mission 66 resources at this time. This method is cost-effective, does not contribute to a feeling of visual "overload" while on-site, and is linkable to information already produced and put online by the National Park Service. Moreover, it provides an ideologically appropriate way to interpret modernist resources through the use of modern technology. The use of "virtual" interpretation and technology is also heavily supported in interpretation policy. According to the 2006 *Management Policies,* the use of existing and emerging technologies can maximize both the visitor experience and employee effectiveness, and then calls on parks to use the Internet and other "virtual" programs to enhance informational, orientation, interpretive, and educational programs.

architectural and cultural heritage of the recent past before more landmarks are lost."
http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/modernism-recent-past/ (accessed March 3, 2011).

Though not currently being used for Mission 66 resources, the potential for "virtual" interpretation of resources is currently being used by several parks, including Glacier National Park. In Glacier National Park, for example, the use of eTours and eHikes allow people all over the world to become "visitors" to the park via their personal computers. eTours and eHikes are interactive, online interpretive exhibits that highlight historic resources and museums or various trails and natural areas of the park, respectively. In these virtual exhibits, "visitors" can access information about the natural resources and wildlife within the park as well as photographs, panoramas, three dimensional views, and video of actual interpreters discussing the resources. The virtual exhibits also allow 'visitors' to listen to the sounds of the trail, as if they were actually in the park and on the trails (Figures 6.1 and 6.2).
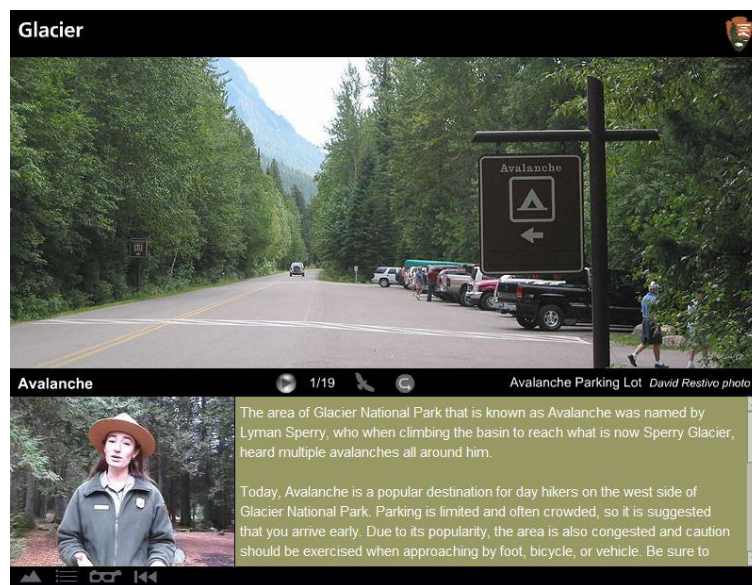
Figure 6.1. Screen Capture of Trail of the Cedars and Avalanche Lake eHike. Clicking on a video camera icon enabled video of an interpretive ranger seen in the lower left corner.[230]

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[230] Glacier National Park, "eHike: Trail of the Cedars and Avalanche Lake," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/featurecontent/glac/avalanche/avalanche_new.htm (accessed February 9, 2011).
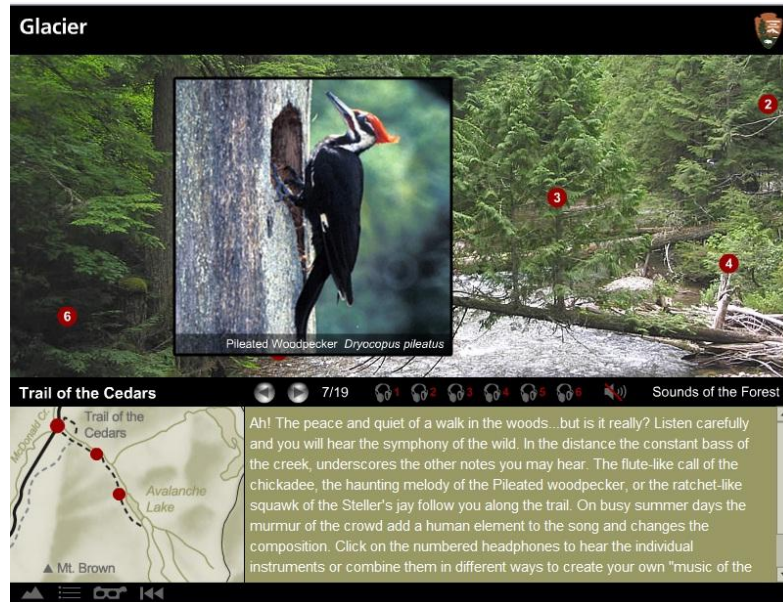
Figure 6.2. Additional Screen Capture of Trail of the Cedars and Avalanche Lake eHike. Numbers can be scrolled over to reveal images of wildlife and other aspects contained within the scene. Audio affiliated with each number can be played in any number of combinations.[231]

At Glacier National Park this technology has been extended to cultural resources, though an eTour that discusses the history of Going-to-the-Sun Road, a road constructed during the rustic period of landscape architecture and park construction. This interpretive exhibit allows visitors to see historic photographs, learn the progression of the road through time, and view historic videos (Figure 6.3 and 6.4).

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[231] Ibid.
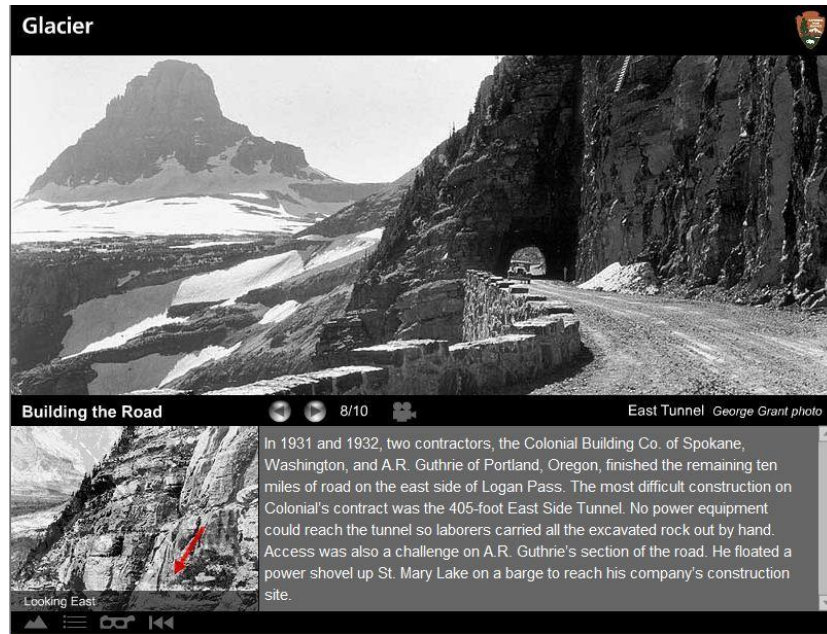
Figure 6.3. Screen Capture of Going-to-the-Sun Road eTour. The video camera icon and others can be clicked on or scrolled over to access additional videos, images, and relevant information.[232]

Figure 6.4. Additional Screen Capture of Going-to-the-Sun Road eTour, showing one of the interactive elements. Scrolling over the date "1918" reveals the road alignment in that particular year.

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[232] Glacier National Park, "eTour: Going-to-the-Sun Road," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/archive/glac/eHikes/gttsrhistory/gttsrhistory_final.htm (accessed February 9, 2011).

This general template, developed by Visual Information Specialist David Restivo of Glacier National Park, has been used at other sites such as Zion National Park and State of Liberty with similar success. The use of the eTour allows "visitors" to interact in a more much dynamic way than simply reading text, and is a cost-effective way to interpret and share information from park archives about these significant resources. Something quite similar could be done for Mission 66 resources with relatively little cost and effort on part of the parks. Elements that have been lost or changed over time could be effectively recaptured by the use of virtual technology as well. Parks with altered visitor centers that no longer allow for the intended flow could use this eTour template or other virtual technology to allow a visitor to 'move' through the space the way it was historically intended. At Beaver Meadows Visitor Center, for example, the cooperating association's bookstore has taken up spaces initially intended for views and interpretation, and several doors and outdoor balcony areas have been blocked off. Using historic photographs and a floor plan with an indicator of where a visitor is in the space on the virtual exhibit, a visitor could virtually travel through the visitor center as it was once intended to be used, thereby allowing the visitor to realize the interpretive value of the center's design.

Mission 66 resources present many opportunities for interpretation in the National Park Service. Mission 66 was an iconic period that brought many changes to the National Park Service, including not only new resources and resource types, but new parks and new park types as well. Many of the ways the public uses and views the National Parks is also a product of Mission 66; a scientific understanding of park resources and the relationships between resource communities; the shift to 'day use'

visitation of the parks, and the isolation of use and impact to designated high-impact areas are all legacies of Mission 66. Also, the dramatic increase of professional interpretive services, including professional development and training for park staff, and the creation of the visitor center as a one-stop location for all visitor services is an example of the far ranging impacts of the Mission 66 program.

The challenges that faced the National Park Service prior to Mission 66 are challenges that the park service is continuing to face and how they deal with those challenges is for our generation to decide. Carefully interpreting Mission 66 and a former generation's methods for dealing with these challenges is a powerful opportunity for the NPS to draw attention to the current challenges they face and the necessity for public involvement and public debate in order for the NPS to be the best it can be. If successfully presented, the NPS could show both the significant contributions and downfalls of Mission 66; then using similar current issues, including overpopulation (Figure 6.5), transportation problems (Figure 6.6), adjacent development and associated pollution, relationships between these two periods can be formed. Visitors will begin to understand how the issues of the 1960s and the resources that remain speak not only of an architectural legacy, but also the mindset and values that a prior generation held. This would certainly produce a much more engaged public.
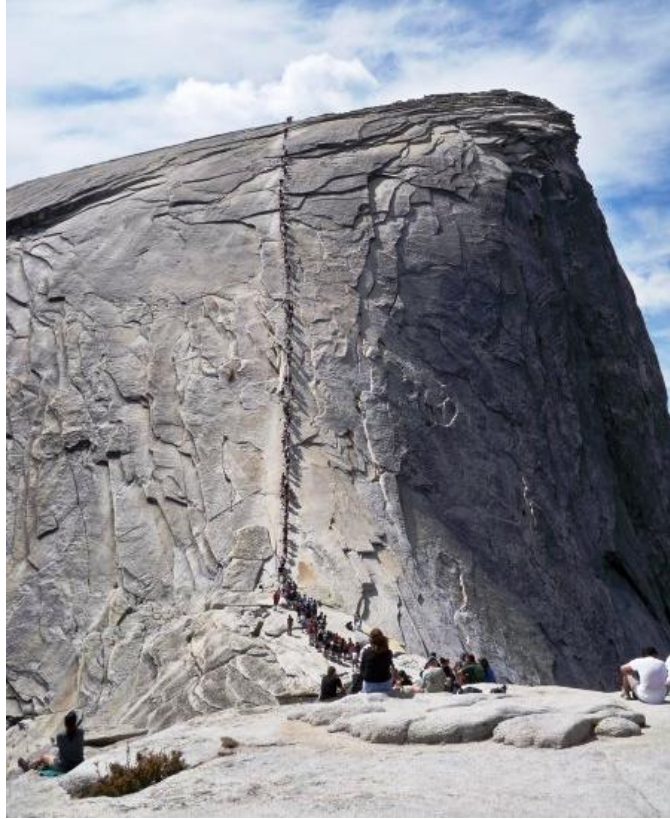
Figure 6.5. Line for the cables to the top of Half Dome, Yosemite National Park, 2009.[233]

Figure 6.6.Traffic Jam at Great Smoky Mountain National Park.[234]

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[233] Photographer Alex Vanotti, 2009, authors personal collection.
[234] Great Smoky Mountain National Park, http://www.nps.gov/grsm/ (accessed March 3, 2011).

The National Park Service is currently using several 'nonpersonal' methods to interpret a few Mission 66 resources; these include flyers, wayside exhibits, and 'virtual' messages provided on park websites. The messages contained within these interpretations typically recognize the resources as significant historic resources; however, the relationships between the resources and other NPS programs, such as the National Register of Historic Places or National Historic Landmarks, is not always addressed. More frequently, the resources' relationships to the Mission 66 program are not clearly addressed.

The interpretation of Mission 66 and its resources present challenges to the National Park Service, ranging from challenges facing all historic resources to those unique to Mission 66. Constructing interpretive stories and messages that are appealing and engaging to park visitors is always challenging; these are compounded by park policy that favors 'park purpose' and primary resource themes, a dearth of scholarly analysis, and a lack of acceptance of modernist structures within the National Park Service. These challenges are not insurmountable, however, and many opportunities are available, particularly in light of 'virtual' technology and the ability to formulate partnerships with organizations dedicated to preserving and advocating on behalf of the resources. By not fully interpreting these resources, the National Park Service is missing opportunities to discuss Mission 66 in a multitude of relevant ways. Mission 66 is an important event and era of park growth and development; it has dramatically shaped the National Park Service as the public experiences it today. Interpreting the program will give all visitors not only a greater understanding of NPS history, but will also highlight tangible resources related to resource management issues and the types of difficult management decisions made by

the National Park Service; in particular, Mission 66 resources provide the potential to

discuss modernism in the national parks, the management decisions of a former

generation, and the current treatment of these resources. Moreover, Mission 66 resources

present the opportunity for the National Park Service to identify meaningful issues and

themes related to problems currently plaguing the national parks, including

overcrowding, pollution, and sustainable development within the parks and in

neighboring gateway communities. As John J. Reynolds, former Deputy Director of the

National Park Service stated

> Stewardship remains a challenge today, even more than it was for the National
> Park Service's founders in 1916…Park managers are being asked to achieve an
> ecological balance and to manage cultural and natural resources effectively. At
> such a time, it is worthwhile to look backward and trace our progress in
> presenting and preserving nature's wonders. In so doing, we can appreciate and
> perhaps recapture the spirit, commitment and principles that guided park
> managers and designers earlier in this century. We can better understand and plan
> for the parks as both natural and cultural places. Above all, we will be better
> equipped to make decisions that will succeed in leaving the parks and the wonders
> they hold unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.[235]

Interpreting Mission 66 resources is perhaps one of the most meaningful ways to exhibit

historic park resources to these ends.

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[235] John J. Reynolds, *Building Our National Parks*, xxii.

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APPENDIX A

FREEMAN TILDEN'S PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

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

2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.

4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.

6. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentations to adults but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.[236]

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[236] Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 34-35.

BEAVER MEADOWS VISITOR CENTER WAYSIDE

National Historic Landmark

Rocky Mountain National Park
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Beaver Meadows Visitors Center:

A Legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright

The Beaver Meadows Visitor Center reflects the legacy of one the world's most creative architects, Frank Lloyd Wright.

Park Headquarters - Beaver Meadows Visitor Center, circa 1965.

After Wright's death the firm he founded, Taliesin Architects, designed the building you see before you.

Architect Thomas Casey, who designed the visitor center, was apprenticed to Wright. Casey incorporated many of Wright's design principals into its creation.

Today, the building is a National Historic Landmark in recognition of its unique contribution to architecture in the National Park Service.

Tom Casey is seen here, top center, in a 1955 photograph as Frank Lloyd Wright, seated left, teaches his team

Frank Lloyd Wright Design Principles

1. The building blends with the natural setting.

Look at the way colors and textures of the rock and steel complement the natural surroundings.

2. The building departs from traditional "box" architecture.

One hundred and one wall panels were precast on the ground and hoisted into place, an amazing new construction technique.

3. Materials are chosen for their weathering effects over time.

The weathering corten steel and moss rock have aged to a rich patina requiring almost no maintenance.

APPENDIX C

BEAVER MEADOWS VISITOR CENTER INTERPRETIVE FLYER

Rocky Mountain

Beaver Meadows Visitor Center and Headquarters

Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you. -Frank Lloyd Wright

If you've guessed that there is something special about the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center and building, you're right. Gracefully nestled into the surrounding landscape, the structure showcases the principles of America's premier 20th Century architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Constructed 1965-1966, the building was designed by Taliesin Associates, the architectural group founded by Wright to realize and extend his design philosophies.

The "Wright Stuff"	Those familiar with Frank Lloyd Wright designs will easily recognize his influence on this structure. His philosophy, which he termed "organic architecture," sought to blend buildings with their surroundings, drawing inspiration from nature while providing an ideal environment for living and working. Nature was Wright's most inspirational force. His respect for nature was expressed in abstract designs that were harmonious with the landscape.	Wright wanted to develop a style of architecture that was purely American. In 1885, as he began his career, he studied American society and its relationship with the natural world. He saw America as informal and independent. Rejecting the formal, box-like structures of the day, Wright created a style to fit America's character and landscapes. His designs included wide open living spaces-a style that changed American architecture.
Exterior Features	Several exterior features show that the building is linked to the master architect. The long horizontal roofline, the projecting rock walls, ample use of glass and natural rock, and the way in which the building appears to grow from the site are clues easily recognized by Wright aficionados. • The native sandstone that envelopes the exterior came from an old federal quarry near Lyons, Colorado. Taliesin architects were delighted to find these sandstone rocks which had been quarried in the late 1800s because they had acquired lichens and an aged patina. The warm color of the rock accented the bark of the surrounding ponderosa pines. • Huge frames were constructed on site to serve as forms for the rock panels. Sandstone slabs and aggregate	rock backed with steel rods and concrete were laid in the forms. Large cranes lifted the panels into place. One hundred one panels of various sizes and shapes were hoisted and carefully positioned. The largest, weighing 65,000 pounds, frames the front interior entry. • The choice of *Cor-Ten* steel for the supporting truss system proved an inspired choice. The unfinished surface of the steel was sandblasted to remove its rustproof patina and then it was allowed to weather naturally. It oxidized into the rich brown and purple shades that blend well with the sandstone and the surrounding landscape. • Large beams and stamped plates of weathered *Cor-Ten* steel form a collage of jagged triangles reminiscent of the surrounding mountain vistas. A triangular motif is stamped into the steel fascia of the building.
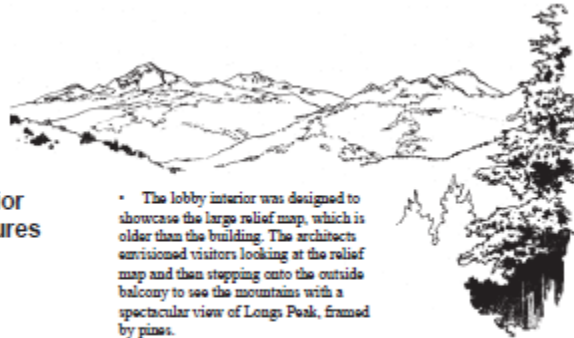
Interior Features

- The lobby interior was designed to showcase the large relief map, which is older than the building. The architects envisioned visitors looking at the relief map and then stepping onto the outside balcony to see the mountains with a spectacular view of Longs Peak, framed by pines.
- Walls of windows provide natural lighting and impressive views of the forest and mountains. A skylight window above the lobby frames a view of Deer Mountain.
- Notice the interesting shape of lobby. The angularity of the room, ceiling, and information desk were designed to provoke thought. Notice also that the external triangular motif I is repeated in the stamped fascia that houses the lobby's indirect lighting.
- Terrazzo floors, which Wright used during the 40s and 50s, occur throughout the building. Terrazzo is extremely durable but was very labor intensive to create. First a concrete layer was poured, and then bronze seams were layed, followed by a poured mixture of cement resin and stone chips. High-powered cutters and sanders were used to finish the floors to a smooth polish.
- The downstairs auditorium is entered by walking from a confined area into a larger space in the Wright tradition. Contrary to rumors, neither Anasazi kivas nor Navajo hogans were the source of the auditorium design. Rather, the octagonal shape complimented and pulled the design ideas together according to lead architect Casey. A rock fireplace adds to the ambience of the interior, intended to give the room a feeling of warmth on cool winter evenings.
- Pure Wright structures always included Wright-designed furniture and fixtures. The pinkish walls and orange color scheme were part of the design. A compliment of furnishings for the building included 40 orange benches for the auditorium and lobby seating, orange draperies, trash containers, and planters.

There is something special about the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center Headquarters building! Because of the building's connection to Frank Lloyd Wright, the National Park Service is dedicated to preserving its original design elements. The building is listed on the National Historic Register.

Wright's Influence

Wright ideas permeate our architectural world. Open floor plans, family rooms, garden rooms, decks, carports, and ample glass windows are Wright contributions. His designs favored long horizontal roofs, with sheltering overhangs, protruding walls, and cantilevers. His colors, textures, shapes, and materials were chosen to blend with the natural setting. Expanses of glass, which he called "light panels," connected the interior to nature and mimicked the soil natural light of the outdoors. Wright also liked contrasts-rough rock next to glass, small entrances opening into large spaces, and light areas next to dark ones. These principles are apparent in the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center Headquarters building, an invaluable aesthetic resource. This is the only Wright/Taliesin structure preserved within a National Park.

APPENDIX D

ST. MARY VISITOR CENTER BUS STOP INTERPRETIVE SIGN