

## *Principle Three:*

### *Make Sites and Programs Come Alive*

As leisure time dwindles and competition continues to increase in the tourism industry, looking for creative ways to bring your heritage or cultural attraction to life becomes even more important. Keep in mind that today's visitors are more sophisticated and well traveled than previous generations, adding to the challenge of drawing visitors to your cultural or heritage attraction.



To attract visitors, the experience that you offer must be compelling and should engage as many of the visitor's five senses as possible. Studies have shown that visitors remember:

- ❖ 10% of what they hear
- ❖ 30% of what they read
- ❖ 50% of what they see
- ❖ 90% of what they do

Today's travelers are looking for experiences that...

- ❖ **Engage all five senses** — At a minimum, provide opportunities for visitors to ask questions and make comments about their own knowledge and experiences. Demonstrations, or better yet, hands-on activities for visitors will ensure a memorable experience. Special events can be a manageable way to provide experiences such as living history, reenactments, performances, candlelight tours or other interactive activities at certain times of the year.
- ❖ **Reveal what happens “behind the scenes”** — Who is the artist, and how do they create their art? What went into designing the exhibit or performance? How was this historic building restored to its former glory?
- ❖ **Relate to their own personal experiences** — When experiencing historic homes or areas, how does this compare to the ways we live today? How is this area like (or different from) the area where the visitor lives? A good tour guide will find out where visitors are from and what they are interested in and tailor the tour experience accordingly.
- ❖ **Relate to a larger historical context** — How does a heritage experience fit into the larger context of local, regional or even national history?
- ❖ **Make them think**— Rather than providing all the answers, use the experience to pose questions. What do you think...? Can you imagine...? Can you find...?

