



Bea Broda – Your Editor

Welcome to the premier edition of the new version of the I IPT newsletter!

With the passing of the baton from founding president, Louis D'Amore to new president Ajay Prakash, along with a re-imagined logo and branding, it seemed a perfect time to revive the newsletter tradition.

Every one of us wishes to expand peace initiatives, and it is hoped that by sharing news and information about the projects and plans everyone has going on in all of the chapters, and by distributing this information to affiliated organizations, we can move peace forward.

First in this issue is a letter from our I IPT president, which is followed by news from a few of the chapters. This is a perfect place to communicate your news and concerns, and this newsletter is only as good as the contributions that are sent in. The newsletter is intended to be distributed monthly, so please send all of your text, pictures and video/web links to: editor@iipt.org

A Letter from the President

Dear friends of I IPT,

After a very long gap, we have the latest issue of our Newsletter. Much has changed in the intervening years; the world has changed and so has I IPT. After 37 years of unflagging devotion to propagating Tourism as a Tool for Peace, our Founding President Dr. Louis D'Amore has chosen to transition to President Emeritus and has entrusted the baton to me. I'm honoured and I'm humbled.

Let me briefly introduce myself. I live and work in Mumbai. I've been a part of the travel and tourism industry now for over 40 years. I'm the Chief Executive of Nomad Travels in Mumbai and currently I'm also the President of the Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) and a board member



Louis D'Amore (left) passing the baton onto the new I IPT President Ajay Prakash (right)

of WTAAA – the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance. So tourism is where I've spent most of my life but, until I met Lou, I had never conceived of the 'higher paradigm of tourism' and that's what drives me today – to spread greater awareness of Tourism as a Tool for Peace and to encourage

every traveller to become an Ambassador for Peace.

The two gravest challenges facing the Planet today are geopolitical confrontations and climate change. Despite numerous cautions, conferences, conventions and resolutions we're hurtling

towards crossing that 1.5 degrees threshold and, simultaneously - though at any time there are over 100 armed conflicts around the globe - the two major current wars, Ukraine/Russia and Israel/Palestine sadly have the potential to spiral into greater global conflict. Thousands of innocent lives have been lost and there is no end in sight yet.

So the question arises – What does tourism have to do with this? What can tourism do to change things? That peace is a prerequisite for tourism is axiomatic; the premise that tourism can promote peace needs corroboration.

Let's start with a question – Does tourism today promote peace? And follow that up with – Can it? The short answer to the first question is – Sadly, largely, No. The answer to the second starts with a question – Can an industry that accounts for close to 10% of global GDP and global employment shrink into helplessness, wring its hands and lament that it has no power to influence global attitudes?

When Louis D'Amore proposed tourism as a force for peace and global good, there were very few who had looked at the industry in this light. Today there are a number of organizations across the globe who espouse the cause and are working towards harnessing the power of tourism as a tool for peace. We need to come together and we need to amplify each others' voices so that they resonate across the entire industry. Hotel chains, cruise lines, credit card companies, tour operators, travel consultants, car hire companies and even airlines need to be sensitised so that they can cascade this awareness to their customers – that the Earth is all we have; that there is no Planet B!

The business of tourism is to bring people together, to celebrate differences as well as shared values, to make the unfamiliar familiar, to reduce the distance between “Us” and “Them” – in other words, to foster understanding, harmony and acceptance.



Ajay Prakash
IIPT Global President

If as an industry we can take this thought to heart and incorporate it in our core business strategies, yes, Tourism can be a vital force for the promotion of Peace.

We seek your help and support to make this dream a reality.



Jovan Popesku
IIPT Serbian Chapter President

News from the IIPT Serbian Chapter

The Serbian Chapter will be featured in the next newsletter, as certain events are just now solidifying.

There are two key pieces of news have not yet been finally confirmed:

One is about organizing an event dedicated to the theme of the **World Tourism Day for 2024 ("Tourism and Peace") during the Exit festival**. The second is about the participation of IIPT Serbia in organizing a **symposium dedicated to the cultural route "Sultans trail"** with a special emphasis on the cooperation of several countries within this route.

Next is the announcement of the organization of the **IIPT Serbia Student Peace Prize** as well as the announcement of one student as an **ambassador of peace**. (The competition will start in September 2024 and the winner will be announced in December 2024).

Final confirmations and details regarding cooperation with the EXIT festival and the Sultans Trail organization are expected to be received soon.

For more information on EXIT Festival – exitfest.org/en

For more information on World Tourism Day – internationaldayofpeace.org

From 'Line' to 'Staff': A Step to Tourism Empowerment

by Max Haberstroh

Critical experts disavow the widespread mantra of post-Covid-19 sustainable tourism development. However, isn't responsible tourism the more accurate approach? After all, its focus on the economic, social and environmental balance of pros and cons of tourism has the time on its side to outlive the traditional, easy-handed practice of playing with merely numerical values (statistics, economic growth/GDP).

I think responsible travel & tourism should be taken as an upgrade of tourism itself, going beyond its essence as an outstanding service industry only. Therefore, it is crucial to create a maximum of public awareness and perception of the industry's 'higher purpose': It's especially up to the public sector to use the comprehensive 'tool-box' (cluster of multi-level communication tools) that travel & tourism provides, to the benefit of both mutual understanding (prerequisite of peace) and qualitative product and service growth.

Embedded in a political setting, travel & tourism is prone to seek commonalities with related bodies in both government and business, and like-minded organisms, with 'cultural diplomacy' being just one of its kind. Consequently, that would require travel & tourism,

due to its actively and passively influential capacity, to upgrade the sector's traditionally functional ministry of tourism, from the limits of a 'line organization' to the level of a 'staff organization' at the very top of state/government leadership ('staff organization' with autonomy status for operational flexibility). Objectives would include an integrated mission-vision statement, consistent guidelines and a strategic and operational empowerment of travel & tourism as the spearhead of place management altogether, including 'umbrella' branding and marketing policies. (i. e. emphasising investments on national, regional, local levels).

The vision of peace, to my mind, has for long been given a lot of lip-service, yet the scope of tourism's real 'non-tangible' (communicative) potentialities have been left to little more than a collateral 'asset' -- nice but "non-essential", in reminiscence to comments regarding the political perception of tourism during the pandemic. Peace Parks, therefore, may indeed bear an inherent symbolic quality, if the message is generally recognized and its peace-promoting contents and intended impact well understood -- and rooted in a concept for key-decision makers' further action. Otherwise it could just trigger mere activism and end up – in a dead end.

News from the IIPT Australian Chapter



Gail Parsonage
IIPT Australian Chapter President

President Gail Parsonage's Chapter in Australia will star in an upcoming issue of the IIPT newsletter, but for now, Gail wants to communicate with us the following news that she received from Mayumi regarding Skal. One of the reasons this is such good news is that establishing like-minded affiliations is a terrific way to grow IIPT and its mission.



Dear Gail,

I just wanted to share this very nice message shared by Skal today, reaffirming the affiliation with IIPT.

I still want to pursue the opportunity to have a Peace Park in Taiwan, and when the discussion gets more solid, I will reach out to you and IIPT.

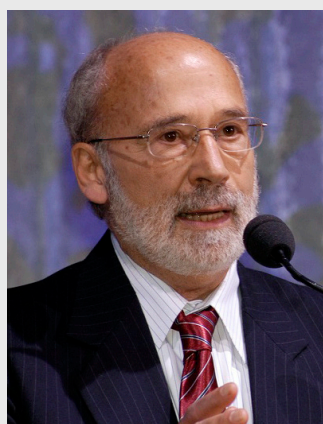
From Mayumi

Editor's Note: Announced at the 2015 IIPT World Symposium on Cultivating Sustainable and Peaceful Communities through Tourism, Culture, and Sport in Johannesburg, this article from the archives remains relevant today, reminding us that the quest for peace is an ongoing mission requiring constant dialogue, consistent collaboration and a shared hope for a better world for all.

Battir, Palestine – to be Declared IIPT/Skål Village of Peace

by Linda Hohnholz

The village of Battir, on the West Bank hills near Bethlehem, is a land of olive groves, grape vines, fig trees and seven natural springs that feed ancient agricultural terraces of rich soil planted with green beans, zucchini and eggplant. It is nestled in a series of farmed valleys with hand-made stone terraces dotted with historic Roman ruins. Farming is done by traditional farming methods passed down for centuries.



Louis D'Amore
IIPT President Emeritus

IIPT Founder and President Emeritus, Louis D'Amore announced today that the Town of Battir – “Palestine’s Paradise Valley” the “Tuscany of the Middle East” – will be declared an **IIPT/ Skål Village of Peace.**

The daily conflict that plagues the West Bank and Gaza seems far from this agricultural paradise. In a land burdened by war and heartbreak – Battir represents an “Oasis of Peace and Tranquility” – recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site as the

result of a campaign spearheaded by both Palestinian and Israeli environmental organizations.

The Village of Battir proudly maintains a zero illiteracy rate thanks to a town elder (who pioneered for the first girls’ school to be built in 1951) while preserving their rich cultural heritage and welcoming spirit in the midst of their idyllic landscape.

Mr. Akram Bader, Mayor of Battir said “We are honored to be declared as an IIPT/Skål Village of Peace, and I look forward to participating in the IIPT World Symposium in South Africa on Sustainable and Peaceful Communities and Nations to spread our message of peace to other villages and towns throughout the world – particularly in areas of conflict.”

The International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) and Skål International, the world’s largest membership organization of travel and tourism professionals with 17,000 members in 400 Chapters in 87 countries have come together in launching the IIPT/ Skål Cities, Towns and Villages of Peace initiative.

Each IIPT/Skål City, Town and Village of Peace is committed to actively promoting values of tolerance,

non-violence, gender equality, human rights, youth empowerment, environmental awareness, and sustainable social and economic development. Collaboration between and among IIPT/Skål Cities, Towns and Villages of Peace is encouraged as well as information sharing regarding their respective peace programs and projects.

A special initiative, “IIPT/Skål Cities, Towns and Villages of Peace Across South Africa has been launched leading up to the IIPT World Symposium: Cultivating Sustainable and Peaceful Communities through Tourism, Culture and Sport being held at Emperors Palace, Ekurhuleni, South Africa – 16 to 19 February, 2015. A goal of 50 Peace Cities, Towns and Villages has been set symbolic of the 50th anniversary year of the African Union.

Cities, Towns and Villages in South Africa – or other regions of the world – interested in committing themselves to peace are invited to contact Louis D’Amore, email: ljd@iipt.org for more details.

IIPT is dedicated to fostering and facilitating tourism initiatives that contribute to international understanding and cooperation, an improved quality of environment, the preservation of heritage, poverty reduction, and the resolution of conflict – and through these initiatives, help bring about a more peaceful and sustainable world. IIPT is dedicated to mobilizing travel and tourism, the world’s largest industry, as the world’s first “Global Peace Industry,” an industry that promotes and supports the belief that “Every traveler is potentially an Ambassador for Peace.”

iipt.org



Diana McIntyre-Pike
President of the Caribbean Chapter

News from the IIPT Caribbean Chapter

As usual, the Caribbean chapter is deeply involved with initiating and maintaining fabulous peace tourism initiatives, and so we have saved this large section for the last. What you will find here is an excellent template for community tourism, as well as news of a wellness festival.

The following information comes from the President of the Caribbean Chapter, Diana McIntyre-Pike, who continues to be dedicated to community tourism. She has sent the following encapsulation of the topic.

Developing Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Community Tourism – through Countrystyle Villages as Businesses

Community Tourism was created in 1978 at my small hotel The Astra in Jamaica and marketed internationally through the International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) to assist communities in realizing the direct benefits of tourism in their own environment. This resulted in the IIPT branding Jamaica THE HOME OF COMMUNITY TOURISM. Community Tourism is holistic. It is not a niche form of tourism but provides for every niche market in an unconventional model. It depends on the appreciation and quality of indigenous resources to generate income and provides a tangible incentive and practical vehicle for community development.

At the first International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) Caribbean Conference, held in Montego Bay in 2003, it was agreed that “community tourism is community development through tourism.”

Objective and purpose of the Villages as Businesses programme

The objective and purpose of the Countrystyle Villages as Businesses programme reside in the fundamental vision of Countrystyle, which is to empower and develop communities on a sustainable basis by helping them realise their natural culture, talents, passions and potential, and dynamically packaging, marketing and exposing each individual community to the world as a unique destination (product) within their general region.

The mission of CCTN's Villages as Businesses programme

The Mission is to support the development of community tourism in Jamaica and internationally and to educate all stakeholders of its importance to the cause of peace, poverty alleviation and sustainable development and to offer local and foreign visitors diverse ‘community lifestyle experience’ vacations and tours.

How we work

We achieve success with our member communities by building relationships, mobilizing community

participation and sharing a vision that encourages creativity and collaboration, motivates everyone to seek economic opportunities within their local environment and stimulates entrepreneurship. We encourage communities to see visitor interest and expenditure as a catalyst for growing the broader economic activity, rather than a new source of revenue to be relied on.

While we encourage the creation of authentic attractions, we seek to diversify the tourism products and services we offer, and through this diversification, enhance our ability to apply to the varying market niches in the wide tourism marketplace.

Three Guiding Principles of the Countrystyle Villages as Businesses programme.

1) Think globally, act locally – with our distinct local flavours and cultures, we can create products which can be marketed throughout Jamaica, the Caribbean and the rest of the world. An example is the idea of ‘community theatres’ featuring the local talents while teaching community values and resources to both communities and visitors.

2) Independence and creativity – local citizens can and should decide for themselves what their Village product, theme or niche market should be. A village could choose three products, or two villages could combine to produce a single product.

While government can provide technical support, marketing and other assistance, it needs to facilitate individual plans rather than competing or requiring standardization.

3) Fostering human resources – the ultimate goal of this movement is the development of human resources. No success can come about without visionary local leaders. It is important to develop a local community that responds creatively when challenged with difficult times.

The Community Lifestyle Experience Tours

The Countrystyle Community Tourism Network (CCTN) has successfully developed a dynamic marketing theme for communities. The Community Lifestyle Experience offers local and foreign visitors a diverse vacation and tour experience anywhere in the Caribbean which promotes its nature, heritage, culture, music, cuisine and entertainment. CCTN helps villages design and package the Community Lifestyle Experiences for tour operators, travel agents and visitors. The packages take into consideration visitor interests and budgets and can include airport transfers, accommodation, meals, tours or vacations, community/host guide service, escort/guide rent-a-car and bus transportation.

Villages gain income directly from visitors through tours, homestay accommodation, entertainment and meals. But they also benefit because the tours include community businesses as interesting things to do and support, adding to the diverse experience provided to local and international visitors.

Our tours are demonstrating a growing market for authentic community experiences, even among the guests of large resort hotels. Visitors also welcome the opportunity to assist communities by participating in our "Adopt a Village" and "Pick a Project" programmes and contributing

to COMFUND, our Community Tourism Fund for investment where the interest will be available for low interest loans and grant funding for community projects and businesses and is registered in the US with an interim Diaspora Board. A Projects Assessment Committee is being set up to assess community projects and businesses before it goes to the COMFUND Board. The Diaspora has been selected as the lead partners for investment, marketing and community business planning.

Membership opportunities

The Countrystyle Villages as Businesses is a membership organization which offers education and training through its Academy for Community Tourism (ACT) especially in Community Tourism Entrepreneurship and Hospitality from our Academy for Community Tourism (ACT) in partnership with the Northern Caribbean University Morris Entrepreneurship Centre anywhere in the world, marketing and business development support through our Consultancy arm which is available to any country at special discounted rates.

Conclusion

While community tourism has much to offer a local population, it is essential that the potential of the situation is carefully analysed and evaluated before embarking on the development of a significant project or promoting a community-based tourism strategy.

The Countrystyle Community Tourism Network's Villages as Businesses programme will ensure that the villages are developed in a sustainable way to protect the natural and cultural environment and improve the quality of its citizens through community tourism. The IIPT has endorsed the Villages as Businesses programme as a project for peace through tourism.

visitcommunities.com/jamaica
Ph. 876-507-6326
villagesasbusinesses@yahoo.com

Wellness Peace Festival

December 4 – 9 2024 is the Wellness Peace Festival in Mandeville, Manchester Jamaica.

- The 1st IIPT Peace Parish in the Caribbean with the first IIPT Peace Park.
- From the IIPT Caribbean Chapter in association with the Manchester Wellness Foundation (Manwell) Manchester Peace Coalition (MPCo)
- Countrystyle Community Tourism Network (CCTN)
- Villages as businesses
- International guest speaker to be advised
- Wellness Peace Fair
- Wellness peace presentations Dec. 5 and 6 – Jamaican Entertainment
- Runwalk – December 7
- Come party with us at Manchester Club with Merritone December 7
- Golfing for peace December 8
- Village Community experience lifestyle tours

For further information:

Diana McIntyre-Pike

Ph: 876-507-6326

iiptcaribbean@yahoo.com

OF ARCHIVAL INTEREST: Please click on the link to listen to this interview which was produced by Dervan Malcolm at the IIPT Caribbean Community Tourism Conference in 2018 at the UWI Visitors Lodge which says it all!

[Interview with Louis D'Amore and Diana McIntyre-Pike at Caribbean Tourism Conference](#)

It is our hope that this information will help keep the movement of global peace going forward, and encourage you to email me items that you think will be of interest to our readers to editor@iipt.org

For more information and to donate to IIPT visit iipt.org