



THE PASSAGEPORT: A 21st Century Thematic Travel Experience

The Lakes to Locks “PassagePort” uses 21st century wayfinding tools to create an experience that encourages travelers to explore the landscape as a cross between a thematic itinerary, scavenger hunt and geocaching. The target audience is two-fold: local residents and school groups who want to understand the place they live; and the tourism industry – individual travelers, or a group tour operators. Each PassagePort can have a thematic badge (virtual or real ones similar to scout badges) that can be earned by the user upon completion of the PassagePort, encouraging repeat users to collect them all. This low-cost and high-impact “multi-media traveler’s guide” will:

- encourage visitors to explore both urban and rural communities by thematically connecting sites (historic markers, landscape features, public lands, monuments, etc.) to museums;
- deliver authentic experiences through interpretive content that is “guided by locals;”
- create experiences that are designed to encourage overnight travel – generating economic activity for shopping, dining and lodging;
- create experiences that are well suited to matching thematic itineraries with local step-on-guides to tour operators;
- have minimal maintenance costs;
- have results that can be easily measured;
- support special promotions when a completed PassagePort can be redeemed for a small prize or entry in a drawing – adding more value and opportunities for promoting local businesses and services.

Here is how it works for the user:

Through the Lakes to Locks Passage print, web and social media promotions, the traveler can find a number of thematic experiences that are appealing for both children and adults. Once they select an interpretive theme (Stoddard’s Lake George, Turning Point of the American Revolution, Road to the Battle of Bennington, etc.), they will use a mobile device to find narration, a list of suggested stops, an interactive map with thematic route, and activities.

Each PassagePort will have a specific theme that directs the user to specific sites identified by GPS coordinates and located on a web-based map. Each site will have a specific story that will then direct the user to find a clue to a PassagePort question:

- at a specific museum or other attraction and introduce them to a specific person that will tell them more, or
- an activity related to a landscape feature, interpretive exhibits or historical markers.

Some clues will be in the form of a link to our website where they will find a “Passage Minute” (video), “Passage Tale” (audio), or other website content that will contain the answer to the clue. By providing on line content, we can encourage visitation to a place that does not have regular hours, interpretive

staff or volunteers. Throughout the PassagePort, users will be prompted to visit local businesses that can build social media connections for special deals or discounts to users.

What is needed for this to work:

1. Each Point of Interest (POI) has GPS coordinates established and has written narrative, photos, PDFs, audio and/or video interpretation attached. This content can be added or modified by the contributors and website manager, allowing for constant upgrades. The POIs are linked thematically and saved as a PassagePort with suggested route and itinerary.

2. A mobile device will draw content from a mobile app that creates a GPS-based PassagePort to guide users on the road (trail or waterbody), linking the map-based content to a thematic itinerary with travel route, narration and POIs. Each page of the mobile app could provide information on the sites, short audio and video stories, images – with options to find businesses, weather forecasts, and traffic/road conditions. Points-of-interest (POIs) and interpretive content will be triggered as the user approaches the GPS location. The PassagePort can include:

- Destinations (shopping, dining, lodging) from the website database
- “Can we suggest” options during the trip for spontaneous diversions
- Weather, road and travel conditions
- Rumsey Map Collection layers
- Zagat ratings for dining
- Trimble Outdoor Trips
- Google postings for comments, photos, Youtube videos, etc.

3. This tool is well suited for building partnerships with local businesses, rental car companies, airlines (fly/drive packages), Sirius radio, and GPS navigation systems.

4. A savvy website and mobile app combination will build in back-end tools to collect data from travelers as they use the content and make travel decisions, providing tremendous value to the business sector.

5. A PassagePort could be developed for bike routes, walking tours, driving tours, hiking trails, waterways – or a combination of them all!

Audio Narration

The goal of the Lakes to Locks PassagePort to allow the visitor to be an “engaged explorer,” understanding how geography predestines history -- and get them to want to learn more. This region is steeped in important history, history that shaped the world as we know it today. The mobile app is designed to thematically link numerous museums and historic sites with elements in the landscape that create and experience that is the reason for the trip.

The narration is scripted, with voices, editing and sound come together to provide lively, engaging, fast-paced, a little irreverent, but historically accurate narration. The narration and interpretation is designed to provoke the audience to learn, and engage them in a personal way, strike an emotional chord,

thereby rendering an authentic travel experience. This is not to be the history lecture or even the historic site experience. We want to engage the traveler to understand the human experience – culture, society, emotions, and morals – related to the historic fact. This is designed to break away from the black and white historical facts and traditional delivery of the history – dioramas, re-enactments, people dressed in period costume – but rather provide the back-story of the players, their motivations, and the culture of the time. Many historic sites will be included in a PassagePort, the narration is to add to the visitor’s site experience, not duplicate or replace it.

Many of the topics may touch on issues that are politically sensitive in today’s world (Indians, slavery, nation-building), but that is just the point. We need the people of today to understand the “why and how” of the actions of 200 or more years ago. It is to further the understanding of American history, building respect for the numerous cultures and perspectives of the people that influenced the history – breaking away from history “told from the perspective of the victor.” The United States is a nation that was built by people that blurred the boundaries of society, culture, and philosophy.

There may be narration at a point-of-interest, where we want people to get out of their car and poke around a bit. Other times the narration can be delivered on the move -- keeping folks engaged, and understand a bit of the landscape they are traveling through – and also interpret the places where there is no safe place to stop.

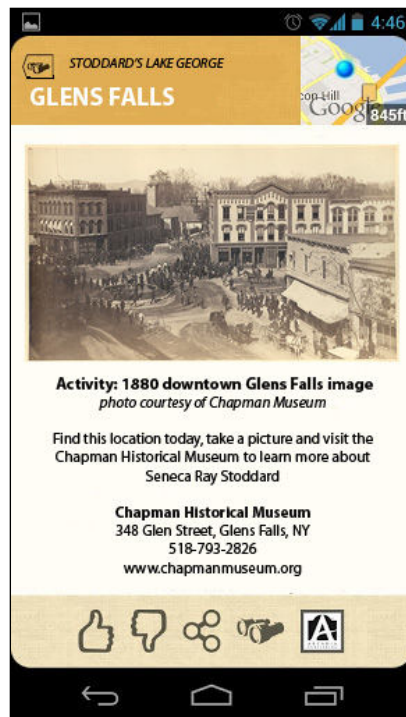
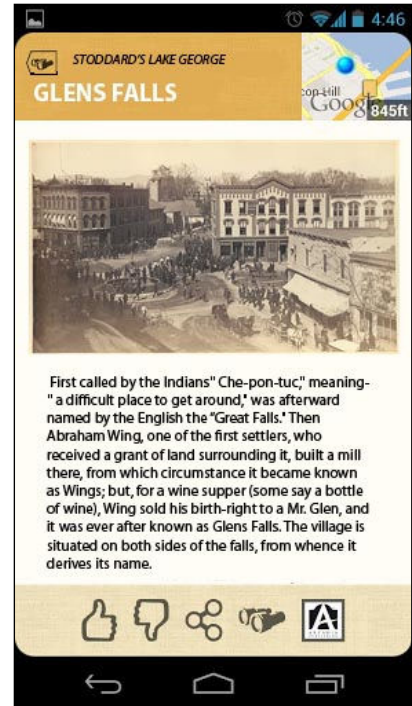
Sound and Music: The PassagePort audio interpretation takes inspiration from NPR's Radiolab -- weaving the stories of historical fact with thematic music, often dissonant and atonal, as Radiolab's host Abumrad explains “I put a lot of jaggedy sounds, little plurps and things, strange staccato, percussive things.” The PassagePort musical composition “brands” the product and a music score for the entire PassagePort will be different for each one -- Burgoyne, Stoddard and others done in the future.

EXAMPLE: Stoddard’s Lake George PassagePort

Seneca Ray Stoddard captured some of the first images most people had ever seen of the Lake George and Adirondack regions. First published in 1873, his guide to Lake George showcases his writing, drawing and map-making skills. His tongue-in-cheek humor still resonates today as we “re-boot” his guidebook with 21st Century technology – delivering on the promise “Guided by Locals.” Examples of how the content can be accessed through a mobile device include (Google’s Field Trip mobile app is used to illustrate content):

1. NARRATIVE: An introduction to the PassagePort theme and history to each community

Selected quote from Stoddard’s guidebook.



2. ACTIVITY: 1880 Stoddard photo of downtown Glens Falls



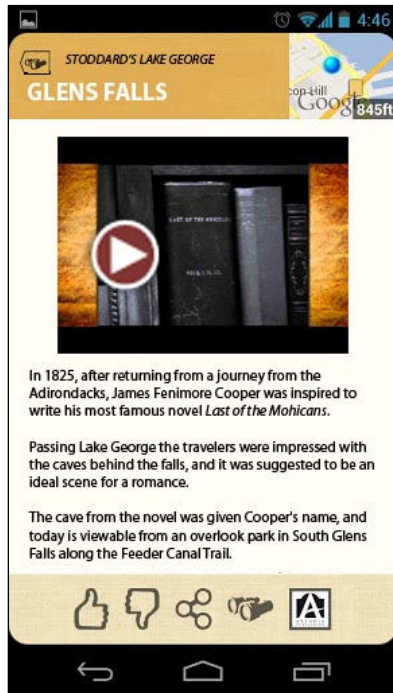
Find that location today, take a picture, and visit the **Chapman Historical Museum**. Ask Tim Weidner to show you the **Stoddard Collection** and their **Glens Falls Community History Project** to learn more about how Glens Falls has grown over the years.

The audio Passage Tale provides the clue to the location:

“Centennial Circle is a five leg roundabout in downtown Glens Falls. The circle is at the intersection of US Route 9 (Glen Street), NY Route 32 (Warren Street), NY Route 9L (Ridge Street) and Hudson Street. In 1873, the intersection — then consisting of Warren, Ridge and Glen Streets — became known as Fountain Square on account of an

ornate fountain having been built in front of the Rockwell House. This fountain was removed, however, in 1898 to make room for brick street paving and a trolley line to South Glens Falls. The fountain was moved to Crandall Park where it stayed until World War II when it was dismantled for scrap for the war effort. Thus lacking the fountain, the name was changed to Bank Square because the then-village's three banks were located in this area. In 2004, the City of Glens Falls renovation of a malfunctioning

intersection planned a roundabout, the Mayor noted that there were no banks at Bank Square and that it seemed contradictory to refer to a roundabout intersection as a square. As a result, the name Centennial Circle was chosen from among submissions to a name-the-roundabout contest, the name having been submitted by Diane and Jon Swanson of Queensbury. The roundabout opened to traffic on May 6, 2007, and according to a 2008 study, the traffic volume of Centennial Circle has increased twenty percent compared to the intersection it replaced, while at the same time providing drivers with reduced wait times.”



3. PASSAGE MINUTE: Coopers Cave

http://www.lakestolocks.org/content_detail.php?uid=ltl23823731F03613E3C

In 1825, James Fenimore Cooper was inspired to write his most famous novel "Last of the Mohicans," set in the times of the French and Indian War (1754-1763). Many foreigners report that this is their favorite piece of American literature, and they enjoy visiting the landscape that inspired the story.

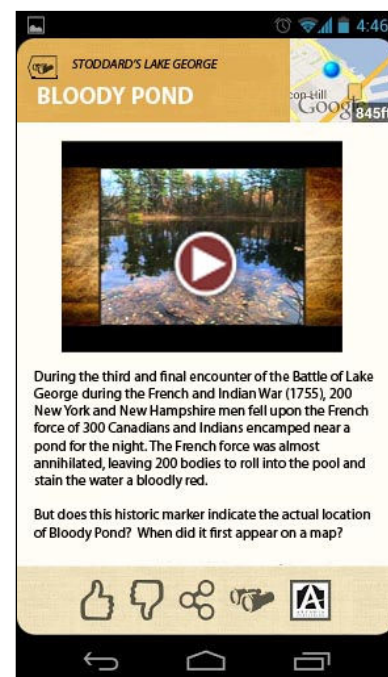
ACTIVITY: Today, the cave is viewable from an overlook park in South Glens Falls along the Feeder Canal Trail. We suggest a walk along the Feeder Canal Trail to Cooper's Cave Ale Company. Started by the Bethel family in 1999 as a Micro Brew, the Bethels have continued to add and expand their offerings to include an ice cream window along the Feeder Canal Trail, ice cream cakes and pies, and the very popular Brew Pub in 2009.

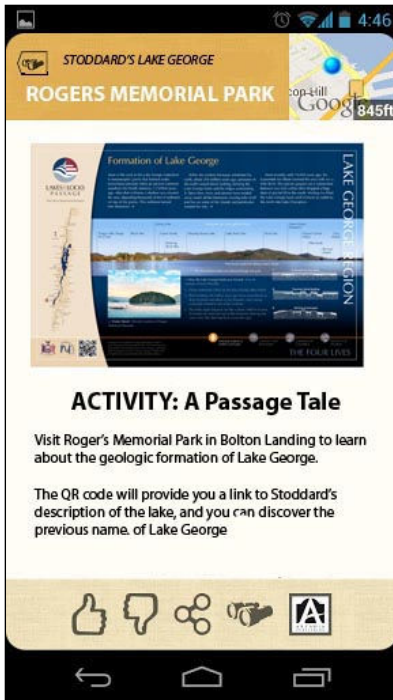
4. PASSAGE MINUTE: Bloody Pond

http://www.lakestolocks.org/content_detail.php?uid=ltl0A4871D3594EE113E

QUESTION: *What year did the pond first show up on a map?*

ACTIVITY: Visit the Rogers Island Visitors Center in Fort Edward to learn more about the French and Indian War. Ask Neal Orsini to tell you more about the third largest "city" in colonial North America and how today's Special Operations forces, particularly the US Army Rangers, consider this little island in the Hudson River to be their "spiritual home.”





5. PASSAGE TALE: Naming of Lake George

This clue will direct the user to a GPS location (an interpretive sign overlooking the lake in Bolton Landing's Rogers Memorial Park). A QR code will connect to a "Passage Tale," an audio reading from Stoddard's guidebook that provides the answer to a PassagePort question.

"The first white man known to have seen this lake was Father Jogues, a French priest, who, accompanied by Jean Bourdon, arrived at the north end on the 29th of May, 1649. It being on the eve of the festival of Corpus Christi, he, in commemoration of the day, called it Lac du St. Sacrament. In 1755 General Johnson changed its name to Lake George, in honor of one George the Second, an Englishman, who, living on a little island just off the coast of Ireland, at that time, proposed to keep America for a summer residence, but his successors had a little difficulty in collecting rents in 1776, and gave it up as a bad job."