

Sue Ellen Fast

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Experience

January 1998–present **Heritage Interpretation Consultant**, often with EcoLeaders Nature Interpretation and Environmental Education and/or Ann Finlayson and Associates.

Professional Development and Training

Executive Director, Interpretation Canada— a national association providing world-class professional development:

- national module training program update, underway
- initiated showcasing of IC Awards of Excellence winners, including video, 2013
- key roles in first online interpretation conferences in the world, design and launch of powerful contribution-friendly website www.interpscan.ca, addition of 150 searchable InterpScan articles, business directory, facebook page, jobs and events boards, 2012
- online training workshop including leading a session using video activities, 2011
- revitalization, community-building, administration, fund raising, program management
- *Needs Report: heritage interpretation in Canada*, Interpretation Canada, 2009

InterpScan—editor, journal of Interpretation Canada, 28 pages:

- transition to digital format from print, underway
- “one of the most interesting of interpretive trade journals in the world” Sam Ham, 2008
- solicit content, write, edit, produce and distribute, 2001–present

Interpscan.ca—editor, website of Interpretation Canada, hundreds of web pages, postings, and resources:

- *online community building, moderating, development, sub-administrator*

Classes and conference sessions, panels, keynote and guest speaking and training seminars, including instructor for:

- *Masterclass - Interpretive Planning*, University of the Highlands and Islands, UK, 2007
- *Regional Spring Training*, Parks Canada Atlantic Region, 2004.

Heritage Interpreter Workbook (first edition)—designed for distance learning. Assists interpreters through self-directed study and associated training to achieve professional development and certification based on national occupational standards. Canadian Tourism Human Resources Commission, 1998.

First place award from the US National Association for Interpretation, interpretive training products category, 1999.

Planning and Needs Assessment

Heritage Appreciation Development Plans—brand new or updated plans for interpretation and environmental education. Includes comprehensive foundations reviews.

- Interpretive Master Plan for Prince Albert National Park—2011
- Fish Creek District, Alberta Parks—2008
- Rouge Park, Rouge Park Foundation, Metro Toronto. 2007
- Beaver Hills Region, Alberta Parks, 2004
- Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park, Alberta. 2002–2003

Statewide Needs Assessment for Environmental Education and Interpretation—staff at state parks and forests, fish hatcheries and wildlife areas were interviewed or surveyed. Recommendations were presented in a strategic plan format. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, USA, 2000–2001.

Eco-Education Program Review and Recommendations—for a province-wide in-school program. Program staff took action as a result of the review, with strategic planning and training in 1999. British Columbia Ministry of Environment, 1998, 1999.

Interpretive Products

BICS Teaching Trails—environmental education curriculum includes grade-specific learning excursions along nearby trails with trail map/focus sheet brochures and activity equipment. Bowen Island Community School, West Vancouver School District, British Columbia, 2002. Award: Interpretation Canada

Weed Watch Videos—a series of short videos broadcast on provincial television network and posted at www.weedsbc.ca/resources educate viewers about invasive weeds in various ecosystems. On-camera host, research, script writing, edit and design recommendations. Open Learning Agency, British Columbia, 2001.

Other Interpretive Plans and Trail Signs—Salmon Watch Panels, Bowen Island Fish and Wildlife Club, 2003. Fort to Fort Trail, Township of Fort Langley, British Columbia, 2003. Elsie King Universal Access Trail, Capital Regional District Parks Department, Victoria, British Columbia 1999.

June 1996–November 1997,

August–December 1994 **Television Host and Writer** for *Nature Walk* television series, SOMA Television, Richmond, BC; www.naturewalk.ca

This documentary television series consists of 52 half-hour episodes filmed in natural areas across Canada, the United States, Central America, Hawaii and U.S. Virgin Islands. During spring 1996, *Nature Walk* was watched by more than 150,000 viewers per week. Broadcast on Life Network (Canada), Knowledge Network, (British Columbia), Outdoor Life Network (USA), Cable in the Classroom (Canada). The series has collected twenty national and international film and video awards.

- recommendations about series concept and design
- researched sites, created story lines and planned filming with each director
- wrote script and interviewed guests
- on-camera host
- assisted in post-production

June 1989–May 1996

Park Interpretation Specialist, West Area, Greater Vancouver Regional District Parks, British Columbia

Developed and managed interpretation and education services for the relatively new parks in west area upon decentralization. Attendance in west area interpretive programs rose to 7,700 and revenue rose to \$13,000 during my tenure. 90% of respondents rated their satisfaction in the top two of six categories.

- initiated the Pacific Spirit volunteer program, a positive involvement phase during development of the system's first partnership group
- developed educational partnership projects
- participated in special event planning and delivery, specializing in community group involvement

- facilitated production of maps and visitor information, wrote, designed and produced interpretive signs and brochures and wrote material for local natural history publications
- recruited, trained and led a team of 3-4 interpretive staff
- participated in west area park management team
- prepared and managed budgets, fee schedules and supervised a few contracts
- contributed to system-wide interpretation and education services management

January 1987–June 1989 **Chief Naturalist**, John Janzen Nature Centre, Municipal Parks and Recreation Department, City of Edmonton, Alberta

A major facility managed by the City of Edmonton, a leader in community involvement and partnership. Volunteer involvement and environmental education approaches were key aspects. During my two years of management of all programs and events, attendance increased by 37% to pass the 100,000 mark and program revenue increased by 25% to \$67,000. Included programming for the city's extensive river valley park system and other extension.

- offered a broad spectrum of services from awareness level through to stewardship involvement and leadership opportunities
- initiated, developed and managed major partnership extension programs
- worked in partnership with other environmental and educational agencies and non-profit groups
- recruited, selected, trained, evaluated, and coordinated a team of up to 12 staff and 20 volunteers
- assisted the Edmonton Nature Centres' Foundation and prepared grant funding proposals
- participated in budget decisions (goal-based budget process) and all planning
- participated in fee schedules and programming schedules, key indicators and other evaluation, marketing plans, revenue projections, booking procedures for 7000+ bookings and registrations annually and more
- managed special events for attendance of approximately 17,000 annually
- participated in exhibit, educational and publicity materials design and edited all text

Sept. 1985 –Dec. 1986 **Interpreter**, John Janzen Nature Centre, Municipal Parks and Recreation Department, Edmonton, Alberta

- prepared and presented a range of programs including free public activities and demonstrations, audio-visual programs, courses, paid group programs and family field trips
- participated in long-range planning and program design
- conducted training sessions for outdoor leaders

May 1985–Sept. 1985 **Visitor Services Supervisor**, Cold Lake Provincial Park, Alberta

- developed, presented and administered programs
- supervised three novice nature interpreters
- designed and directed monitoring programs for a western grebe colony and a bluebird nesting trail.

Oct. 1984–March 1985 **Project Manager**, Edmonton Nature Centres' Foundation, Alberta

- designed and wrote natural history brochures, trail guide, and retail booklet as a successful fund raising venture (precursor to Lone Pine's *Birds of ...* series)
- coordinated production and printing of the above
- managed and supervised a three-person writing team.

- May 1982–Sept. 1984 **Interpreter**, Cold Lake Provincial Park, Capital City Recreation Park, John Janzen Nature Centre, Alberta
- prepared and presented public programs
 - coordinated and trained staff and volunteers
 - assisted with publicity, statistics and reports
- May 1981–April 1982 **Wildlife Biologist**, Wildlife Branch, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- studied the effects of development on lakeshore wildlife and habitat in Ontario
 - designed and wrote environmental education pamphlets, press releases, and reports
- Summers 1977–1980 **Research Technician**, Great Lakes Forestry Research Centre Institute, Yukon Wildlife Branch, Canadian Wildlife Service
- examined the effects of cutting history on boreal songbird populations and plant communities in Northern Ontario
 - studied impact of pesticides on boreal populations of songbirds, invertebrates, and small mammals in Northern Ontario and Quebec
 - sampled arctic and alpine vegetation for inventory of caribou winter habitat

Education

University of Guelph

Guelph, Ontario

Bachelor of Science (Honours Unspecialized)

Emphasis on wildlife biology and management

University of Alberta

Edmonton, Alberta

Courses in interpretation, recreation research and park planning

Community and Volunteer Involvement

Recent: 2011 Community Stewardship award from Islands Trust, Chair of municipal Greenways Advisory Committee

Past: Chair of municipal OCP Update Steering Committee, President of Bowen Island Conservancy, Co-chair Cape Roger Curtis Trust Society, member of MetroVancouver Parks Partnership Forum, municipal Sustainability Working Group, coordinator for Collinsia Organic Farm Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, advisory board member *Journal of Interpretation Research*, Bowen Island Parks and Recreation Commissioner, start-up manager Collinsia Organic Farm, long-past executive of Vancouver Natural History Society, Edmonton Natural History Club, Federation of Alberta Naturalists, Interpretation Canada Alberta section, Alberta Museums Association Training Committee, Alberta Environmental Education Network.