# LIVING MEMORY AND THE INTERPRETATION OF HERITAGE
Developing a multimedia interactive to record and store personal stories for use in heritage interpretation and research

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Abstract

The voices and stories of local communities help tourists to better understand the places they visit. Oral histories, stories and community associations are also important aspects of heritage significance. These stories enliven the presentation of heritage sites and create connections between past and present.

This project funded by the STCRC and Derwent Valley Council develops a Living Memory Interpretation Module to enhance visitor experiences at Heritage Tourism sites in Australia. The project develops a cost-effective and manageable tool for communities to shape the presentation of their heritage. It also gives visitors access to community stories and allows them to record their own responses and experiences.

The project includes a suite of guidelines for the replication and management of the module at heritage properties throughout Australia.

Acknowledgements

SUMMARY

Objectives of Study

The study aimed to develop a digital interactive to enrich visitor experiences at heritage tourism sites. The purpose of the interactive is to:

- Produce a cost-effective and manageable tool for communities to shape the presentation of their heritage
- Increase opportunities for visitor participation in site interpretation and experience
- Provide a mechanism through which locals and visitors could record personal stories
- give visitors access to community stories
- Produce an archive of engaging stories to use in the interpretation of heritage sites
- Allow visitors to contribute to site interpretation and heritage assessment by recording their own stories

The study further aimed to develop a suite of guidelines to allow heritage tourism operators (and heritage managers) to operate a similar interactive module at heritage sites throughout Australia.

Methodology

The project was undertaken through a combination of methods including:
- A review of literature relating to memory, history, heritage and place
- A case study of the Willow Court heritage site at New Norfolk, Tasmania; including site visits, interviews and discussions
- An evaluation of an existing interactive at the National Museum of Australia
- Extended industry interviews with curatorial staff of the National Museum of Australia

Further elements of the project method included working with designers and software developers to develop a new interactive software interface.

Key Findings

The project identified:
- New opportunities to engage memory in the interpretation of heritage both to enliven visitor experiences and to enhance significance assessments
- Limitations and opportunities to use interactive technology to record personal stories
- A means to standardise narratives across heritage sites to enable them to be shared through an archive of living memory

These findings informed the subsequent development of:
- A new software package to manage the interactive
- Guidelines for installing and establishing a Living Memory interactive at a heritage site
- Guidelines for the management, storage and use of material created through the interactive

Future Action

The project identifies a number of future actions including:
- The development of a saleable kit for distribution to heritage tourism operators and managers
- Options for additional application including outdoor use in natural heritage areas, a tool for heritage assessment and research, the production of saleable souvenirs
- The development of a national archive of living memory to be shared through web based technology and partnerships between local, state and national institutions

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The voices and stories of local communities help tourists to better understand the places they visit. Access to local knowledge and perspectives are regarded as highly desirable tourist experiences. At the same time, oral histories, local knowledge and community associations have gained recognition as important aspects of heritage significance. Recording and accessing these stories is therefore of potential mutual benefit to both heritage conservation and heritage tourism. They are an important aspect of fully understanding heritage significance, and in a tourism context enliven the presentation of heritage sites. In both instances they create connections between past and present.

This project funded by the STCRC in partnership with Valley Vision, Derwent Valley Council develops a Living Memory Interpretation Module. This module is designed to enhance visitor experiences of heritage tourism sites in Australia. The module is delivered through consideration of a case study which includes the redevelopment and heritage tourism development of a nineteenth century asylum in New Norfolk Tasmania.

Objectives

The project set out to develop a new way of incorporating local stories into the interpretation of heritage sites, and at the same time providing an interactive through which visitors could contribute their own knowledge and stories to the living memory of the site.

The project thus sought to meet what are often regarded as competing needs of both heritage conservation and management and heritage tourism.

The aim was to produce a cost-effective and manageable tool for communities to directly contribute to the presentation of their heritage. It further aimed to gives visitors access to those community stories and to allow them to record their own responses and experiences.

These aims were addressed through the development of a digital interactive which aimed to:
- Increase opportunities for visitor participation in site interpretation and experience
- Provide a mechanism through which locals and visitors could record personal stories
- Give visitors access to local community stories
- Produce an archive of engaging stories to use in the interpretation of heritage sites
- Allow visitors to contribute to site interpretation and heritage assessment by recording their own stories

The study further aimed to extend its findings to other sites in Australia through the production of guidelines for the replication and adaptation of the interactive at other heritage properties. This suite of guidelines would allow heritage tourism operators (and heritage managers) to operate the interactive at heritage sites throughout Australia.

Industry Reference Group

Projects funded by the STCRC have a strong focus on industry needs. The project was conceptualised within a field of application, and generated through discussions between researchers and industry. To ensure the project met these objects, an Industry Reference Group (IRG) was established to provide advice on key aspects of the project. The IRG was not involved in the day-to-day running of the project, but provided advice and suggestions at key points of the project. The IRG monitored progress and helped to communicate the outputs to industry.

Figure 1: Research visit to Willow Court: Left to Right: Simon Ancher, Celmara Pocock, Marion Stell, Ian Brown, Julia Crozier, Sophie Jensen, Lucy Frost (Photo by Katrina Higgins)

Method

The project was developed through a variety of methods, with a particular approach developed in each of the core stages. These included:

- A review of literature relating to memory, history, heritage and place to provide the theoretical and research contexts for the project
- A review of personal history and storytelling in the context of heritage tourism
- An analysis of the use of themes in historical research and practice
- A case study of the Willow Court heritage site at New Norfolk, Tasmania; including site visits, interviews and discussions
- An evaluation of an existing interactive at the National Museum of Australia
- Extended industry interviews with curatorial staff of the National Museum of Australia

The research team further worked extensively with designers and software developers to develop a new interactive software interface and to identify issues for the set up, installation and maintenance of such a system at heritage sites.

Figure 2: Research Team at Willow Court Barracks (Photo by Katrina Higgins)

Chapter 2

MEMORY, HISTORY, HERITAGE AND TOURISM

The past decade has seen the emergence of a developing field of research in 'memory studies' and the widespread adoption of the term memory within cultural history (2000: 128, Pillemer 2004: 151). The word 'memory' increasingly appears in titles of books, papers, journals and conferences as a means to enliven existing historical topics, debates and discussions. Its popularity and effectiveness can be partly attributed to the way memory is understood in everyday language. In this way 'memory' appears to be more personal and warmer than an objective or dry term like history or heritage, and memory thus invites people to engage with the past. Klein (2000: 129-30) suggests that memory helps to draw 'general readers into a sense of the relevance of history for their own lives'.

For these same reasons, the use and extension of memory studies into heritage tourism has great potential; to enhance visitor experiences, engage new audiences and build stronger synergies between heritage tourism and heritage management.

However, it is important that the term memory is not simply adopted at a superficial level without understanding how it has been defined and used in related contexts. It is impossible to make reliable and informed use of memory in any academic sense without first understanding what memory is. This chapter presents a review of recent and emerging research and theoretical perspectives on history and memory and considers the implications for heritage assessment and interpretation as well as application in heritage tourism contexts.

What is Memory?

Academic discussions of memory have their foundation in the disciplines of philosophy and psychology. And it is from these discussions and definitions that other disciplines, like history, anthropology and geography, have taken their cue (Olick and Robbins 1998).

Memory can be conveniently divided into 'explicit' and 'implicit memory' in which explicit memory refers to those memories that can be accessed verbally by the subject, and implicit memory is memory without awareness.

According to philosophy three distinct types or varieties of memory can be described:

1. 'habitual' or 'procedural' memory, a form of implicit memory that includes embodied skills like walking, typing or playing golf.
2. 'recollective' or 'episodic' memory which is explicit memory that incorporates personally experienced events and episodes.
3. 'semantic' memory, a form of explicit memory that can recall 'facts', for example acknowledged data about the world we live in like names of places and dates.

The first two are most important for this study.

Recollective Memory, Memory Traces and Habitus

Of most obvious relevance to this project is the type of memory that is recollective or autobiographical memory. But even here not all memory is direct. As the philosopher Sutton points out we can non-experientially remember facts about our own life – such as the date and place of our birth – which can't possibly be real memories. Rather, it might be argued that these are indeed a form of semantic memory.

Autobiographical memory connects our present self with our own particular past actions and experiences. Built into our common sense concepts of memory is a reliance on the existence of some kind of 'memory trace' connecting past and present (Sutton 2004: 4). This association of ideas through memory traces suggests that

memories can be triggered by such actions as looking at a photograph or re-reading a diary to access some static, permanent, distinct storage that experiences leave within our brain (Sutton 2004: 3-4).

Significantly for this study, implicit memory can therefore be seen to play an important role in autobiographical memory. Habitual memory is encapsulated in the concept of 'habitus' – an idea that is highly influential in the social sciences (see Bourdieu 1977). Bourdieu identifies habitus as both embodied practice and perception. The knowledge of embodied practices only exists through the actions of individuals, and the interactions between them and between them and their broader environment. Thus it is possible to suggest that the habitual memory can be created and recalled through the embodied interactions between people and the environment.

Remembering

As outlined, memory can be triggered by any number of external events, objects, actions or environments. Equally important, however, is the ability of individuals to remember events without any traces in their current external environment.

Interestingly, to explain how memory operates within the brain we commonly use metaphors associated with archives or repositories. Memory is represented by the language of imprinting, engraving, copying, coding or writing on the brain. In recent years these metaphors are increasingly digital. We interchange the language of computers or digital photographs to model the internal processes of the brain and vice-versa. These analogies assume that if traces of memory are stored and somehow triggered by later events, it is possible to simply transfer them from one archive (the brain) to another (a computer database). In such a model the expectation is that memory will remain consistent and reliable over time. But unlike the contents of a computer file which will usually remain exactly the same between shutting down and rebooting (Sutton 2004: 9), human memories are much more mutable.

Unlike a computer switched off overnight, the brain is never actually switched off. Rather, 'various kinds of reorganization and realignment happen to the information retained in [the] brain' (Sutton 2004: 9). As such human memories are dynamic. They constantly change and reorganise themselves as we filter them through other events, beliefs and contexts. As a consequence the memory will seldom contribute a consistent and static series of data with each interrogation.

History and Memory

Surprisingly, in 1964 the word 'memory' verged on extinction in the social sciences having been overtaken by other terms including 'remembering', 'learning', 'forgetting' and 'retention' (Klein 2000: 131). It wasn't until the 1970s that academics outside psychology began to pay attention to memory. And it was Holocaust studies in particular that utilised the term 'memory'. The Holocaust specific usage of memory persists, and according to one historian, 'Memories not defined by trauma are likely to slide into nostalgia' (Klein 2000: 139).

Despite this lingering meaning, the word memory quickly lost its strict academic association with 'Holocaust memories' and entered wider popular and academic usage.

Memory is increasingly popular not only because readers can more readily consume and understand the term, but because memory itself is the 'stuff of everyday life'. Laqueur (2000: 2) suggests that memory makes 'the past more democratically accessible [and] more inclusive'. Cultural and social historians are concerned with exposing everyday and un(der)represented histories. The capacity of memory to reach and represent the invisible or marginal is a strong motivator in the adoption of memory in history. The elasticity of 'memory' allows historians to more easily include the dispossessed, especially historically marginalised social groups like Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, the poor, the insane, illiterate, women, ethnic minorities, children and so on. Other fields of history and approaches have also sought to engage with these groups, but memory has gained pre-eminence for its ability to be used as an overarching category.

> *'For years, specialists have dealt with such well-known phenomena as oral history, autobiography, and commemorative rituals without ever pasting them together into something called memory. Where we once spoke of folk history or popular history or oral history or public history or even myth we now employ memory as a metahistorical category that subsumes all these various terms'*

> (Klein 2000: 128)

With the common twinning of history and memory, it is easy to forget that memory and history were once placed in sharp opposition to each other. As with other objective-subjective binaries that contrast the rational and emotional; the masculine and feminine; nature and culture, the binary between history and memory is a trope in which the "organic" flow of memory is contrasted with the historian's more or less calculated accounts of the past. Traditional historiography gave greater (even exclusive) priority to written documents which appeared 'less amenable to distortion and thus preferable to memories' (Klein 2000: 130). More recently social and cultural historians have challenged these nineteenth century notions with regard to the infallibility of the written record and have turned to other sources to reveal hitherto hidden pasts.

With the rise of memory studies, the idea that memories are a dubious source, especially for the verification of historical facts has largely been lost (Klein 2000: 130). Nevertheless, there remains if not doubt about the value of memory, certainly a need to verify the reliability of information that comes from such sources. Griffiths (1996: 197) suggests that 'history is the discipline of memory', but that as such it maintains a 'strange, oppositional relationship to memory and constantly exercises that discipline against it'.

Debates about the validity of memory in history, are paralleled in earlier and continuing arguments about the reliability of oral history. All historical sources – documentary, pictorial, oral or digital – originate from autobiographical, unstable or malleable foundations. They all need to be validated in light of the broader context, the degree to which elements may be changed and the degree to which they can be substantiated or challenged by other evidence of a similar or different kind.

Individual and collective memory

Despite the growing popularity of memory within history and other disciplines, many commentators (over)simplify critical concepts. For instance, there are significant tensions in discussions about individual and collective memory, but these distinct categories tend to be collapsed into one. This is especially the case in relation to heritage sites.

Some scholars controversially claim that there is no such thing as 'individual memory' and that the only real memory is 'collective memory'. Collective memory is a general term used to characterise patterns of behaviour in particular social groups. Gedi and Elam (1996: 4) suggest, somewhat sceptically, that collective memory is 'something that is supposedly behind myths, traditions, customs, cults, all of which represent the "spirit," the "psyche," of a society, a tribe, a nation'. They go on to suggest that collective memory occupies the space we once termed 'myth' (Gedi and Elam 1996: 6). However, collective memory as a cultural category is somewhat reminiscent of Bourdieu's ideas about habitus and perception. For Bourdieu, practices that appear second nature are in fact varying human characteristics determined by different historical and cultural settings. In this sense it becomes possible to see that collective memory might encapsulate both explicit and implicit forms of memory.

If, however, collective memory is understood in this way, then it is critical to understand that collective memory is not an aggregation of a number of individual memories (Gedi and Elam 1996: 6). As Karl Mannheim suggests, '[w]e cannot jump straight from the general observation of individuals and their psychic mechanisms to the analysis of society. The psychology of society is not a million times that of an individual…' (Mannheim cited in Confino 2001: 99).

Young (1993) argues that, '[i]ndividuals cannot share another's memory any more than they can share another's cortex'. This interpretation might suggest that where collective memory is implicit, then individual memory is explicit. This has particular implications for remembering. Funkenstein (cited in Gedi and Elam 1996: 4) argued that, '[j]ust as a nation cannot eat or dance, neither can it speak or remember. Remembering is a mental act, and therefore it is absolutely and completely personal'. Hence for some scholars it is individual rather than collective memory that is paramount.

Despite such opposing – even contradictory – views most historical studies highlight the social or cultural aspects of memory or memorial practice' (Klein 2000: 135). Many argue that collective memory only exists on a metaphorical level and so permit it to co-exist with individual memory. Gedi and Elam (Gedi and Elam 1996) point out, however, that even those who commonly use the term 'collective memory' seldom subscribe to the underlying theory and express 'instinctive reservations'.

Griffiths articulates such reservations when writing about social memory in Australia:

> *'It is most suspicious to historians when [memory] ceases to be personal and becomes communal, when it reaches back beyond a lifespan and becomes handed-down rather than actually lived. It then offers itself as history, but it is neither recollection nor research'*
>
> (Griffiths 1996: 197)

In a similar vein, Klein (2000: 136) warns that memory has become a subject in its own right, free to range back and forth across time' and, that with 'the elevation of memory to the status of historical agent … we enter a new age in which archives remember and statues forget'.

Memory loss

> *We speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left'*
>
> (Nora 1989: 7)

Nora identifies a sense of urgency that characterises current discourse surrounding memory. He suggests that the popularity of memory has arisen from the 'acceleration of history' – the general perception that anything and everything may disappear (Nora 1989: 7).

> *'What we call memory is in fact the gigantic and breathtaking storehouse of a material stock of what it would be impossible for us to remember, an unlimited repertoire of what might need to be recalled'*
>
> (Nora 1989: 13)

In this way, it can be argued that the current preoccupation with memory is fetishised. Nora (1989: 13) suggests that we are attempting 'the complete conservation of the present as well as the total preservation of the past'. He argues that 'as traditional memory disappears, we feel obliged assiduously to collect remains, testimonies, documents, images, speeches, any visible signs of what has been' (Nora 1989: 13). Davis and Starn (1989: 3-4) similarly argue that memory is an 'index of loss', a 'substitute, surrogate, or consolation for something that is missing'. As a consequence, 'every object – even the most humble, the most improbable, the most inaccessible – [is promoted] to the dignity of a historical mystery (Nora 1989: 16-17).

The assumption is that as the present passes ever more quickly, it can be retrieved as the past, and 'somehow resuscitated'. Nora warns that in placing such heavy emphasis on the material of memory, we delegate the responsibility of remembering to the archive. The irony is that in our concern about memory loss, the act of remembering – and the capacity to remember – may be forgotten.

Disremembering

Forgetting is itself a significant aspect of memory. It is important to note that remembering selectively is not the same as forgetting (Confino 2001: 96).

Forgetting, like memory, has a strong association with Holocaust studies (Young 1993). In Australia, unsurprisingly, it has a strong association with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories. Disremembering is a term used by Hunter (2000) in drawing attention to the resonances (stopping short of equivalence) between the genocide of the Holocaust and Aboriginal genocide:

> *'In Australia, a cult of disremembering' is how Stanner (1979) described the "great Australian silence" – by which the surviving Indigenous people of this land were 'disappeared' from the consciousness of most Australians until recent decades'*
>
> (Hunter 2000: 7)

'Disremembering' is also important for heritage sites – those associated with less palatable parts of our histories. While thanatourism or dark tourism may highlight these aspects of history – they can also sterilise or trivialise significant and devastating events and experiences of the past. Perhaps even more commonly less savoury aspects of our history may simply be overlooked. This is particularly pertinent to the case study site Willow Court and a wider society that continues to disremember the insane. We are also left with the continuing question as to what aspects of our society and past that we continue to disremember.

Memory, Social Significance and Heritage Places

In parallel with these shifts to consider memory as a critical element of historical study and interpretation, heritage practices increasingly recognise the need to give greater emphasis to community and cultural values in significance assessments. The traditional reliance on architecture, history and science (archaeology) to determine the importance of heritage sites is challenged by those who advocate 'social significance' as an integral aspect of the assessment process (Byrne, Brayshaw, and Ireland 2001, Johnston 1992, Pocock 2002a, Pocock 2002b). Over the past decade heritage practitioners have regarded social significance as an integral means to incorporate a greater range of cultural perspectives, and to give marginalised groups an avenue through which to have their histories, cultures and values recognised in heritage (Byrne *et al.* 2001, Harrington 2004, McIntyre-Tamwoy 2002, McIntyre-Tamwoy 2004, Pocock 2002a, Pocock 2002b). Pocock has also advocated social value as a means through which to recognise everyday knowledge and ways of knowing place, though argues for the need for systematic and substantiated interpretation of these sources (Pocock 2002a).

While memory may be regarded as a meta-historical category, memory is barely considered a valid concept in heritage assessment. At most it is presumed to be a contributor to social significance, rather than being explicitly recognised as a valid concept or recognised category of significance in its own right. This apparent disinterest in memory within heritage is something of a paradox.

Influential French historian Pierre Nora (Nora 1989: 22) asserts that history attaches itself to events, whereas memory attaches itself to sites. For him '[m]emory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images and objects' (Nora 1989: 9). Similarly Bender (2002) suggests that landscapes provoke memory. For this reason, cultural geographers and others, have widely used Nora's argument that memory attaches to sites, both to concrete and physical sites that embody tangible notions of the past as well as to non-material sites like festivals and celebrations, identifying an 'inextricable link between memory and place' (Hoelscher and Alderman 2004: 348). And tourism research points to the importance of souvenirs as tangible markers or triggers for memory (Morgan and Pritchard 2005).

As such memory is broadly recognised as being an integral aspect of place (Casey 1996). Heritage practice is assumed to be – and claims to centre on – the conservation of places. It might therefore be inferred that memory plays an important role in the assessment of heritage significance. However, this is not the case. Perhaps it is because heritage practitioners tend to use the term place very loosely (Pocock 2007) that memory has been overlooked.

An assessment framework developed by Lucy Frost is a notable exception in that it considers memory as an indicator for assessment of the cultural environment. It is significant to note, however, that this innovative cultural heritage assessment procedure was based on indicators drawn from the assessment of natural heritage (Frost 2003, see also Nazarea 2006).

The sites of memory described by Nora (1989: 12) – museums, archives, cemeteries, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries' – are site types often associated with heritage and with heritage tourism in particular. While the heritage field is becoming increasingly enamoured with concepts of intangible heritage, in the case of memory, at least, the intangible is interconnected with and reliant on the tangible. It is the scale and speed with which modern development transform physical environments that pose the most immediate threat to heritage. And it is primarily by way of the nexus between the tangible and intangible that memory and other intangible heritage is most impacted.

Within heritage assessments there is therefore a greater need to consider how memory plays a role in significance, and in understanding both physical and 'intangible' heritage.

Implications for heritage tourism

It is the personal qualities of memory that make it an appealing exploration for the interpretation of heritage and application to heritage tourism in particular. Tourism research suggests that visitors increasingly wish to experience the local, and create their own experiences of tourist destinations. The recollections of locals can provide the kinds of experiences desired by tourists, and the engagement of visitors through their own experience and memory creates opportunities for this interactive and self-created experience.

Chapter 3

MEMORY AND STORYTELLING

The previous chapter outlines some of the complexities of working with and understanding memory and its relationship to heritage sites. Despite some of the inherent issues with relying on memory as a historical source, individual memories have great potential to engage new heritage audiences, and to contribute to our understanding of heritage significance.

In the next phase of the project it was necessary to establish a mechanism through which to shape memories into stories that can be used to enhance public understandings and appreciation of heritage sites. We were particularly concerned to identify a means to ensure that memories would be communicated in an engaging way that connects between individuals and between individuals and places. To this extent the project aimed to develop a process of two way exchange – one in which both locals and visitors could contribute personal stories to produce a body of stories that could be accessible to all.

The project sought to develop a template or filter to guide narrative structures, to ensure that stories are relayed in the most evocative way possible.

Story Telling Structures

The translation of memories into storytelling has much in common with oral history. However, in the context of recording oral history, this translation is guided by the interviewer. A skilled interviewer can direct and guide an interviewee while still allowing the subject to tell their own story in their own words. They can lead the interviewee away from commonly known versions of events. They can ask questions that provoke new perspectives and revive recollections that have become flattened through frequent repetition.

In the absence of an interviewer, however, subjects must rely on their own sense of what is important to tell their stories. In the context of this project, all story contributions will be made through a self directed recording of personal memories. There is no provision for an interviewer or other person to be present to guide their contribution. To the contrary, the project is centred on a digital interactive that allows people to contribute their own stories without the need for additional staffing. Consequently it is important for the project to develop a structure that can guide users in what aspect of a story they might tell and how they can tell it.

In asking people to contribute their own stories, there is a need to provide a framework that allows contributors to construct meaningful and focused stories from their memories. People find it difficult to tell their own stories without a context. It is difficult to tell a story without knowing the audience or understanding why a story might matter. Consequently a vital step in this project is to develop a context for story telling.

Chronology

Without guidance narrators will often rely on the most common story telling structure – that is of chronology. Chronological structures predominate storytelling in our society – from drama, film and fiction to history (Sternberg 1990). By starting at an arbitrary point or beginning and following a sequence of events memories become flattened into sequential accounts. Authors of history, drama, film scripts and novels plan chronological structures. To different degrees, and using their own expertise, they will each decide the most critical elements of the chronology; slow and hasten certain events, ignore particular characters and times, to create a flow that is relevant and engaging. However, individuals have varying capacity to structure and tell stores. Many individuals telling their own story in a new context for the first time may not exhibit this same skill. Instead every event or chronological period may be presented as equally significant. This means that the captivating and unique parts of individual memories can be buried within a much more mundane account that is neither useful to understanding heritage nor engaging for an audience.

Another problem that unfiltered chronological storytelling raises is that the time taken to tell a story in a unilinear manner becomes itself time consuming. Without great skill in construction, chronological storytelling is often lengthy. This is problematic when the time available for telling and listening to stories is limited, as in the case of a visitor experience. Time has to be managed in providing an interactive in a visitor experience such

as that proposed by this project. But in limiting the time available to the user – contributors are even more at risk of not including the more interesting or relevant aspects of a story, and listeners are more likely to be bored by the repetitive nature of stories that begin and progress in a predictable way.

People will inevitably return to some form of chronological storytelling – and chronology can itself be a motivating impetus to continue listening – the idea of what happens next? Or what happened at the end? However, it is imperative that chronology should not be the principle driver in structuring contribution. Unplanned chronologies should be avoided because they are not conducive to producing short and meaningful contributions.

The development of a framework for narratives therefore needs to provide a structure that allows contributors to move beyond chronology, or to focus particular parts of their chronology, so that their story can make a unique contribution. At the same time, the structure should provide the security necessary for individuals to feel comfortable in contributing their story and understanding where it fits within the broader context.

Heritage Sites, Memory Traces and Context

As we have seen in the previous chapter, memory traces can be found in the surrounding environment. These traces act as triggers for individual memories, which comprise the multiplicity of stories and associations that contribute to significant places. The associations between memory and place can be harvested for associated memories if an appropriate context is provided.

The interactive module in this project seeks to actively exploit the associations between memory and place. As a site-based model it seeks to evoke visitor memories through association with heritage sites. The site provides the geographic and physical context for contributors' story telling. By being in or at a heritage site, visitors may remember a story associated with the place. In this sense direct personal experiences and memories of the site in question will be the primary form of memory. For first time visitors, these experiences may be the immediate ones of visiting the site. For others there may be multiple associations with the site. A single individual may have a range of local experiences such as a family association, as a local resident or previous worker at the site. And the same local may be further linked to the site through tourism as an operator or employee, or even as a tourist visiting alone or accompanying other tourists to the site.

The interpretation offered at a particular site may provide additional contextual triggers for visitor memories. Interpretative themes or objects may resonate with experiences at the site as well as other times, places and events. These may serve to generate directly associated memories and indirect memories. Those stories that are not necessarily directly related to the site, may nevertheless serve to link the site to national or global historical themes.

In both instances, the association between the physical environment and individual memories provides the motivation for people to contribute their stories through the interactive module. The physical context of the site is therefore a critical element in the effectiveness of the interactive module. The site itself can provide contributors with a context and focus for their storytelling.

History, Myth, Place and Heritage

As outlined above, Griffiths (1996: 197) and others share concerns about using memory that 'ceases to be personal and becomes communal' as a valid form of historical research. For historians these kinds of memories are unsubstantiated and myth like. In the context of heritage and heritage tourism, however, myths may be less problematic than they are for the historian. This is not to say that historical veracity is not fundamental in the assessment of historical significance. To the contrary, historical significance is closely aligned with, and determined by, accepted historical research methods. However, for many people these communal memories or myths are an important aspect of places. In this way, myth-making is an important aspect of place making, and it is arguable that myths are part of the social significance of heritage places (Pocock, Collett, and Knowles In Prep).

Engaging Stories

Beyond the physical context which might encourage participation in the recording of memories, the module needs to ensure that contributions are meaningful. While memories can be recollected independently of triggers in the surrounding environment, more memories are likely to be evoked where there is a trigger. As discussed, the site context is a critical trigger. Beyond the site context there is a further need to shape the memories in a way

that is most useful for the purpose at hand – that is to enliven visitor experiences of heritage sites.

For the structure to prompt memories and enliven individual storytelling there is a need for an additional set of triggers. These are not so much memory triggers like the site provides, but rather narrative triggers that can mould and shape the transition from personal memory to engaging story.

Changeable Memory

One of the main challenges for historians working with memory is its highly mutable qualities. The same person may recollect or communicate a memory in a completely different way on different occasions. Some of the influences that effect what is remembered and what is deemed to be significant in a particular situation include both social and physical contexts. These may include memory traces within the physical environment, and the associations between people and places, as outlined above. Memories are further modified by intervening periods during which related and unrelated experiences, emotions and events can impact on how something is remembered.

While this capacity for memory to be formed and reformed through different contexts and associations is problematic in evaluating memories as a valid historical source, the variety and diversity of storytelling associated with recollection makes it a highly attractive and potent mechanism to provide engaging visitor interpretation.

Importantly, in heritage tourism contexts, remembering is influenced by interactions between individuals and groups of people. These include behaviours of others and interactions that develop through site visits. Visitor experiences – and hence memories – are effected by the responses and experiences of the individual visitor and those around them. This applies to visitors who have chosen to visit a site together as a group and for visitors who happen to be present with others at a particular time. The experiences and reactions of fellow visitors can impact on how the site is experienced and how memories are recollected and recounted.

In a tourism context human interactions include interpersonal interactions between visitors and interactions between visitors and site interpreters (whether physically present or not). In other words site interpretation can be read as another human influence that impacts on perceptions and shapes recollections. This is an important consideration for this project which aims to structure, shape and encourage contributions based on personal or autobiographical memory.

The project can use site interpretation to actively influence how memories are recollected, ordered and shared. This is not the same as prompting content in the form of events or dates, but to filter the way in which they are recalled. An element of the structural context therefore includes an interpretive element.

Interpretive Themes

Themes are a common tool used to sort, categorise and interpret history and heritage. As such they have the potential to provide a filter through which visitors might contribute their personal stories.

The kind of themes used to categorise heritage sites are often chronological, functional or typological. Research previously undertaken for the STCRC suggests that themes can also be evocative and engaging (see Stell, Pocock, and Ballantyne 2007).

Stell *et al.* (2007) identified a broad suite of innovative themes that can be used to reinterpret and enliven heritage tourism sites in Australia. While thematic development requires considerable knowledge of underlying topics and chronologies, the resultant themes developed by Stell *et al.* are broad and flexible enough to be used in a broad range of contexts. By focusing on evocative and experiential themes rather than functional or chronological ones, it is possible for a single topic or story to be told through multiple themes. It is this aspect of non-chronological and non-functional themes that has greatest relevance to memory based story telling. As memories are influenced by surrounding environments, events and experiences, there is a strong advantage in being able to represent the same set of empirical facts through different themes or filters.

While the themes developed by Stell et al have many significant advantages, they were nevertheless developed for a different context, and are not immediately applicable to the current project. It was intended that the 'Essential Australia' thematic framework would be interpreted and implemented by professionals in the heritage and/or tourism industries. The implementation of a suite of themes requires a prior knowledge of the range of topics that need to be covered in relation to the interpretation needs of a given site. In the context of this project a thematic approach would need to be predetermined, succinct and applicable to a broad range of heritage tourism contexts. It is also important not to overwhelm the user with choice, but to provide a readily digestible set of themes.

Narrative Triggers

Considerations of the issues outlined above, resolved that the project develop a simple set of narrative triggers for the interactive module. These are aimed not at triggering memory but rather to manage the translation of memory into accessible and compelling stories. In contrast with memory triggers which rely on the experiences and knowledge of individuals, narrative triggers can influence how an individual recounts and reconstructs memory.

Narrative triggers seek to focus and shape a particular part of an individual memory to make it as relevant as possible to the context. As outlined above, these triggers do not attempt to provide contextual information or to support the memory through known or established facts. They simply aim to ensure that the story being told is told through an evocative and engaging theme. Importantly, narrative triggers do not seek to make all stories alike. To the contrary, they must be devised so that the same story might be told through different narratives.

While the themes developed by Stell *et al.* (2007) are not suited to this project, the underlying principles are consistent with those of the narrative triggers. In other words, the project sought to develop narrative triggers that would encourage engaging story telling about heritage by implementing filters that are themselves evocative and personal, and applicable to a wide variety of sites.

The thematic framework developed by Stell *et al.* (Stell *et al.* 2007) was itself based on an emotional interpretation of Australian history developed for the *Eternity* gallery of the National Museum of Australia (Stell 2001). These themes have proven to be effective in engaging audiences and have proved an effective means of engaging visitors in story telling (Berry 2004, Brown 2008).

Table 1: *Eternity* Themes, National Museum of Australia (Stell 2001)

Chance
Devotion
Fear
Hope
Joy
Loneliness
Mystery
Passion
Separation
Thrill

The project contemplated further refining and extending this suite of themes to make them more applicable to the specific case study site – Willow Court (Chapter 4). However, initial experimentation suggested that when themes were developed with a specific site in mind, the themes themselves began to shape expectation. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the Willow Court site is a site primarily associated with a stigma and shame associated with mental illness. When themes were developed along these lines, they only served to compound the stereotypes that plague the community. It was felt that it was more appropriate if the suite of narrative triggers were not developed with this knowledge in mind, and that they could be less site-specific. This has the added advantage of ensuring that the themes can be applied to any heritage site.

For these reasons the project decided to adopt the ten themes from the *Eternity* exhibition (Table 1) as the guiding structure for the narrative triggers. It also became apparent that there were opportunities to synthesise and group these experiences into a national framework that extended beyond the local site. If all sties could contribute to the project through the same thematic matrix then stories could also speak across sites. These opportunities for national cooperation are further discussed in the following chapters.

In Reach

In considering the benefits of using an existing theme set, Valley Vision made the project team aware of their concept of In-Reach. In contrast with most centralised Commonwealth services which aim to extend programs to

local communities through 'outreach', the idea of 'in-reach' is that local communities can contribute and share their learning, knowledge, experiences and capacity with others, including the Commonwealth.

The concept of in-reach had very strong appeal and relevance to the Living Memory project. The benefits of linking personal stories to a larger national picture, or creating a national archive of related stories opened many more opportunities for research and application for the project (see Chapter 7).

Given that the narrative triggers developed for the project originated in the *Eternity* exhibition at the National Museum of Australia (see Chapter 3), the idea of in-reach was directly applicable. By using the same themes it became possible to consider how stories gathered at heritage sites throughout Australia might be represented within the *Eternity* exhibition in Canberra. The possibility of including community based stories in the national narrative of *Eternity* offered potential benefits to the National Museum of Australia and to the project. This became the basis of an initial collaboration as discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 4

CASE STUDY: WILLOW COURT

The Living Memory project was initiated in partnership with the Derwent Valley Economic Renewal Group, also known as Valley Vision. This incorporated, not for profit community group is funded by the Derwent Valley Council to provide a community forum to initiate, coordinate and support economic and social renewal in the Derwent Valley in Tasmania.

At the commencement of the project, Valley Vision had initiated a program of adaptive reuse of a significant heritage site in the town of New Norfolk. The heritage listed Willow Court Asylum Precinct had been identified for redevelopment, including the development of major heritage tourism attractions.

The redevelopment of the Willow Court precinct offered an opportunity to develop and test the Living Memory interactive within a proposed heritage tourism development. The significance of the site, the range of complexities and proposed redevelopment made it an ideal case study as discussed below. In order to progress the project using the Willow Court example, Valley Vision became a partner in the STCRC sponsored project.

Figure 3: Barracks at Willow Court, New Norfolk Tasmania

Location and History

The Willow Court Asylum Precinct is located at New Norfolk in southern Tasmania, about 35 kilometres from Hobart.

The convict built structures predate the penal settlement at Port Arthur. The New Norfolk Hospital for the Insane opened between 1830 and 1831. It was the first purpose built asylum in Australia. The original building was a barracks for incurable convicts and accommodated both invalids and lunatics, with the insane

accommodated in a separate ward (Piddock 2001, Piddock 2007). The site was progressively adapted to meet changing mental health care needs (National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) 2009, Piddock 2001, Piddock 2007). Over the years, the site developed and expanded as it continued to operate as a psychiatric institution. Changes to mental health care practices, site management and physical facilities were accompanied by a series of name changes, and the institution was officially known as the Royal Derwent Hospital when it closed at the end of the 1990s. The name Willow Court has, nevertheless, been the enduring name for the principal mental institution in Tasmania.

Heritage values

The Willow Court precinct is recognised as a significant heritage property by the Tasmanian State Government, the National Trust and the Commonwealth. The Precinct currently occupies 18 hectares and comprises 24 buildings of varying ages including the original 1830 Barracks, Frescatti House built for the Colonial Secretary in 1834, and substantial additions to the complex from the 1960s, including the notorious C Block.

The heritage significance of the site lies in its age and continuing use as an asylum for almost 170 years. The Willow Court former hospital complex incorporates a number of significant architectural features (National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) 2009).

A significant element of the history of Willow Court is difficult and even shameful. As a site of incarceration, of experimental treatments and misunderstood illness, it shares these issues with similar institutions elsewhere. While some have naively suggested that the heritage tourism precinct should only focus on the positive aspects of these histories, all stories tell an important part of the history of the site. Those that might be deemed 'negative' are especially important for their capacity to represent and illustrate a part of our history that has largely been shunned and hidden. These stories underpin the strong community significance of the site (see below) and contribute to our understanding of the multiple meanings that a single site can hold. These include autobiographical memories in the form of direct experiences, stories and memories, and collective memories in the form of myths and behaviours that illustrate prevalent social attitudes towards mental illness (Housego and Strategic Communication 2006, National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) 2009, Piddock 2001, Piddock 2007).

Relationship to the town of New Norfolk

Willow Court is known throughout Tasmania as *the* mental institution. Associated with this high profile are the equally entrenched negative views of mental illness, and associated stigma and shame. For many in the broader community Willow Court and New Norfolk were one and the same – a site of incarceration for the insane. For the people of New Norfolk the stigma of this association directly impacted on how they perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others. The relationship between the town and the asylum, and the stigma of association is encapsulated in the local slogan 'you breed them, we feed them', suggesting that it is not the residents of New Norfolk who are the lunatics.

The reality is that most residents of Willow Court were brought from elsewhere. But the hospital provided a major source of employment for the town. Many locals worked at Willow Court as health carers, cooks, cleaners, security guards, and gardeners. The economic role of the asylum in the town also brought secondary economic benefits to local businesses.

Despite the closure of the site, the associations between Willow Court, New Norfolk and mental illness prevail. Stories about the site live on in the minds of individuals, families and former staff; and in the New Norfolk community. With the closure of the hospital at the end of the 1990s, the economic impacts were far reaching. The task of Valley Vision to sustain economic and social renewal can therefore be seen as a direct result of the closure of Willow Court.

Recent history

Following the closure of the Royal Derwent Hospital, the Derwent Valley Council acquired the property in mid 2002. The Council's vision is to create "a vibrant, sustainable village community where people live, learn, work and visit". This includes a plan to adaptively reuse the Willow Court site, and develop a range of partnerships with developers. Several buildings have been sold for commercial and community use, while the Council has retained key heritage buildings as the focus of heritage conservation and tourism related activities. In partnership with the State Government Derwent Valley Council agreed to:

- Effectively utilise the substantial built heritage at the historic precinct known as "Willow Court"

- Develop opportunities for increased participation, employment and investment in cultural activities and culturally based enterprises
- Protect and manage Derwent Valley's cultural heritage assets
- Identify the unique cultural product of the Derwent Valley, and the product from any future redevelopment of Willow Court, as a basis for increased participation in strategic tourism industry development, training, marketing and promotional activity opportunities

(Government of Tasmania 2002)

It is fitting that the site that sustained employment in New Norfolk for so many years might again provide social and economic stimulus, but this time through heritage tourism.

Current situation

Much of the work to revitalise the town was undertaken by Valley Vision. Unfortunately, the Global Financial Crisis, changes in government leadership and a number of local issues conspired to derail and delay the visionary future for Willow Court. The net result is that Valley Vision has been unable to implement the heritage tourism interpretation plan to date.

The delays to the redevelopment have had serious adverse impacts on the heritage values of the site. In the period during which this project has been undertaken the site has undergone significant degradation and damage. As a result of power and water cuts to the heritage building, security and fire alarms are inoperable. The result has been a rapid escalation in incidents of break-ins, vandalism and theft.

In December 2009, a newly elected Derwent Valley Council moved to take direct control of the Willow Court redevelopment. As a consequence Valley Vision will no longer have responsibility for the redevelopment of the historic site.

Relevance of the Case Study to Living Memory

The Willow Court case study was deemed highly significant and appropriate for this project for a number of reasons.

1. The site was undergoing redevelopment and reconceptualisation as a heritage tourism precinct. This offered an opportunity to develop an interactive module that was integrated into the overall site interpretation plan (Housego and Strategic Communication 2006).
2. The site is historically significant. The original Barracks buildings predate the penal settlement at Port Arthur, and the institution is the oldest mental hospital in Australia.
3. Willow Court has a long and continuous history, being the longest continuously operated mental institution in Australia. The Willow Court Asylum accommodated the insane and mentally ill continuously from 1830 to 2000. The longevity of association ensures that there are both historic values and continuing social values associated with the site. This is critical to recording of living memory.
4. The identity of New Norfolk people is strongly intertwined with Willow Court. Willow Court is positioned close to the centre of New Norfolk. The close proximity of the mental asylum has had a profound effect on the identity and morale of the local community. The widespread negative public perceptions of mental illness has stigmatised both the town and its people over a long period of time.
5. The Willow Court site is highly significant to the local economy. The asylum was a major source of employment for many townspeople. The closure of Willow Court as a mental institution in 2000 brought significant economic and social hardship to the town. The redevelopment of the site is one of the many ways in which the community is trying to rebuild its economies and social well-being. Tourism will form an important component of this rebuilding.
6. Willow Court is significant on local, state and national levels. The institution has cared for and employed people from across Tasmania, and other parts of Australia. The links between New Norfolk and the rest of Tasmania and even other parts of the Australia, give it an extensive geographic reach. While Willow Court is intrinsically connected with the identity and perception of a small regional town in Tasmania, its human reach is extensive – effecting and known to almost all Tasmanians, and their friends and relatives beyond the state.
7. The site is challenging and complex in terms of visitor experience. The negative associations for the local community and for Tasmanians more broadly make it a difficult history to promote or celebrate.
8. Willow Court highlights a number of ethical considerations in the use of a self-recorded public contribution. The sensitivities associated with mental health care, of people with mental illness, the representation of those individuals, and the relationship of the project to the mentally ill is highly

complex. These challenges provide a critical test for understanding a range of issues that might be faced at other sites.

9. The Willow Court precinct offers a number of physical contexts in which a Living Memory interactive might be incorporated. This enables the research team to consider a range of issues for the design of the module and its application to various contexts.

Types of Memory

Individual Memory

The Willow Court buildings are evocative of different periods and treatments in the history of mental health care. It is highly likely that significant memory traces within the physical layout of the site, the individual buildings and remnant artefacts, markings and equipment will trigger strong memories of patients, visitors and workers.

Collective Memory

Willow Court occupies a profound position in Tasmanian society. The name alone evokes a fear in individuals about the repercussions of straying from social norms. For many, memories of Willow Court will be ones of imagination or myth. Through a heritage tourism venture, many people will visit the site for the first time. The visit may confirm or contradict many of the assumptions and fears held by these individuals and as a result produce new experiences that will become memories. Anticipated feelings are likely to say something about wider social attitudes to mental illness, and feelings of apprehension and ridiculing behaviours may represent some collective memories.

In a similar way, Willow Court may simply represent an imaginary for general visitors. The buildings are typical of their era and function, and are likely to evoke emotional responses from those with no previous association. The powerful themes of the site history are, however, likely to have the capacity to link with similar topics elsewhere in Australia and overseas. This is particularly the case as there is a growing awareness and acceptance of people with mental illness in our society.

Chapter 5

DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

The initial project proposal planned to first develop an interactive unit and then trial it at the redeveloped Willow Court site. The aim of the trial was to identify any ethical issues, technical difficulties and other problems so that the product could be refined prior to completing the project. It was also intended that the trial would identify a range of issues for the operation of the unit that would form the guidelines for the use of the module at Willow Court and for the installation and operation of similar units elsewhere.

Unfortunately significant political and economic issues delayed the progression and implementation of the Willow Court interpretation plan. Combined with delays and significant changes to the research team, this made the trial of a module difficult to implement within the timeframe.

As a means to identify the relevant issues and develop the package as planned, an existing interactive was studied.

Case Study: *Eternity* Exhibition

The *Eternity* exhibition is an innovative reinterpretation of Australian social history. It uses individual objects and biographies to represent the diversity of stories that contribute to Australian history. The individual stories are taken from all periods, and include a socially, culturally and geographically diverse range of individuals. Stories include those of famous or well-known Australians from the past and present, while others come from lesser known individuals. All of them have extraordinary stories to share. The real impact and power of the exhibition is its underlying thematic structure which enlivens the stories through ten emotional or evocative themes (Table 1) (Stell 2001, Stell *et al.* 2007).

As outlined in Chapter 3, the ten themes that structure the exhibition had already been selected as narrative triggers for the Living Memory Interpretation Module. The themes were initially selected for the flexibility they offered to interpretation of diverse heritage sites. They were general enough to be applicable to a variety of sites, focused enough to be useful, and did not predict visitor responses or stereotype experiences of particular heritage sites. Furthermore, the themes had proven successful in an exhibition context.

Through the development of the project it also became apparent that by sharing a thematic structure it might be possible to cross-reference stories to the National Museum. This led to the development of longer term partnerships for the project. This became an invaluable partnership when the interpretation plan for Willow Court was delayed.

Evaluation of 'Your Story'

A very popular element of the *Eternity* exhibition is an interactive module called 'Your Story'. This module was conceived by the curator to allow visitors to include their own story, and thus become part of the exhibition fabric that represents Australian social history. The last 'story' of the exhibition is thus named 'your story' and a facility is provided for visitors to record a 60 second personal story. Like the profiled stories, visitors are asked to select one of the ten themes through which to contribute their own story. Curatorial staff review these recordings and select the most powerful, evocative and relevant to play back in the exhibition space. In this way, visitor stories become part of the exhibition and help visitors to understand their relationship to Australian history.

Since the development of the *Eternity* exhibition and its opening in 2000, the gallery has been managed by Senior Curator, Sophie Jensen. One of her key contributions has been to monitor the contributions made through the Your Story module and to select stories that can be played back in the *Eternity* gallery. Because of this experience Sophie was invited to become a member of the Industry Reference Group at the outset of the project.

Following various project delays, it became apparent that a trial of the Living Memory module would not be

possible in the project timeframe. The team decided that an evaluation of the Your Story module could serve the main aims of the trial.

Figure 4: Eternity Gallery, National Museum of Australia (Brown 2008)

Interviews

In the absence of a trial module, the project adapted its method to conduct extended interview with the Senior Curator of *Eternity,* Sophie Jensen. This was undertaken with a view to how the new interactive should be developed, and most importantly forms the basis of operational guidelines outlined in Chapter 6.

Despite the fact that the Your Story module sits in a particular exhibition framework, the experiences of running and operating the module over a long period has led to significant insights.

As a replacement for the trial at Willow Court, it was important that the interviews should reveal information identified by the project as critical to the guidelines, and that would allow us to manage these issues through the interactive. The interview therefore followed a semi-structured format to identify the following issues:
- ethics
- technical requirements
- data management
- any other problems

This would ensure that the development of the Living Memory interactive could be adapted to suit the heritage tourism purpose and avoid known issues and problems with running. It also enabled the product to be refined prior to completing the project. It was also intended that the trial would identify a range of issues for the operation of the unit that would form the guidelines for the use of the module at Willow Court and for the installation and operation of similar units elsewhere.

The Living Memory Interpretation Module

Despite the fact that the Willow Court interpretation plan could not be implemented during the project, the Willow Court site nevertheless remained the principle conceptual site for the project. This commitment was maintained in the interests of the relationship established with Industry Partner, Valley Vision and their direct financial contribution to the project. Willow Court also remained a particularly suitable case study through which to consider a range of issues for the development and implementation of a digital interactive. This rationale is outlined in Chapter 4, and remained a good test case even without the trial of the interactive.

Context

The context in which the Living Memory Interpretation Module operates is critical to its success in terms of attracting appropriate participation and being experienced meaningfully by visitors. At the broadest level, the context for the Living Memory module is any heritage tourism site where it will operate. For the purposes of this project, the site in question is the former asylum, Willow Court in the Derwent Valley, Tasmania.

Research visits to the Willow Court site and discussions with the Industry Reference Group revealed a number of significant factors relating to context. Most significantly, the site itself – even without any form of interpretation – plays a significant role in evoking memories and in establishing a mood or feeling that influences the kinds of stories visitors might contribute through the module. In other words, the site is the primary means through which to evoke memory and share stories and experiences. This supported the findings of the literature review which identified a strong link between memory and place and heritage.

The importance of the site is one of the most significant differences between the Living Memory Interpretation Module and Your Story. In the case of the *Eternity* exhibition, visitors gain an understanding of how individual stories can be told through the emotive themes by viewing the exhibition. Significantly, however, the stories that make up the central part of the exhibition are not first person stories contributed by individuals, but **curated** stories chosen and interpreted by professionals. The stories featured in the *Eternity* gallery are selected by skilled curatorial staff, drawn from rigorous historical research and interpreted through the central themes. Sometimes a familiar story is reinterpreted through an unexpected theme. More often the story is less well-known but the theme provides the connection between visitors experience and the story. In this way visitors come to understand how very different stories might be told through the same theme. Visitors engage with the exhibition because they can identify with both the story and the emotion of the theme.

Importantly for *Eternity* visitors, the exhibition demonstrates how a theme can link diverse stories. This knowledge is acquired before they construct and share their own story through the Your Story module. This construction cannot be replicated at the range of heritage sites which the Living Memory Interpretation Module aims to serve. Rather, the Living Memory module needs to foreground the heritage site to create a sense of purpose and relatedness between the site, individual contributors and the module.

The study concluded that the module would ideally be used within the heritage tourism site, in a space that was both characteristic and integral to the visitor experience. However, the Willow Court site suggests that there are instances where a heritage site is integral to the identity of a town (as Willow Court is to New Norfolk) and that it might sometimes be possible to use the module off-site. Similarly, it was recognised that the module might be used for special events like anniversaries of particular sites or reunions of associated cohorts. In these instances it was recognised that the event might be held off-site and yet still create a shared atmosphere that triggers memories. Despite these very real possibilities, an off-site location raises particular problems for context and the guidelines suggest a number of considerations to ensure that the facility is used as it is intended rather than for general purposes (see Chapter 6).

The development of the Living Memory Interpretation Module therefore considered design and functional elements that would explain and demonstrate the module to contributors at the same time as enhancing their experience of the site. To this extent the Context became a guiding principle for the development of the module, with a flow on effect to other considerations.

The Interactive Unit

Computer Hardware/Software

The project team negotiated a generous in-kind agreement with the National Museum of Australia to trial the Your Story software at Willow Court. Under this agreement the National Museum provided the project with a licence to use the 'Your Story' software, with minor modifications. However, the project decided not to use this licence option. This decision was made before the Willow Court trial did not proceed.

The primary reason that the National Museum software licence was not used was that the software was designed to operate with a particular technical set up. When the *Eternity* gallery was first established, the technical specifications for the interactive were designed to work with high-end audiovisual equipment. This was driven by the resources of the Museum, and its desire to ensure high quality sound and visual data. In contrast, the Living Memory project was developed to deliver a product to a diverse range of heritage tourism sites. Many

of these organisations would not have access to the technical or professional support of a large national institution.

Furthermore, since the development of the Your Story interactive there have been rapid changes in technology. Many off-the shelf products can deliver footage of a quality suited to our needs. Increasingly personal computers have in-built cameras and microphones that can deliver the hardware requirements for a recording booth. Newer units also include touch screens that eliminate the need for separate componentry like a keyboard or mouse. These self-contained units are therefore easier to manage, self-contained and more affordable for smaller operators.

The decision to use a self-contained computer unit rendered the existing software ineffective. The project therefore engaged Soul Solutions to develop a new software package suited to working with self-contained computer units. This also provided the opportunity to redesign the computer interactive.

Computer Interface

As outlined above, the research revealed that it was important to link contributors to the overall site context. In particular it was identified that the module should emphasise:

- The site as the most important contextual element for story telling.
- The use of an 'attract loop' of previously selected stories to characterise the site.

One of the principle elements around which the software was to be designed is a series of screens that will guide contributors through the use of the module. These were each designed as follows:

Figure 5: Attract Loop - the front page of the interactive in which the playback of selected stories provides interpretitve content and encourages participation.
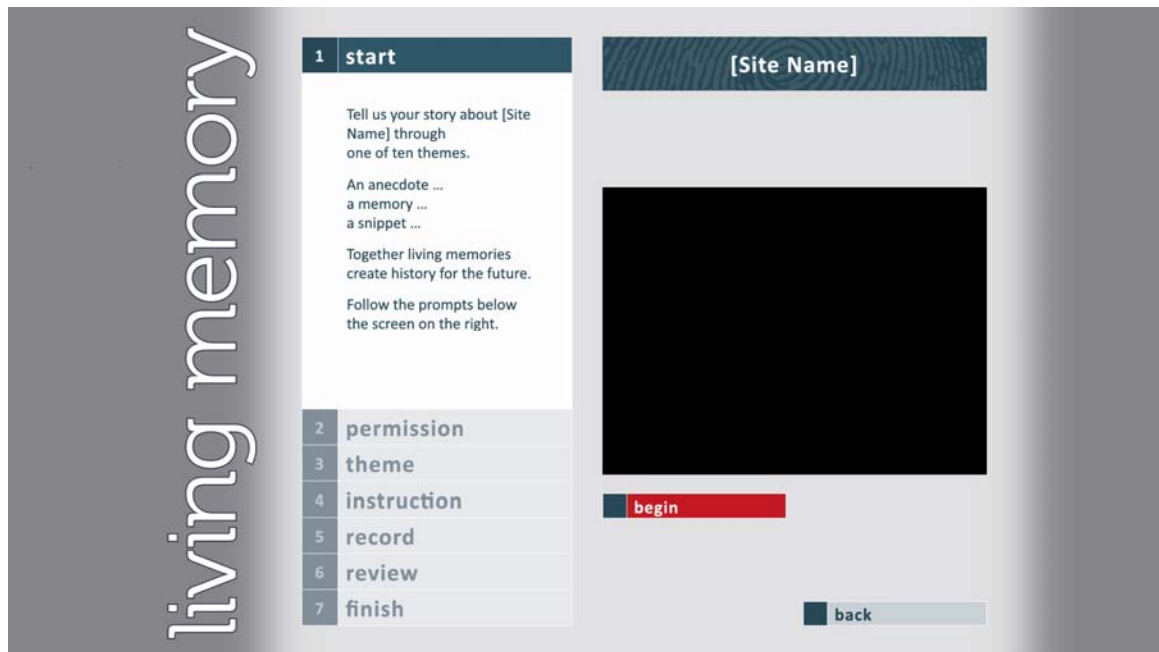
Figure 6: Screen One - the first screen of the interactive which explains how the interactive works and how participants can contribute.
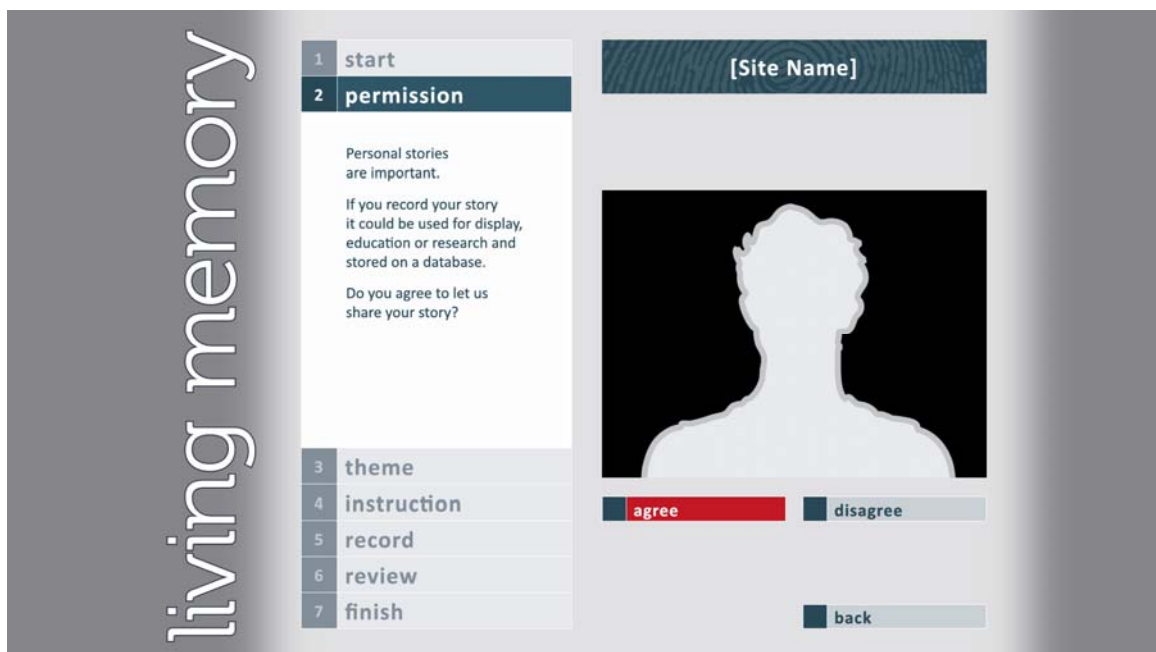
Figure 7: Screen two of the interactive outlines how the recorded story might be used and seeks the contributor's permission. In agreeing on this screen, the operator secures the legal right to use the material (subject to ethical considerations outlined in the guidelines.
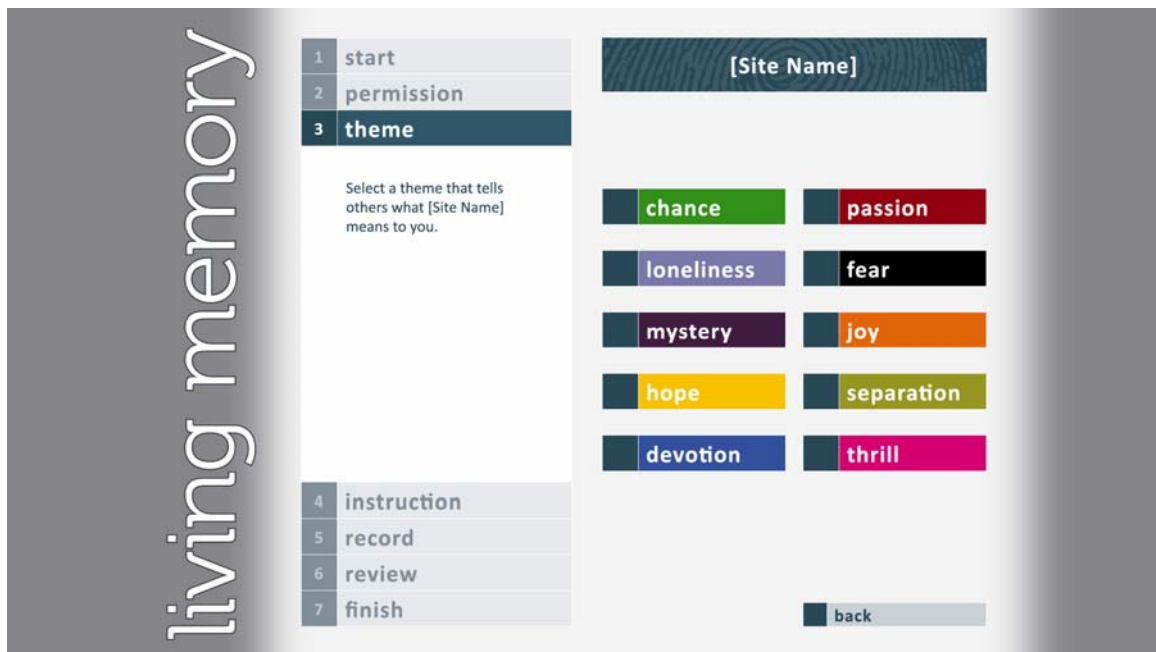
Figure 8: The next step of the interactive outlines the narrative triggers. These are referred to as themes and are clearly distinguished by colour.
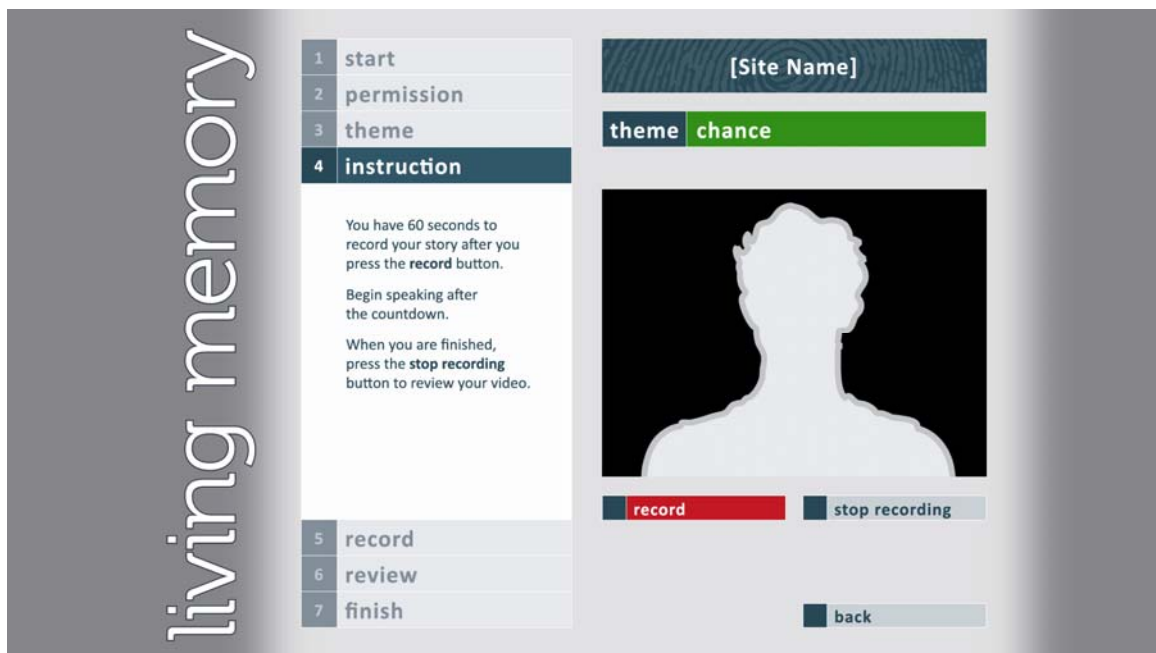
Figure 9: In this screen the contributor sees themselves for the first time through the camera. They are provided with brief instructions on how to record their story. The selected theme is highlighted in the background to remind the visitor of the essence of their story.
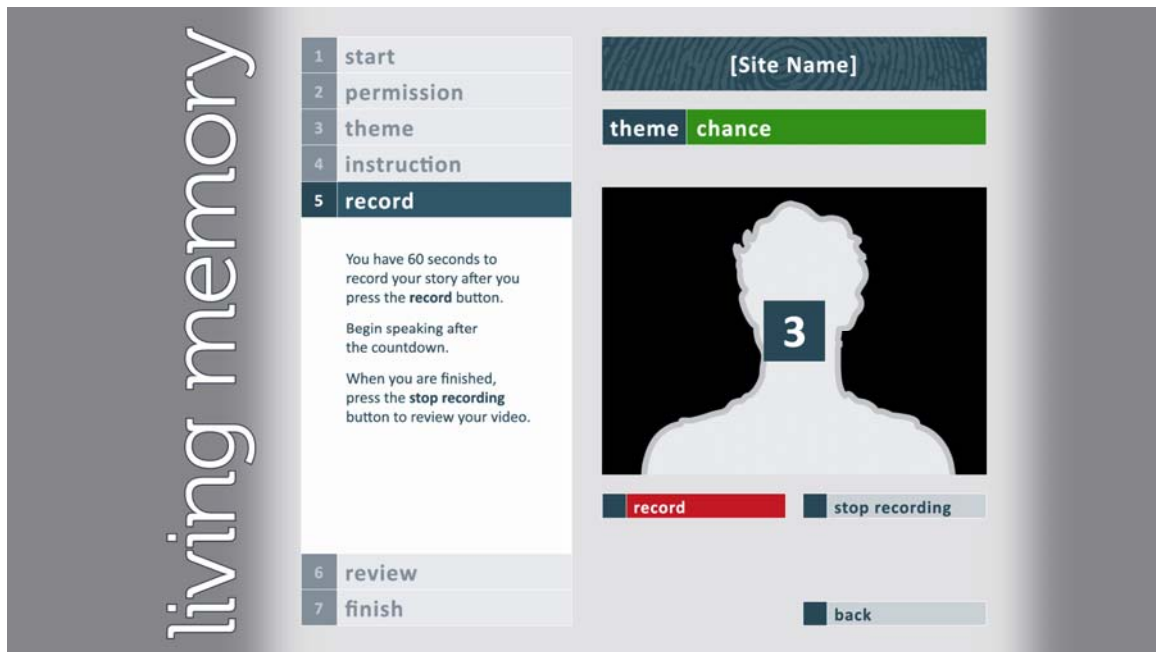
Figure 10: This screen provides a countdown to when the recording starts. It allows the visitor to ready themselves for recording.
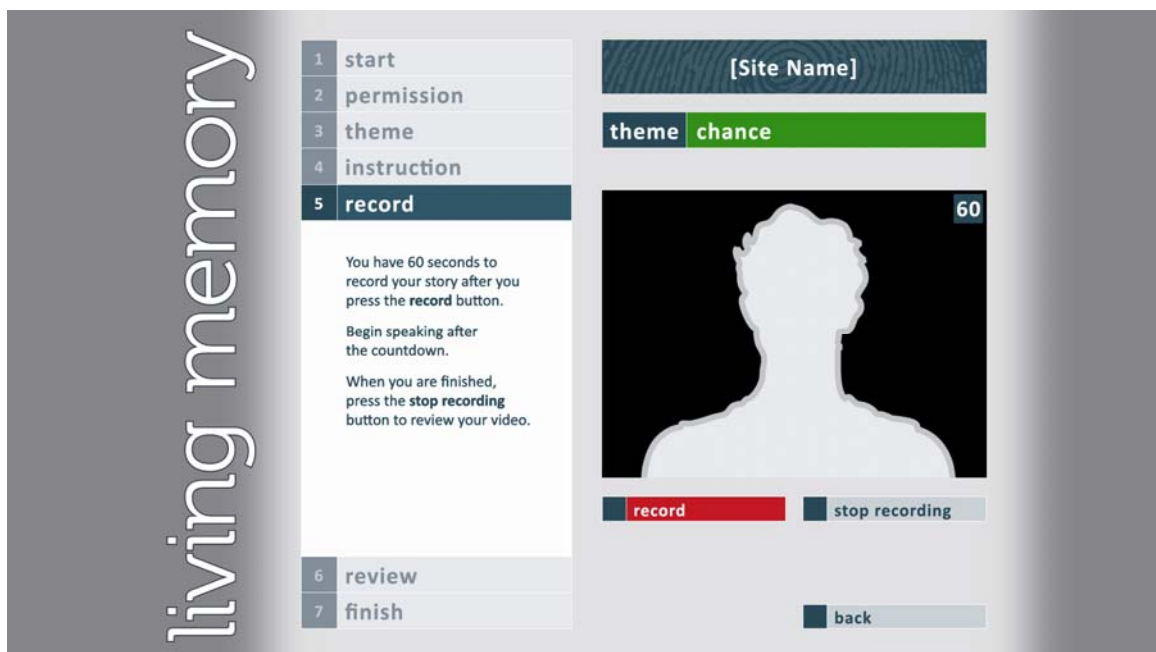
Figure 11: Once recording commences, the screen switches to a timer that indicates how much time the contributor has left to record their story.
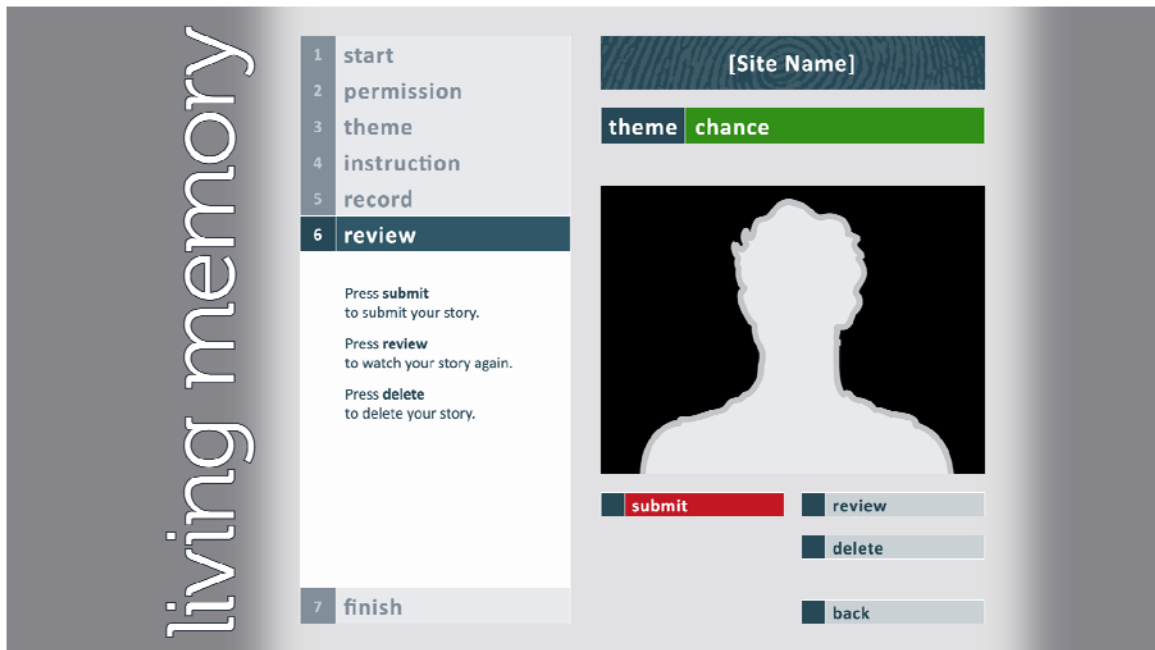
Figure 12: This Screen allows the contributor to review their recording and/or to submit it to the Living Memory archive.
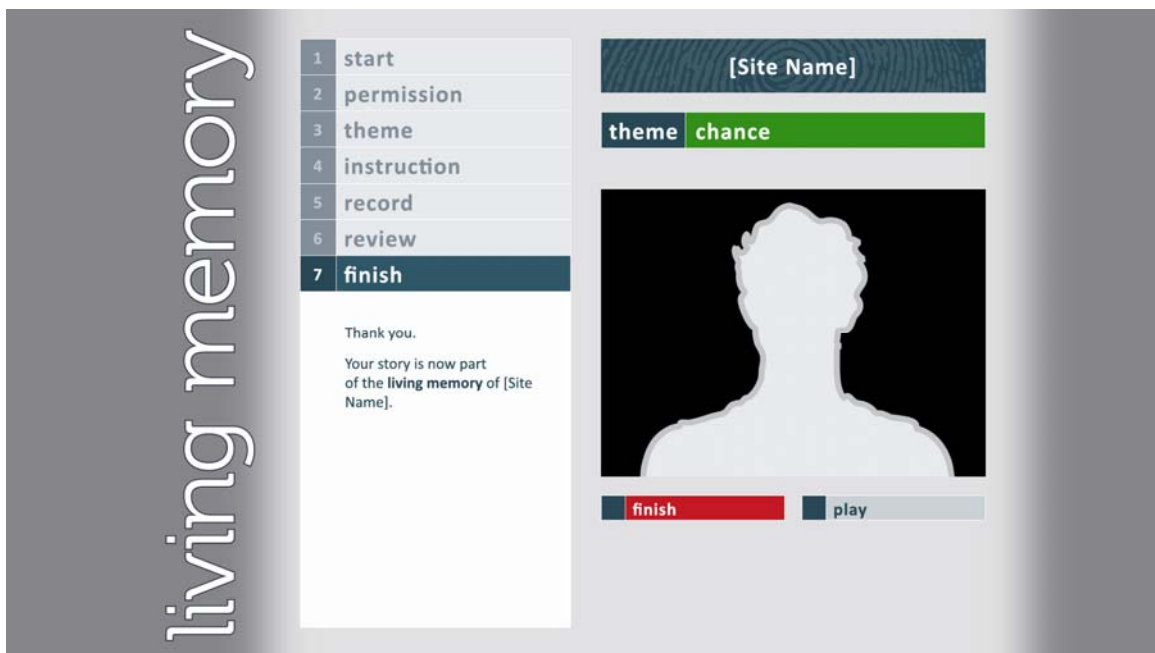
Figure 13: The final screen exits the recording mode and returns the user to the front screen where they can watch and listen to the playback stories or record another story of their own.

Management of Data

One of the biggest challenges for smaller organisations is the management of data generated through the module. The major issues for management of data relate to the storage and retrieval of recorded material. This includes how to decide what to keep and what to delete. The question of data retrieval is also very important for both immediate application in the form of material to be selected for playback, and longer term access. While requests to use data from the *Eternity* interactive have not been forthcoming, it is quite possible that the site-based nature of the Living Memory Interpretation module will make it more directly relevant to research (see Chapter 7). It is therefore important that the material is stored in a way that will support a system of retrieval and analysis.

Detailed consideration is given to this question in the Guidelines (Chapter 6). However, these issues also

informed the development of the interactive. The developed unit therefore includes basic classification to aid identification and retrieval of information. This includes:

- Auto-filing by theme, date and time
- An automatic backup of data.

Other elements such as the selection of material for playback or more sophisticated classification of material requires manual input and this is discussed further in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6

LIVING MEMORY INTERPRETATION MODULE: GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Following the development of the interactive software, an extensive follow up interview was undertaken with Sophie Jensen. The aim was to fully understand the scope and limitations of the 'Your Story' interactive at the National Museum. The first interviews enabled us to modify and develop our own software. These second interviews were critical to the development of guidelines and protocols for operating the interactive.

This chapter attempts to present a comprehensive and practical suite of protocols and guidelines to guide the operation and maintenance of the interactive. Together with the software and operating manual, it is anticipated that these findings would form the backbone of a commercial kit (see final chapter). To this extent the following section does not make direct reference to the literature review or theoretical considerations already presented. Rather it tries to present the issues in plain English with a focus on practical matters. Nevertheless the earlier discussions and considerations have informed the drafting of the guidelines.

Use of Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to help users decide the best way to implement the Living Memory Interpretation Module. The computer interactive can be used to enhance or extend visitor experiences at heritage tourism attractions, including heritage properties, museums, special event days and exhibitions.

The guidelines aim to ensure that the module operates in the most effective, ethical and manageable way possible. It is therefore recommended that the guidelines are referred to prior to making key decisions about the use of the Interactive Module.

As guidelines, however, these are not a fixed set of requirements. Rather, they aim to provide an outline of issues that may arise through the implementation of the interactive and suggest ways to avoid such problems. They further suggest ways to mitigate or address these issues should they arise.

Organisational Policy

The guidelines should be considered in light of the operational needs and organisational policies and procedures of the specific heritage attraction where the interactive is to be deployed. Where necessary, the guidelines should be adapted to ensure consistency with existing policies and practices. In other words the guidelines should be interpreted in light of your own organisational policies and procedures to ensure that operation of the interactive is consistent with organisational goals and standards.

Issues that arise through the implementation of the guidelines should inform the development of individual management procedures and policies.

The procedures which provide greatest security, confidentiality and ethical standards should be taken as the overarching principle where there is any conflict.

Getting Started: Things to Consider

1. Purpose of Interactive

The first step in deciding whether to use the Living Memory Interpretation Module at your site is to ask why and how it will be used. In other words it is important to understand how this interactive module can enhance the visitor experience and/or interpretation of your site. Some questions that might help you to make a decision include:

- Will locals participate in sharing stories?
- Are your visitors likely to have stories they want to contribute?
- Are all these contributions important to understanding the site or topic?

- Will personal stories enhance visitor experiences at your site?
- Will the facility to tell stories at your site be welcomed by your visitors?

2. Context

Once you have decided that the Living Memory Interpretation Module can enhance site interpretation and visitor experiences at your site, it is important to determine in what context the module will be used.

The context of the Living Memory Module is a critical element of its successful implementation and creation of useable content from participants.

The interactive has been developed with the understanding that the heritage tourism site will provide the primary context for storytelling. As the heritage sites are the most important context for story telling and for triggering associated memories, it is important to maintain the visitor focus on the site in question. Depending on the physical location of the interactive the following issues will need to be considered.

On site Installation

The first preference, and most effective option, is for the interactive to be set up at the heritage location itself. The location within the site should consider:

- Is the interactive positioned where the user will already feel immersed in the site experience?
- Is the location evocative and representative of the heritage qualities and key messages of the site?
- Is the interactive co-located with other key site interpretation elements?

Off site installation

It is much more difficult to make the interactive effective if it is operated in isolation from the heritage site in question. There is a risk that the interactive might be used to record complaints, comments, personal vilification, or other general communication unrelated to the intended purpose of the module.

This may be less the case when the heritage site is strongly recognised as part of the fabric and social identity of a broader location (e.g. Port Arthur Historic Site on the Tasman Peninsula). In these instances it may be possible to use the interactive in an off-site but related location.

Nevertheless, any off-site installation requires much more careful attention to the physical and social setting of the interactive. It is important that steps are taken to ensure that in such a general space people do not use the facility for unintended or general purposes.

If circumstances demand that the interactive is used in an unrelated space it is important to maximise the connections to the heritage site and reiterate the principle purpose. Some of the ways to do this include:

- Ensuring a high quality playback loop that includes quality stories that have a clear focus on the site and core messages of the interpretation.
- Providing visual clues to the site. This may be as simple as displaying brochures, photographs, and banners in the space where the module is situated.

Special Events

It is also possible to reinforce the connection to a particular place or event through social interaction. The Living Memory interactive has great potential to be used for special event days associated with a heritage attraction. For example, reunion and anniversary events where groups of people meet and share experiences of a particular event, time or place. These interactions can be powerful memory triggers that will encourage story telling. The shared experience also serves to reinforce the purpose of the recording.

An event can therefore create a shared atmosphere and focus memories towards a particular site.

3. Physical set up and use of space

The physical environment is critical to the quality of the material you will collect. The available space will dictate what you can do, but there are a number of things worth you can do to enhance the area. Many of these suggestions will impact on one another.

Understand the Interactive

The interactive is designed to be installed on an all-in-one touch-screen personal computer. However, a number of factors may influence the exact hardware configuration. Available technology, budget, desired quality of recording and design of space, are all factors that all determine what machine the software is installed on. As a

result each operating unit will be slightly different.

As a first step it is therefore important to experiment with the physical machine (including the installed software) to understand how recordings made in your space will look sound and feel on playback.
- It is important to remember that the most obvious choice may not provide the best results.
- Play with multiple settings, positions before deciding on a final set up.
- Be prepared to change the set-up if a better result can be obtained – even if it does not fit with your original conception of the space.
-

It can be useful for more than one person to experiment with the set-up. Individuals may differ in
- physical height
- speaking voices (volume and tone)
- how (un)comfortable they feel recording and watching themselves.

Encourage staff to experiment and record stories

Any staff who may use the interactive should be encouraged to experiment prior to deciding the final set up. This will ensure that:
- more than one person has trialled the system.
- staff are familiar with the equipment and confident enough to help others, including contributing visitors.
- staff members are not overlooked as people who have valuable stories to contribute.

Background

The background or setting for the recorded story is an important element of the interactive. The background setting – the physical context behind a person recording their story – is visible to the user during recording and becomes a permanent element of the recorded story. It is therefore important to think carefully about positioning the interactive within the available space.

Movement of people and other activities in the background can be a distraction to both the person recording their story and someone watching the material in playback. Ideally film material will have a better appearance if it is recorded against an appropriate background. A very decontextualised background will make playback material less potent.

Some ways to achieve a suitable background include:
- Ensuring that a part of the heritage site, exhibition or building is visible (ideally this would be an instantly recognisable, iconic or evocative element of the site).
- Provide a background design that includes images of the site around/behind monitor.
- A simple pull up/down screen behind the storyteller will provide a plain background that will also provide some privacy and improve acoustics.
- Posters, brochures, photos, banners with site logos and images may also be appropriate background material.

Acoustics

The acoustic setup of the interactive will greatly impact on participation and playback material. An environment that is too quiet may inhibit personal and intimate storytelling, while a very noisy environment may render the recording unusable.

Sound recording can vary greatly depending on the physical surrounds. Some general principles to consider in the acoustic environment are that:
- Hard floors, walls and other surfaces create harsh and amplified background noise
- Sound dissipates in large open spaces – making it difficult to obtain a good quality sound recording.
- Background noise is muted through soft furnishings and smaller spaces.

Hint: Consider facing the screen towards the wall with the person looking out into open space. This will help to ensure that:
- Sound is contained by the rear wall rather than leaking directly into outer space
- The person feels more secure knowing that they can peripherally view goings on in the open space.

For many reasons, including acoustics, an on-site installation and operation of the interactive is preferred. On-site the background noises are less intrusive because they are more likely to be appropriate and directly relevant to the stories told.

However, it is not always possible to do this, and in some cases an office space or other off-site location may have to be used.

Office environments

Be aware that everyday office noises will be very noticeable in a recording. Noises that we don't necessarily notice in person such as telephone rings, conversations, keyboard noise and general traffic will be much more audible on tape. These sounds won't be a good background noise because they are unrelated to the site/memory and are a distraction to the listener. They also change the ambience and therefore impact of the story.

Some ways to counter this is to:
- As a first priority find a space that is as insulated from office routine as possible.
- Use a blank wall or pull up screen to isolate background noise and focus the speaker's voice to the recording device.

Light

Light levels can affect the quality of the video recording. This may be problematic in heritage sites and display areas where light levels may be kept deliberately low to conserve the heritage resource. You may need to consider this when choosing where to place the module.

As a general rule, strong light above or in front of the contributor will provide the best light conditions and hence the best picture quality. Light behind the user may make it difficult to see the contributors face and generally produce a dark image.

Privacy

The need for privacy is important to help participants feel secure in contributing their story. While some people are comfortable being observed recording their stories, others may feel inhibited if they feel they are being observed during the process. Although participants agree to make their stories publicly available, during the recording phase there is still the opportunity to withdraw or rerecord the story.

People must feel comfortable enough to share personal, and at times sensitive, stories. If the physical space feels private individuals are more likely to contribute intimate personal stories. These kinds of stories can have the greatest impact on visitor experiences and contribute to an understanding of heritage significance.

Privacy and inclusivity need to be kept in balance. It is important that participants do not feel overly isolated because this, too, can make a contributor feel exposed and self-conscious. It is also important that people remain connected with the site (see Context).

The provision of privacy also brings some additional risks and potential management problems. If the interactive is set up in a concealed or secluded area, it is more difficult to monitor behaviours. If people feel that they are not observed, or that the equipment is not monitored, there is a risk that activities may lead to:
- Inadvertent damage to the system
- Deliberate vandalism and damage to equipment and facilities
- Recording of lewd behaviours (e.g. nudity, offensive gestures and language)

While individual privacy is important for participants, it does not need to take the form of concealment. By making sure that the interactive is publicly observable at any time, damage and inappropriate use of the facility can be minimised.

Furniture

The interactive requires, at a minimum, a table for the hardware to rest on, and a seat for participants to use during recording. There are several options for these elements, but they need to be set up so that the most ideal picture and best audio quality possible are recorded.

As part of the setting up the interactive (see Understanding the Interactive) it is recommended that various aspects of the furniture set up are trialled for picture and sound quality, including
- distance from the screen
- camera position and height
- camera orientation
- optimal orientation and distance for sound quality.

- relative height of the seating/table/camera

Fixed positioning

Once the ideal position for the furniture has been determined, mark up the space and place the furniture to meet these settings. The best quality of video recording can only be maintained if every user maintains these positions. It is therefore recommended that the table and seating be fixed in position.

If this is not possible or feasible to fix the furniture permanently (for example if it is a temporary installation), you should
- draw up a floor template to ensure correct placement of furniture and monitoring movement during use.
- encourage participants to use camera lens adjustment rather than moving the seat to accommodate their image.

Remaining flexible

While fixed furniture is the best option for ensuring consistency of quality and presentation of film footage, be aware that people will use interactive in many different ways. The more complex the set up the furniture, the less flexible it becomes for multiple uses.

The space needs to maintain a level of flexibility to accommodate a diversity of users and needs including:
- access for people using wheelchairs or walking aids
- small groups of family or friends who want to record stories together
- parents holding children
- differing heights of adults and children

Hint: often a seated adult and standing child can be accommodated within the same vertical plane.

4. Set up of Software

Soul Solutions has provided a manual for the set up of the hardware and software system (Soul Solutions, Zande, and O'Brien 2010). For ease of use, the software provided has a limited capacity to be modified by users. This ensures that the underlying concept remains consistent and that information is collected is supported by a rigorous research foundation. It also ensures that material collected from different sites can contribute to a larger national story.

There are, however, provisions for users to customise the software to their particular site. It is recommended that these changes are made to enhance the context for the visitor:

Site Name

The name of the heritage attraction is a necessary first step in customising the software for individual applications. The initial change to the set up on the first screen of the interactive automatically fills related screens. This customises the text in the interactive and reminds users what their story relates to throughout the recording process.

Organisation Name/Logo

The first screen of the interactive provides a space to include the name and/or logo of the body responsible for operating and managing the interactive. The inclusion of your organisation identity is very important. This allows the user to identify who they are giving permission to use and store their story. This underpins the legitimacy of any granted permission and determines how material may be used in future (see Ethics and Permissions).

Playback Loop

The first screen of the interactive makes provision for what is called an 'attract loop'. This is a sample of recorded stories that have been selected to be played as part of the site interpretation. The playback stories are selected from the full range of contributed stories and can be regularly updated (see Playback Material). In the first instance, however, it is helpful to create at least one recording to play on the front page of the interactive.

The playback loop demonstrates the kind of stories and people who can be included, and begins the process of using personal stories to interpret the site and provide a meaningful visitor experience.

If you have no stories available when the interactive is first established, it is suggested that someone from the organisation record a general introductory loop. This might include a short statement about the interactive and be

something like:

> *Welcome to [site name]. Do you have a story about [the site]that you'd like to share?*
> *If you would like to tell us your story, follow the touchscreen prompts.*
> *What kind of story can you tell? Is it one of passion, joy, loneliness or fear? Is your story a mystery or a thrill? Does your story show devotion, offer hope or point to chance? When you tell your story, think about how you want others to feel when they listen to it.*
> *After you record your story you can review it before you decide to share or save it.*
> *Your story is an important part of the Living Memory of [the site]. Thank you for sharing it with us.*

5. Ethics

There are significant ethical issues to be considered in the use of the interactive. Some of the most significant issues relate to the use of recorded material in display, interpretation and research (see Managing Data/Stories, page 34). However, there are also important issues to consider in relation to the recording and storage of people's stories.

Permissions

Gaining the permission of contributors is the primary step in ensuring that the material is gathered in an ethical and legal manner. The issue of permission is built into the interactive, and in using the system, individuals agree for their story to be stored and used in research, interpretation and display.

There are, however, some issues that you should be aware of and use some common sense in deciding whether consent is valid. You may want to consider whether participants, as recorded in the video appear genuinely comfortable with their contribution and fully able to make informed consent.

Children

Only persons 18 years of age and older are able give legal consent. In reviewing the material you may consider some of the following:

- You may need to make some judgement based on appearance. Does the participant appear old enough? Is it likely that they are of legal age?
- If children record stories in the presence of (or together with) an adult it can be assumed that the permission has been granted through parental/guardian consent.

Playback

The recording module aims to generate stories that can be used as part of the interpretation of particular sites. There are a number of factors to consider in determining what is appropriate material to include (see Choosing Material for Playback below).

When selecting material for viewing it is very important to be aware of ethical issues and to use material sensitively and respectfully.

Decisions about whether to use material should be guided by a principle of good intent. The playback of material should not expose individuals or groups to ridicule or misinterpretation.

The greatest risk comes from material removed from context. What is appropriate to display in a particular location or time will not necessarily be appropriate at another site or at a different time. For example, the story of someone who has suffered as a result of mental illness could be played back at a site where the interpretation supported the story and helped audiences to be sympathetic. However, without a sensitising context, the same story could leave the participant vulnerable to misinterpretation.

- Playback of material should always be contextualised.
- The original context in which the recording was made, or a related heritage venue will provide the most suitable playback venues.
- Make informed decisions about what is appropriate use, and always use the material with good intent.
- If material is by nature disturbing/sensitive/intimate – in what circumstances would you allow others to view it?
- Some material may only be suitable for research/analysis and may not be suitable for public display.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content

In addition to the matters raised above, any use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content should be carefully considered. Good working relationships with local Indigenous communities will be highly advantageous.

- Where material is contributed by non-Indigenous persons, local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups should be consulted. This is particularly the case if material contributed appears of a sensitive cultural nature.
- Material of a derogatory nature should not be included for reasons outlined above.
- Information contributed by Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders may also require special consideration. While individuals can provide consent for their personal stories to be shared in a public space, these stories may include information that is sensitive, that others in the community regard differently.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander information may also need to be renegotiated periodically. Events and changes in the community may alter the suitability of information for inclusion. For example, images and voices of deceased individuals can cause distress to families, and for some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is culturally inappropriate. Similarly information can become the basis of legal proceedings such as land or native title claims, or the subject of other community negotiation.

In these instances it may be necessary to do one or more of the following:

- Withdraw material from public view
- Renegotiate permissions to use material
- Provide signage at the site to warn Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of potential sensitivities; make disclaimers about the validity of such information for legal proceedings, etc.

Managing Data/Stories

The Living Memory Interpretation Module (the interactive) creates a collection of personal stories about heritage sites, significant events and historical topics. It is important that this body of stories is recognised as an archive and collection, and that as a whole, the collection has value. Whether the interactive is used for a defined period, has a finite life or maintains a continuous collection of stories, the material produced creates a body of data that requires attention and management.

It is discretionary what each organisation decides to keep. However, the resource is an important one and any decision about the use, storage and value of the collection should be carefully considered.

1. Storage and cataloguing

It is important that recorded material is stored safely and can be readily retrieved. The interactive has been designed to make storage and cataloguing simple.

If the physical set up of hardware follows that outlined for the protocol, the interactive will:

- date and time stamp each recording,
- store each recording to a digital file according to selected themes,
- automatically back-up recorded stories at shutdown, and
- store back-up copies to a separate external storage device.

Retrieval of Information

Rights to access and copy stories

Contributors may want to access or copy their stories at the time of recording or at a later date. There are potential commercial opportunities to explore in tourism contexts (see Extended Applications). Whether or not you undertake this as a commercial opportunity there will be times when you need want to retrieve specific information. Cataloguing will determine how easily you can retrieve specific files.

Cataloguing Material

Classification or cataloguing of recorded material is an essential part of managing the data. Recording basic information about each recording allows you to store records in a systematic way and to retrieve them for particular uses. By adding additional markers or metadata to each record, the value of the material is significantly increased.

Automated classification

The interactive automates some basic classification of material by recording the

- site/topic,
- theme,
- date and time.

In addition the use of the interactive can be used in a way that makes the collection of data more streamlined.

One of the advantages of the interactive is that it can be used to target specific collections of stories. One option for smaller organisations is to restrict the use of the interactive. Rather than making the interactive available on a continual basis, the interactive can be preserved for use during particular hours, on specific days of the week or month, annually or for special events. Similarly, the interactive can be used so that people can respond to particularly occurrences such as a refugee crisis, a natural disaster or other community issue. The module can also be used to target responses to a particular exhibition or site interpretation.

These strategies will help to restrict and control the number of stories collected at the same time as giving the archive a strong topical or thematic focus. The associated event can be simply recorded through digital filing.

Manual classification

Manual classification of recorded material provides opportunities for more sophisticated sorting of material. This allows material to be retrieved more easily and for more directed purposes.

In an ideal situation, someone will be responsible for monitoring contributions made through the interactive. If this is possible for your organisation, the person who monitors contributions can store and tag material in a systematic way. For example, you may choose to cross-reference, store or catalogue stories according to variables such as events, eras, genders, occupations, etc. Site specific flags like inmate, patient, visitor, family, worker can be developed for particular settings.

These markers and metadata can be cross-referenced to individual recordings on a separate database or spreadsheet.

Metadata allows easier and more reliable retrieval of material for particular purposes. For example, you may find that you do not have enough stories from women, or that some themes are underrepresented in playback. The tags will help you to select appropriate stories to balance your interpretation. Similarly, research interests in particular events, perspectives or eras, can use tags to identify relevant stories for analysis.

2. Categories of Material for future use

Err on the side of caution: Keep It

Storage is now cheap. If you're not sure about whether or not to keep material, keep it.

- **Keeping is safer**. If you delete material it will be permanently lost.
- Recorded material may be valued differently in the future. Something that seems common knowledge now may be come unknown in just a few years. Keeping everyday stories is therefore advisable.
- The more material you keep, the greater the range of base material you have to draw on for playback and other uses.
- Keeping all or most material is especially viable where the module is only used occasionally, or infrequently.
- -

Cheap digital storage options and the automation of classification make it possible to keep an archival record for its own sake. It is even possible to keep all recorded material so that it is available for a range of unforeseeable purposes. Nevertheless, contributions should be regularly reviewed to decide what material to keep and how to use it. Without doing this you may accumulate a large quantity of material that is of little value. Review will also help you to determine how well your context and physical set up are working (see Context).

Ultimately, however, the review of material should be undertaken to decide what material to keep for what purpose. The following provides some guidelines to help you to decide what to keep and why, what to use material for, and when it might be appropriate to discard material.

Choosing Material for Playback

Playback material – selection suitable for public playback and interpretation

It is important that the material selected for playback – both through the interactive and in other related spaces – is representational of the site. While it is important that the material reflects the essence of the site, it is equally important to illustrate the richness and diversity of stories associated with the site.

Diversity

The playback of stories is the main attractant for visitors. The key marker is diversity. The greater the diversity of your stories, the greater diversity of your audience. A richer diversity will also encourage a wider group to contribute their stories and ultimately make the interactive successful. Try to ensure that the stories included in playback reflect a variety of

- Emotions (themes)
- Different types of relationships with the site, e.g. worker, resident, family, etc.
- Demographic profiles (age – old people and young people, gender – men and women; ethnicity and educational status, etc)
- Individuals and group contributions (families, couples, groups and individuals)

Flavour

In particular circumstances you may want to theme your attract loop for a particular theme or occasion. This can create a different effect than a general loop for general audience. It is a particularly useful approach where the interactive is used to relate to a specific exhibition or event. For example:

- You may use the attract loop to highlight – and thus engage responses to – a particular issue
- You may want to inspire a particular audience (e.g. workers, inmates, women) to contribute
- You may want to use a particular them to highlight a particularly strong emotion or unexpected experience.

Compelling Stories

It is important that the stories on the attract loop inspire visitors – whether in enhancing their experience of the site or encouraging them to participate. Good stories are good for a range of reasons:

- An individual may be a good story teller
- Some stories are made more powerful because they use the theme well to anchor their story
- Some stories are powerful in combination with other stories because they support, contrast or juxtaposition each other.

There is no exact formula for making a good story. It may only become apparent when viewed in context of other submissions or in a particular context or environment. But there will always be stories that from their first viewing are well told; make powerful use of the theme and good use of the interactive.

Separating the good from the bad

While there are some people who can use the technology easily and can immediately tell a good story, others will need to practice and adjust. While this might produce some less useful material, there can be cases where you may still want to use some of their content.   This definitely an issue for older users who are less familiar with technology and sometimes less focused in their story telling.

- People who go over time and use multiple 1 minute recordings to record their story. The continuity in a single segment doesn't always work, but if they are stored together they can be edited, or different segments can be used for different contexts.
- It is important to include stories you don't agree with. This is an important part of representing diversity. You don't want all material to represent the same view or you might risk only reaching one segment of the community or alienate others. While it is important not to present views that are deliberately inflammatory, a diversity of opinion can also encourage greater participation by being controversial.

Consent for Playback

Even when people have granted consent through the interactive, it is important to consider the implications of recording particular stories in playback. Where a contributor indicates through body language such as frequently checking their surrounds, or whispering, this might suggest that they are uncomfortable with people hearing or seeing them. In small towns where stories and individuals are identifiable it may be less appropriate to include these for playback.

Hint: Selecting Playback Stories
- Include all opinions, including those you don't personally agree with.
- Learn to judge the intent of the contributor rather than outcome.

Research material – research and analysis

No matter how the data is kept or how much analysis is possible at the time of collecting, the resource holds inherent value. Sometimes the use and relevance of the collection may only become apparent with time. And the significance and value of the collection may change at different times and in particular contexts.

The research potential of material gathered through the interactive is yet to be fully explored or realised (see Chapter 7). It is difficult to predict research questions of the future or the data that is required to answer those questions.

It is therefore recommended that the stories be maintained as a single collection, and that the long term management be flexible enough to accommodate as yet unidentified research questions. In line with guidelines outlined in the section on Storage and cataloguing, above, it is preferable that material is maintained for research and analysis at a later date.

There are significant ethical issues to be considered in the use of recorded material in research. These issues are heightened when the research is undertaken by an external party.

If the data collected through the module is used for research purposes, some of the questions you may want to consider include:
- What level of access will you give to external researchers?
- How will you decide what is released and what it can be used for?

In almost every instance, these will be individual requests which you will need to assess on a case by case basis. However, the following principles will help – though not guarantee – a more certain and ethical outcome.

Establish the benefit of the research to your organisation:
- Your organisation should benefit in some way from the research.
- Establish requirements for research or outcomes to be returned in a useable format for the organisation.
- If you provide the data, they should provide the research back in a useable format e.g. results of an analysis.

Assess how the research will use data from the Living Memory Interpretation Module
- How is the material central and critical to research questions?
- How does the researcher plan to analyse the data? – what methods will they use?

Assess ethical considerations
- How will sensitive or personal information be protected?
- How can you ensure that contributors won't be misrepresented?
- Ask how the proposed researched contributes positively to the heritage topic or theme.
- What steps do they plan to take to gain ethics clearance from their institution? E.g. what requirements does the university have, and how will they address them.

Hint: The safest course of action is to only release material to people from institutions that can readily demonstrate their ethical requirements and provide a research proposal. In most instances you will find it easier to deal with researchers from recognised research institutions such as bona fide universities, museums and archives, and government agencies. These organisations tend to have existing ethics policies and guidelines whereas independent researchers or small organisations find it more difficult to demonstrate their own ethical guidelines.

Other External Uses

Occasionally you may receive requests to use material in unrelated contexts such as for media. However,

once you have agreed to such a request it is impossible to control the subsequent reproduction, distribution and playback contexts of the material. This makes contributors vulnerable to unwanted exposure. It also leaves your organisation in a questionable legal position. Although the interactive provides for individuals to grant permission to the organisation to use the material, this does not give permission for open distribution and replication in other contexts.

- Requests to broadcast through mainstream media should never be agreed to.
- Other requests should be assessed carefully on a case by case basis, and any agreement should specify controls and restrictions on further distribution.

3. Categories of Material for Deletion

Despite the recommendation to keep material wherever possible, there are instances where deletion is appropriate. In some cases this decision may be a simple one, but in others you may need to use some judgement. The following guidelines will assist you to make these decisions.

In all cases judgements about whether or not to delete material should be judged in light of the intention of the contributor.

Offensive material

One of the most obvious categories of material to delete is those stories that contain material that is offensive. However, what constitutes offensive material is not necessarily clear cut. What may be offensive to one person may not be to another. Furthermore, contributors who swear may not intend to give offense. It is also important to remember that some of the most powerful stories may include this kind of unintended offense, and it will be detrimental to delete all such materials.

There are also decisions to be made about the use of material that contains offensive material. While offense may be unintended, it may nevertheless be inappropriate for playback.

Political content may be relevant to store for historical posterity and research purposes, but be inappropriate for playback. This is particularly the case where material can shock, offend or even ignite a contemporary issue. An example may be stories which contain racial vilification.

Example: Swearing

Swearing is a good example. While some people may find all swearing offensive, this is not necessarily the intention of the person who swears. A person who swears during their recording as a means to give emphasis to their story, to quote something or because it is part of their everyday vocabulary. The intent is to share the story, not to give offense. In this case you may wish to keep the material. Your decision about whether or not to use it in playback needs to be informed by how important the story is, what the likely audience is and whether it will cause undue concern. It is possible that you may even want to use it but provide a warning for viewers.

On the other hand it is quite possible that someone may misuse the interactive to include material that is deliberately offensive by including a litany of expletives without any context or related story. This material is intended to be offensive and has little or no value and can be deleted.

Guidelines

- Judging offensive material is not about what you or another individual finds personally offensive, but what might cause serious offense to a group of people.
- Some content that contains offensive material can nevertheless contain good stories.
- Material can be relevant and offensive. If so, it should be stored and separate decisions made about playback.
- Material that is offensive and contains nil content should be deleted.
- Physically offensive behaviour such as recorded nudity, sex, lewdness can be deleted.
- Material generated through misappropriate use of equipment (e.g. recording acts of vandalism or personal or political attacks) that contains no relevant content should be deleted.
- Relevance of material will determine storage and future use.
- Political content which can ignite conflict should not be selected for playback especially where it may appear that the organisation condones such views.

Children

Material recorded by children may be suitable for deletion where there is no clear guardian consent or when they risk being identified.

- People under 18 years are not legally responsible and cannot be regarded as giving informed consent to have their stories stored, used in playback or made the subject of research.
- Implicit parental consent can be inferred where children record their stories in the presence of an adult. These stories can be kept.
- It may be necessary to make some informed judgement as to the age of the contributor.
- Where children are dressed in school uniform a clear association is established between the child and a particular school. It is preferable that material is deleted to protect the privacy of the child and the reputation of the school.

Material submitted in Languages other than English

In a tourism context it is not unexpected that some visitors will make contributions in a language other than English. It is also possible that some contexts would encourage participation by multicultural Australian groups who may similarly wish to share their stories in languages other than English. It is also possible that some non-verbal people may record their stories using sign language.

These stories may be particularly valuable in bringing new and diverse experiences to the site interpretation. However, if there is no capacity to understand the story then it can be difficult to assess its worth. It is also of limited use in playback without some form of translation.

Nevertheless, this material should not be automatically deleted. While it may not always be possible, it is preferable to first translate and understand a story before making a decision to delete it.

Hint: If there is the possibility of translating material, do not delete the recording until its worth has been assessed.

Repeat stories

There will be instances where individuals may record the same story a number of times in an effort to refine and improve their contribution. However, they may sometimes submit multiple versions. This can occur where they do not fully understand the equipment or where they cannot judge which is the better version. You will need to make some assessment about which versions of the story – if any – you wish to keep.

- Sometimes the evolution of storytelling is part of the story and it is relevant to keep multiple versions.
- Make a quality judgement about which story to keep. E.g. which version contains better narrative structure, contains most pertinent information, is told in a compelling and clear voice, etc.

Nil Content entries

Recordings that have no content can be immediately deleted. These can be recordings where people have not spoken or acted out a role, or simply talked nonsense.

In some cases the interactive may be used to record general comment on particular issue or to provide feedback on the tourism experience or facilities. This content does not relate to the theme or content of the interpretation. Operators may choose to use such unrelated information to respond to visitor concerns but the material should not be kept for playback or research.

Delete all recordings that only contain:

- Empty content (i.e. no voice or other translatable content)
- Nonsensical material (e.g. rhubarb, rhubarb, rhubarb; blah, blah, blah)
- Unrelated content

Criminal Evidence

The presentation of criminal evidence in a recording is highly unlikely but it is important to be aware that it could occur and to have a strategy to deal with it.

Information relating to criminal content may take the form of a confessional by a criminal or as an accusation

by a victim or witness.

In small communities there can be huge privacy and defamation implications for using this information in any way. However, it may be necessary to decide when an issue is a 'cry for help' that should be passed on to authorities.

Some things to think about include:
- Contributions will only become defamatory if the organisation chooses to broadcast it.
- High profile and significant cases might come to represent current views and there may be some value in retaining information until after a case is decided.
- Material that defames individuals in cases where information is not public should be deleted.
- Where an individual confesses to a crime you might consider passing it on to Police or other relevant authorities.
- Where you feel there are sufficient grounds to believe the recording has been used as a means to voice concerns or appeal for assistance in a threatening circumstance, consider passing material to an appropriate authority so that it can be dealt with through appropriate legal channels.

Chapter 7

FUTURE ACTION

The Living Memory Interpretation Module offers several opportunities for future development and action. The most immediate is the extension of the product to heritage tourism attractions. This has been highlighted as a key direction since the inception of the initial project. There are also opportunities to extend the application to new contexts.

Extension of Product through Saleable Kit

The project was initiated with the view that the key elements of the study could be repackaged into a saleable kit for distribution to heritage tourism attractions throughout Australia, and even overseas.

The key elements of the Living Memory Interpretation Module, as they have been developed through the project include:
- Specifications for hardware
- Software to run the interactive
- A manual to install and manage the interactive software
- A suite of guidelines to assist in the physical set up, operation and management of the module and associated data.

These products could be packaged together so that any operator who has a need or use for this kind of interpretation could be guided through the process of establishing and maintaining the unit.

Extended Applications

In the first instance, the unit was conceived and developed in relation to built cultural heritage sites. These offer immediate opportunities for adoption of the unit, because they often have existing spaces in which to house and run the Module. However, there are many other contexts in which the unit might be used, and further developments that might take it forward in new directions. These are briefly outlined below:

Additional Site Types

The module could be used at heritage tourism sites such as museums, galleries, national parks, open sites and public events. This kind of adaptation would focus largely on self-contained and robust housing for the unit so that it could withstand greater degrees of vandalism, exposure to climatic conditions and higher rates of use. It may also be necessary to investigate self-generating power sources to run the unit.

Special Events

The Living Memory Interpretation Module has great potential to be used for special event days associated with a heritage attraction. For example, reunion and anniversary events where groups of people meet and share experiences of a particular event, time or place can be powerful memory triggers. The flexibility of the interactive is ideal for this use. While restricting the use of the unit to particular events and days can be a means through which to manage data, it also provides opportunities for smaller organisations to construct and share a single unit.

Heritage Management

The module was principally developed for application in cultural heritage tourism. It has great potential to be extended for use in heritage management and research. As outlined in the literature review, heritage assessments are increasingly concerned to reflect and consider a broader range of community values. The Living Memory interactive could provide a mechanism through which to record and understand the full range of interests in particular sites or regions.

In addition to using the unit in more contexts, the module also has the potential to be developed for

commercial and research purposes.

Research Tool

In a similar way that the module might be used to understand heritage values, a self-directed recording module of this kind, might also be used to collate data for other kinds of research purposes. This would require the software to be reconfigured around semi-structured interview questions, and the timing would need to be altered to allow for longer contributions. This will require significant reconceptualising, but is potentially a valuable way to gather qualitative data.

In-Reach

Despite the interest of the National Museum of Australia in developing a partnership that would see stories from Willow Court reflected in the *Eternity* gallery, this has largely remained unexplored due to unforeseen circumstances. The involvement of the NMA has been important to the project, and the opportunities for sharing stories from regional Australia into the 'centre', that being Canberra. This has important benefits for an organization like the NMA which is physically and socially isolated from many of its core constituents.

Web-based sharing

Another major area of development would be to extend the application into a web-based format so that all the stories could be shared through a national network. The potential for web-based products would also allow users to create their own collections of stories from the library of publicly accessible stories.

Commercialised souvenirs

Contributors may want to access or copy their stories at the time of recording or at a later date. There are potential commercial opportunities to explore in tourism contexts. The Living Memory Interpretation Module could be developed to support commercial products based on this. An adaptation of the software and some additional hardware would allow users to select to make a copy of their recording. This could easily be copied to a CD that might include some information about the heritage site and images. These could be sold at a very modest price and still return a good profit to the organisation.

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- the value of graduate researchers to Australia;

- collaboration among researchers, between searchers and industry or other users; and

- efficiency in the use of intellectual and other research outcomes.