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TOPONYMIC EDUCATION AND PRACTICE AND INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION: COOPERATION WITH PUBLIC INFORMATION MEDIA

Cooperation with public information media by the GNBC

(Submitted by Canada)**

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COOPERATION WITH PUBLIC INFORMATION MEDIA BY THE GNBC

Paper submitted by Canada

Various methods are used by members of the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) and toponymists across the country in providing geographical names information to the media. Print articles and radio and television interviews are the most high-profile methods. Most recently, the latest technology was used to interview the GNBC Chair in a webcast on the Internet.

Book launches, newspaper and journal articles, and radio and television interviews are some of the various ways used by Canadian toponymists, since the Seventh Conference, to promote geographical names by means of public information media.

Newspapers

Toponymists across the country have written articles for local newspapers. Some have been single articles; others have been weekly columns. The Commission de toponymie du Québec (CTQ) wrote a number of articles for journals dedicated either to municipal affairs or the French language. In Manitoba, a paper dedicated to senior citizens, publishes a listing, every two weeks, of 31 World War II casualties and the geographical features named after them with a request that the families contact the office of the Manitoba Geographical Names Program.

Radio and television

Several toponymists, notably in Manitoba, have been interviewed on radio or television – usually about a particular geographical name or an aspect of geographical names. The Alberta and Northwest Territories toponymists have been on weekly radio programmes for which they have researched specific names. The Chair of the Advisory Committee on Toponymy Research was interviewed on a radio programme over the course of several months about French names in the province of Ontario. Talks have also been given to historical societies, museums, and other groups.

Trade shows and similar events

One should also consider trade shows and similar events promoting cartographic products as being public media. The CTQ participates in about five such events during the year, speaking to clients and promoting the services it offers. Each year, the Department of Natural Resources hosts a Science Fair. Members of the Geographical Names Section have demonstrated the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base and distributed publications and puzzles at this event.

Book launches

Publicity is also used when launching new publications such as Quebec's *La France et le Québec. Des noms de lieux en partage* and Manitoba's *Geographical Names of Manitobu*.

The Internet

Ms. Gisèle Jacob, Chair of the Geographical Names Board of Canada was the featured guest in December 2001 on "Canadian Studies in Person", a series of interviews conducted by webcast. The interviewer was Dr. André Lapierre, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Toponymy Research. More information about the programme and archived shows may be found by going to <http://www.canada.uottawa.ca/csip.htm>. This site also has links to previous interviews in the show archives.

Also on the Internet, not only the GNBC but also various provincial and territorial members have toponymic web sites. Addresses are given in the paper on toponymic web sites under agenda item 13. Many queries are received from members of the public and media interested in geographical names through this medium.

Road signs, cairns, plaques, certificates, and film

Manitoba's Provincial Toponymist is a member of the Highway Names Advisory Committee and the Manitoba Heritage Council Inscriptions Committee. Such membership promotes the use of the correct current, and in some cases historical, geographical names on road and highway signs and commemorative plaques. Similar sorts of names publicity is done by other members of the GNBC.

Special cairns were unveiled at a cemetery in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Commemorative Name Certificates were given to the families of servicemen who had died during the Korean War. The CTQ receives commemorative name proposals from family associations and other groups. Such commemorations are usually announced at family reunions and other types of gatherings. Other provinces, such as Ontario and Saskatchewan also receive requests for certificates commemorating their deceased family members from WWII.

A documentary film about Saskatchewan's casualties from WWII, but particularly in the northern part of the province, was in the works. The efforts of a Saskatchewan pilot to locate and place plaques at the site of each geographical feature named for these casualties were to have been included. Unfortunately, the film's completion is now in doubt as the director passed away unexpectedly.

Displays

The Commemorative Name Certificate Display was set up at the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum, in Brandon, Manitoba, in 1999. The display was arranged to

commemorate the 25th anniversary of the naming of Commonwealth Lake and its four main islands – Beaver, Kangaroo, Lion, and Kiwi – after the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan and the participating trainees from Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand. A short article on the celebration and display appears in *Canoma*, Vol. 26, No. 1. The media are usually invited to the display unveiling.

Telephone, e-mail, and in-person

For all of the GNBC's members, telephone and e-mail inquiries continue to be the most-used daily forms of communication with the public information media. Occasionally, a really interested media person will visit a geographical names office in person to conduct geographical names research on their own.