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Newsletter

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TOUR-MATE TELLS THE STORY OF BIO-DIVERSITY AT THE BIOMUSEO DE PANAMA



Image © BioMuseo De Panama

The BioMuseo de Panama was designed to tell the story of how the Isthmus of Panama emerged from the sea, uniting two continents and separating a large ocean in two, forever changing the planet's biodiversity.

Designed by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry, it is his first work in both Latin America and the tropics. The Museum comprises 4,000 square meters and contains eight permanent exhibition galleries, a public atrium, a space for temporary exhibitions, a shop, a café and multiple external displays in a botanical garden. The exhibition space was designed by Bruce Mau Design.

Tour-Mate was selected by the Museum to provide audio interpretation to its visitors to convey the origin of the Isthmus of Panama and its huge impact on the Earth's biodiversity. Tour-Mate's producer, Jill Sharpe, spent weeks with the BioMuseo team to craft a truly inspiring story. After visiting the Museum for the first time, Jill said, "how wonderful to work on a project where the entire museum experience is one elegant integrated story line - from the architecture to the blend of art and science in the exhibit design - the Museum has been designed to impact the visitor on many levels. It's been a delight to work with such talented Panamanian Museum staff who are so dedicated to this Museum's message."

Margot Lopez, Communications Coordinator for the BioMuseo, said of her experience working with the Tour-Mate team, "As a part of the process of choosing our audio guide provider, we asked several companies for advice on our special needs. It was clear that Tour-Mate had a lot more experience and understood how museums work and the limitations that sometimes entails.

Even though we knew we were in good hands, we were more than pleasantly surprised by the commitment they showed through the process for the tour script creation. Their writer spent two weeks on site working closely with staff to understand our story fully and create a script that would become an integral part of the complete experience of the museum. Although we had a very tight schedule, the team went out of their way so we could have our equipment on time."

All BioMuseo visitors will be provided with a Tour-Mate SC550 Listening Wand and will be able to listen to fascinating stories about the Museum's exhibits and about bio-diversity in their choice of Spanish, English, Portuguese, Chinese or French.

For more information about the Biomuseo de Panama please go to: www.biomuseopanama.org

TOUR-MATE AND PARKS CANADA TEAM UP TO PROVIDE AUDIO INTERPRETATION TO FORT RODD HILL NHS AND FISGARD LIGHTHOUSE NHS



Located just outside Victoria, British Columbia are historic Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse. Tour-Mate was selected by Parks Canada to provide tours of both locations in English and French.

Fort Rodd Hill NHS commemorates the national significance of the Victoria-Esquamalt coast artillery fortress in the defense of Victoria and the naval base at Esquamalt harbour, as part of the larger defense strategy of the British Empire and Canada from 1878 to 1956.

Fisgard Lighthouse was Canada's first lighthouse on the west coast. It was built by the British in 1860, when Vancouver Island was not yet part of Canada's west coast. It is still in operation. The light was automated in 1929, but every year many thousands of visitors step inside a real 19th century light, and capture some of the feeling of ships wrecked and lives saved. Fisgard's red brick house and white tower have stood faithfully at the entrance to Esquamalt harbour. Once a beacon for the British Royal Navy's Pacific Squadron, today Fisgard still marks home base for the Royal Canadian Navy.

Inside the building are two floors of exhibits, dealing with shipwrecks, storms, far-flung lights, and the everyday working equipment of the light keeper a century ago. Right next to the tower stairs on the second floor, a specially-made video evokes the loneliness and isolation that was the lot of the 19th century keeper.

The tour will be delivered via Tour-Mate's SC550 Listening Wands and will be available at the entrance to Fort Rodd Hill NHS.

For more information about Fort Rodd Hill NHS and Fisgard Lighthouse NHS please visit:

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/bc/fortroddhill>

HISTORIC FORT LANGLEY TO OFFER A SIX LANGUAGE AUDIO TOUR

Tour-Mate is pleased to announce that it is collaborating with Parks Canada to produce a six language tour of Fort Langley NHS to be delivered to visitors via the SC550 Listening Wand system.

Fort Langley NHS in Langley, British Columbia (a suburb of Vancouver), is the exact location where, a century and a half ago, a huge fur trade organization called the Hudson's Bay Company established a small post to trade with the First Nations of the West Coast. The enterprise grew, evolved, and influenced history, leading to the creation of the colony of British Columbia. Furs were shipped to Europe via Cape Horn. Produce was traded to the Russians in Alaska. Local cranberries found their way to California, and Fraser River salmon was enjoyed as far away as Hawaii!

In 1858, rumours of gold on the Fraser River caused a massive influx of Americans to the area. Fearing annexation by the United States, British Columbia was proclaimed a Crown Colony on this site by James Douglas on November 19, 1858.

The tours will be available for visitors to Fort Langley NHS at the end of March 2014.

For more information about Fort Langley NHS please visit: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/bc/langley>

TOUR-MATE HELPS ANIMATE THE BIRTH PLACE OF THE RED WHITE AND BLUE

The well-known and beloved story of Betsy Ross sewing the first Stars & Stripes is tightly woven into the colorful fabric of America's rich history. Historic Philadelphia, Inc. and Tour-Mate teamed up this past spring to launch a new audio tour of The Betsy Ross House, the birthplace of the American flag. Visitors to the Betsy Ross House who take the tour can meet Betsy and listen to her story of love, death and the Revolutionary War. They will learn about Betsy Ross, the business woman, revolutionary, mother and wife.

The tour is available via Tour-Mate's SC550 Listening Wand system for a small rental fee.

Lisa Acker-Moulder, the Director of Betsy Ross House, had this to say of her experience working with Tour-Mate to implement the new tour, "Late last year I was caught off guard when I learned that, for numerous reasons, we would have to replace our very popular audio tour and we only had a few months to do it. The audio tour had been a terrific source of revenue for the Betsy Ross House, bringing in tens of thousands of dollars a year, and I was fearful that we would be forced to go through our busy spring and summer season without one. I reached out to Tour-Mate in a panic. I thought it would be impossible to develop the content, record and produce a high quality audio tour from scratch in less than six months (and on a shoestring budget!). The folks from Tour-Mate assured me that they could give us what we needed and stay within our timeline and budget. We signed a contract in February and by June we were selling our brand new audio guide to our tourists!

It's been a pleasure to work with the Tour-Mate team. They've always been responsive and willing to work with us on our specific requests. Their rates are very reasonable and their equipment is durable and reliable. We're very pleased with our partnership with Tour-Mate!"

Neil Poch, President of Tour-Mate said of the Betsy Ross House, "It is an honor for Tour-Mate to have been selected to provide interpretation for this historic location. The team at Betsy Ross House has been a pleasure to work with. We look forward to a long affiliation with this iconic location."

To find out more about The Betsy Ross House please visit: <http://historicphiladelphia.org/betsy-ross-house/what-to-see/>



Image © Miles Kennedy

TOUR-MATE TEAMS UP WITH THE DENVER ART MUSEUM FOR COURT TO CAFÉ

Tour-Mate is providing a multi-platform delivery solution for the interpretation provided by the Denver Art Museum at its current exhibition: *Court to Café: Three Centuries of French Masterworks from the Wadsworth Atheneum*. In addition to delivering a tour to visitors via Tour-Mate's SC550 Listening Wand system, the Denver Art Museum is also providing group tours to its visitors using its new TM200 Group Guide system.

Tour-Mate produced the Court to Café tour in collaboration with Denver Art Museum's curatorial and education staff. There are adult and family versions of the tour and both are provided in English and Spanish. The exhibition runs until February 9, 2014.

For more information about the Denver Art Museum or about the *Court to Café: Three Centuries of French Masterworks from the Wadsworth Atheneum* exhibition, please visit: www.denverartmuseum.org

TOUR-MATE LAUNCHES THE SOLAR WAYFINDER –A WAYFINDING AND INTERPRETIVE DEVICE



The newest addition to Tour-Mate's fixed in place eco-line of interpretive products is the Solar Wayfinder. The Solar Wayfinder is perfect for outdoor trails, gardens, nature walks or exterior locations which would benefit from an audio component incorporated into signage. The Solar Wayfinder improves upon traditional wayfinding signs by marrying rugged design and high visibility with dynamic audio to accompany text and graphics.

The Solar Wayfinder is constructed of heavy duty aluminum. These coated aluminum graphic panels will not warp or fade over time. The Solar Wayfinder's audio is powered by the sun and incorporates a long life battery back up. Up to eight MP3 audio messages can be accommodated within each Solar Wayfinder unit making it an ideal device to provide interpretation, directions, safety messages, and service availability messages to visitors.

For more information about the Solar Wayfinder or to request a quotation please contact Tour-Mate at (800)216-0029 or at info@tourmate.com

FIND US NEXT AT:

ASSOCIATION OF PARTNERS FOR PUBLIC LANDS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

FEB 25 - 27, 2014

ALBUQUERQUE, NM

VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MARCH 16 - 18, 2014

ALEXANDRIA, VA



Tour-Mate has been offering Interpretive Solutions since 1988. Millions of people have taken Tour-Mate tours in museums, art galleries, historic sites, zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, national parks, and commercial establishments.

From script creation to production, translation to recording, selection of delivery platforms to installation and operations; our experienced team can assist you each step of the way to ensure that you communicate your interpretive vision to your visitors in a fun and engaging way. Tour-Mate offers clients a fully integrated interpretive experience on multiple platforms such as handheld audio and multimedia devices, cutting edge mobile solutions, innovative and eco friendly stationary outdoor interpretive platforms and accessible group guided systems. Tour-Mate empowers its clients by offering them with the necessary software tools to allow them to edit, and/or create new tours on-site.

'Taking care of our clients' needs' has been the cornerstone of our success. Whether your institution has one hundred visitors or one million visitors, your total satisfaction is our primary goal.



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