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Restoration of Indigenous Toponyms: Recognition of Attachment, Identity and Dependence

Submitted by Australia**

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Summary

There have been various papers presented at UNGEGN Conferences which have discussed the cultural value of place names (toponyms). In particular, Resolution V/6 recognises that geographical names are 'significant elements of the cultural heritage of nations'. I would like to expand upon this resolution for the purposes of Resolution VIII/1, which invites summaries of activities that have promoted the revitalisation of Indigenous place names. In addition, consideration will be given to the attachment, identity and dependency people form with toponyms. In particular, consideration is given in this paper to:

- ♦ the cultural significance of toponyms and the importance of recognising the roles of toponymic attachment, identity and dependence in everyone's lives
- ♦ the significance of Indigenous place name restoration programs and how they can act as a process of promoting Indigenous heritage for cultural and tourism purposes
- ♦ how toponymic attachment can both positively and negatively affect the restoration of Indigenous toponyms

These topics will be discussed in regards to a case study from the State of Victoria in south-eastern Australia: The Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park. Gariwerd/the Grampians is a popular recreational area with strong Indigenous cultural heritage. Examination of the Gariwerd/Grampians case study allows insight into the roles and meanings of place names, and, through a discussion of the framework and methodology of the case study, consideration will be given to Indigenous place name restoration guidelines in Victoria, Australia and the World. This paper recommends that:

- ♦ policy developments occur within UNGEGN regarding the status of the cultural heritage of place names
- ♦ further guidelines be developed within UNGEGN regarding the importance of Indigenous place name restoration
- ♦ UNGEGN consider developing further community education programs in regards to the promotion of Indigenous people's cultural heritage and place names

This paper is exploratory in nature and intended to encourage further discussion about the meanings of place names. All responses to the ideas contained within this paper and any suggestions or comments are welcomed by the author.

Restoration of Indigenous Toponyms: Recognition of Attachment, Identity and Dependence

Introduction

Since its inception in the 1960s UNGEGN has provided resolutions and recommendations to all member states of the UN as to the standardisation of geographical names. Recommendations have been made in regards to, among other things: romanisation, exonyms, cartography, education and Indigenous or minority names. One field of toponymic research and expertise that has been growing in interest over the past decade has been that of the cultural significance of place names. The current promotional flyer for UNGEGN states that 'place names can identify and reflect culture, heritage and landscape'. Further investigation into UNGEGN resolutions adopted at conferences reveals that:

- Resolution VIII/9 urges ‘countries that have not already done so, to undertake the systematic collection of geographical names and the promotion of a greater understanding among the wider public of the significance of geographical names with respect to local, regional and national heritage and identity’.
- Resolution V/22 recognises that ‘aboriginal/native people have an inherent interest in having their geographical nomenclature recognised as important’ and recommends that ‘whenever possible and appropriate, a written form of those names be adopted for official use on maps and other publications’ and that ‘regional and international meetings be held to discuss the methodology for collecting and recording aboriginal/native geographical names’.

From these resolutions, UNGEGN has proposed that geographical names are an important tool used to identify culture, heritage and landscape and that Indigenous nomenclature systems should be promoted and supported throughout the world. This paper is partly a response to Resolutions VIII/9 and V/22 and their recommendations to promote a greater understanding of the heritage and identity roles of geographical names and to discuss a methodology for officially recording aboriginal geographical names.

Through my PhD research into the Indigenous toponym restoration plan of the Grampians National Park during 1989/1990 and my work with the Victorian Government’s Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) I have been able to consult with various sections of the Victorian community to ascertain their understandings of how toponyms work, what the toponyms symbolise, and what they think of Indigenous toponym restoration policies. I will briefly outline the background of the Gariwerd/Grampians place name restoration plan, before moving into a discussion of the cultural heritage of place names and restoration of Indigenous toponyms.

Background to Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park Plan

The Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park is located approximately 3.5 hours west of Melbourne, in Victoria, Australia. The National Park covers 170,000 hectares containing ancient mountains, rocky escarpments and Indigenous rock art. The area is popular with tourists for mountain walking, rock climbing and learning about Indigenous art and cultural heritage, whilst the area around the park is populated by farming and tourism-based communities. The area is known to the Jardwadjali peoples as *Gariwerd*. The area was named the *Grampians* in 1836 by the Colonial (British born) Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell. The act of naming the area the Grampians was part of the colonial process of land appropriation in south-eastern Australia which saw the existing Indigenous place names either overwritten or used for colonial mapping purposes. During this period of colonisation the Indigenous people of the land were slowly removed and placed on the periphery of the colonially-defined mainstream Australian society.¹

¹ For further discussion of colonial land appropriation in Victoria and Australia see: Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay* (London: Faber & Faber, 1987); David Day, *Claiming a Continent: A New History of Australia* (Sydney: Harper Collins, 2001); Laura Kostanski, "That Name Is Our History: Divergent Histories of Place" (paper presented at the International Council of Historical Sciences Conference, *Inclusive Histories*, University of New South Wales, 2005).

Just over 150 years after Mitchell had named the area Grampians, the Victorian government proposed to restore the Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung people's place names for and within the National Park (the park overlaps the boundaries of these two Indigenous countries). At the time of the government's initial announcement in 1989, there was no provision for dual-naming within Victorian state legislation, thus the restoration of Indigenous place names meant the removal of non-Indigenous place names. In reaction to this proposal, over 60,000 people signed petitions in protest. In addition to the petitions, letters were written to local and metropolitan newspapers, with the authors outlining their opposition or support for the proposals. Due to the overwhelming public response to the proposal, legislation was subsequently amended in Victoria to allow for dual-naming. As a result of these legislative changes, the Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung place names were restored as dual-names to the already officially recorded non-Indigenous place names in the area.

Presently, my PhD research has involved interviewing government officials and non-Indigenous and Indigenous locals of the Gariwerd/Grampians area. It has focused on why the government and some members of the community supported the restoration of Indigenous place names, and why other parts of the community opposed the restoration. Despite whether people had objected to or supported the government's initial proposals, in interviews and letters they all discussed the themes of: attachment, identity and dependence. This commonality of themes, from people arguing from different sides of the debate, highlights the importance of place names in everyone's lives. By discussing these themes a greater appreciation of the meaning of toponyms may be established.

Cultural Importance of Place Names

Toponyms are names for places. In one way they act as linguistic symbols for different features within the landscape. In another way they act as symbols of heritage, identifiers of culture and signifiers of local commodities. Anthropologist and philosopher Claude Levi-Strauss proposed that places are named spaces.² He suggested that the landscape is comprised of spaces (an area which is not understood to have any subjective meaning) and named places. Geographers contend that humans create places in the landscape through a process of attaching meaning to specific sites, and they subsequently attach names to these places to distinguish them from all others.³

UNEGN Member for Norway, Botolv Helleland, noted that geographical names function on several levels: cognitive, emotive, ideological and community-constituting.⁴ Helleland asserted that geographical names represent a vital part of a nation's cultural heritage and should be treated and preserved accordingly. His comments have been important in promoting the symbolic nature of toponyms, and I would like to expand

² Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 168.

³ See for example Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires, eds., *Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1993); Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Melbourne: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

⁴ Botolv Helleland, "The Social and Cultural Values of Geographical Names," in *Manual for the National Standardisation of Geographical Names*, ed. United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (New York: United Nations, 2006), p. 123.

upon his categories and provide more information on the attachment, identity and dependency aspects of toponyms. These are important elements constituting the symbolic meaning of place names to individuals and communities.

Toponymic Attachment

The geographer Edward Relph's definition of *place* centres on the notion that it is a 'profound centre of human existence to which people have deep emotional and psychological ties'.⁵ Places are areas which we hold our daily experiences in and they are areas which we give meanings to. Geographers often use the term 'place attachment' to define the concept of people forming emotional and psychological ties with places. Place names are symbols which we use to identify places from the general landscape, and the idea that place names can act as repositories for emotions is often overlooked in academic research and publications. Therefore I propose that the term 'toponymic attachment' be used to define the emotional and psychological ties people form with place names.

At the time of the initial government proposal to restore the Indigenous place names for the Gariwerd/Grampians National Park, the predominantly promoted culture was Anglo-Saxon in origin that stemmed from the colonisation of the area which began in 1836. The place names in the National Park were a mix of Colonial (*Grampians, Halls Gap*), Anglo-Indigenous (*Wannon River, Yarram Gap*) and Corrupted (*Cherrypool* is an Anglicised form of the Jardwadjali name *Djarabul*) forms.⁶

Letters written at the time to local newspapers showed evidence that place names act as linguistic tools to which people attach deep emotional and psychological ties. For those who identified solely with the colonial history of the area, they were greatly attached to the place name *Grampians* and were reluctant to have it removed. One non-Indigenous local wrote about the proposal in 1989 that 'the attachment of the majority is to the places named as they understand them today, regardless of the source of the word'. This person was asserting that for them the non-Indigenous place names should not be removed because he (and possibly others) was highly attached to them. This assertion was at once an act of demonstrating attachment to the place name, and also an act of cultural hegemony which deemed Indigenous place names as being unimportant. Conversely, another member of the community wrote that 'Aboriginal culture although not written in the English word pre-1770 is still indisputable, tangible and coherent' and represented in the place names.

Despite opposing opinions during this time, the community agreed that place names played a significant role in their lives, and that they had formed strong emotional bonds with them. Importantly, all people interviewed in this area today still contend that while

⁵ Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion Limited, 1976), p. 141.

⁶ I use the term 'Anglo-Indigenous' to identify official toponyms that are derived from Indigenous names or words. I have termed this *Anglo-Indigenous toponymy*, because the names once used exclusively for Indigenous landscape purposes were captured by colonial powers and used for their own means of identifying the landscape. For further discussion please refer to Laura Kostanski, "Toponymic Books and the Representation of Indigenous Identities," in *Aboriginal Placenames Old and New*, ed. Harold Koch and Luise Hercus (Canberra: ANU ePress, 2007 [in press]).

they are attached to the places in the National Park itself, they have similar yet distinguishable attachments to the place names themselves. For this reason alone it can be seen that it is important to restore Indigenous place names because they allow for Indigenous cultural attachments and understandings of the landscape to be recognised. They also promote an alternative to the instituted colonial promotions (both in literature and tourism) of the landscape.

American geographers Daniel Williams and Jerry Vaske have asserted that there are two different forms of attachment to place.⁷ The first they label *place dependence* and describe it as a *functional* attachment to place which 'reflects the importance of a place in providing features and conditions that support specific goals or desired activities'. The second form of attachment to place they label *place identity*, which they assert is an *emotional* attachment to place. Further, they posit that place identity 'generally involves a psychological investment with the place that tends to develop over time'. Place identity does not have to result from particular experiences with the place, and it 'enhances self-esteem...increases feelings of belonging to one's community...and is an important component of communications about environmental values and policies'. Thus, Williams and Vaske define place attachment as occurring in two distinguishable forms, that of the emotional and that of the functional. I would also suggest that toponymic attachment can occur in two distinguishable forms, that of the emotional (identity) and that of the functional (dependence). These two concepts will now be explored in more detail.

Toponymic Identity: Recognition of Culture and History

The Commission de Toponymie du Québec have asserted that 'toponymy, intimately tied to collective and individual memory, functions at times as a geographical memorial and at other times as a vector for memories in the making'.⁸ In Australia there are many types of toponyms, created for different purposes. In the Gariwerd/Grampians case study the notion of how place names act as tools of identification was hotly debated, as in this area the restoration of Indigenous names was promoted as a process of incorporating Indigenous heritage into mainstream collective memory.

Those who opposed the restoration argued that mainstream culture should not accept Indigenous heritage, or that mainstream culture should not be removed in favour of Indigenous culture (as there was no dual-naming policy at the time of the initial government proposal, restoration of Indigenous names could only be done with the removal of non-Indigenous names). People in favour of the restoration believed that Indigenous culture had been overlooked for too long, and it was correct to recognise the importance of Indigenous heritage in Australia through the restoration of Indigenous place names.

⁷ Daniel Williams and Jerry Vaske, "The Measurement of Place Attachment: Validity and Generalizability of a Psychometric Approach," *Forest Science* 49, no. 6 (2003).

⁸ Commission de Toponymie du Québec Canada, "Toponymy and Memory: Toward an International Protocol for Toponymic Commemoration" (paper presented at the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardisation of Geographical Names, Berlin, 27 August - 5 September 2002), p. 1.

UNGEKN member for Australia, William Watt, recently reported that in Australia the place names given by Indigenous and Torres Strait Islanders to the land 'relate to the ancestors, stories, song and dance'.⁹ In this way they link the landscape to an Indigenous cultural heritage and identity. In recent interviews with Indigenous people who have cultural ties to the National Park area, they acknowledge that 'the land is who we are and the names are our link to the land'. One Indigenous person asserted that Indigenous place names gave his people 'a sense of cultural heritage' as they formed a bridge between the present and the ancestral past. For one non-Indigenous person writing to a newspaper in 1990, they noted that the Indigenous names were an integral part of historical identity, as they had been 'born and brought up close to these beautiful mountains and as a young child I often wondered why they should have been renamed after a range in Scotland. It just did not seem to make sense'.

It should be noted that non-Indigenous place names also represent cultural heritage and identity. One letter writer at the time of the debate noted that 'I have a plea for some degree of reason in the Grampians renaming issue and a reminder that Australians born here, but of European background, also have a sense of belonging to this land and a wish to cling to reminders of their forebears and the history of their struggles and achievements'. Instances of personal affinities between the place and the name being inextricably linked appeared in another letter, where the writer stated 'I am a fifth generation Australian whose sense of identity comes from the fact that I am descended from colonial Australians. Australia's history is my history- and that is being taken away from me by men, who...fail to sell their idea to the community by saying that such a beautiful area should be known by its Aboriginal name...I say equal rights to the 1770s colonial descendents who want to keep their heritage too'. The writers of these letters are asserting the idea that historical identity is represented by all toponyms, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous. What is important to remember is that the exclusion of Indigenous place names from official recognition places Indigenous heritage and identity on the periphery of mainstream society.

George Seddon theorised that the words of the landscape carry 'cultural baggage' that may 'imply values and endorse power relations'.¹⁰ This notion of power relations being borne out through place names is no more evident than with the debates at the time of the Gariwerd/Grampians proposals striking a chord with non-Indigenous people unwilling to lose their heritage in the process of helping Indigenous people reassert theirs. Since the time of early European exploration of Australia the landscape was mapped from a colonial cartographic perspective. The colonial acts of mapping and naming the Australian landscape from 1788 onwards have led to a historical and contemporary colonially-tainted sense of place for non-Indigenous and some Indigenous Australians.

⁹ William Watt, "Guidelines for the Recording and Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names" (paper presented at the Eight United Nations Conference on the Standardisation of Geographical Names, Berlin, 27 August - 5 September 2002 27 August - 5 September 2002a).

¹⁰ George Seddon, "Words and Weeds: Some Notes on Language and Landscape," in *Landprints: Reflections on Place and Landscape*, ed. George Seddon (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 15.

Eviatar Zerubavel noted that places ‘play a major role in identity rhetoric’.¹¹ Zerubavel proposed that events such as the Hajj to Mecca, or couples visiting the site of their first date are examples of pilgrimage which bring ‘mnemonic communities into closer “contact” with their collective past’. In addition, Zerubavel argued that the protection of old architecture, such as the Chechens defending old stone towers in Chechnya that helped them “connect” with their ancestors is a further example of how place evokes identity and memories. Indeed, the contention of Zerubavel’s argument is that memories of place imbue a present-day identity on the users or inhabitants of the place. Through the restoration of Indigenous place names, Indigenous people can also officially ‘connect’ with their ancestors. David Lowenthal has written on the social construction of the past and the impacts it has upon the identity of places and communities.¹² Lowenthal reminds readers that ‘remembering the past is crucial for our sense of identity...to know what we are confirms that we are’. The restoration of Indigenous names also provides a vehicle through which non-Indigenous people can explore the heritage of a place prior to colonisation, in this way it allows for Australian society to confirm that it has both Indigenous and non-Indigenous identity. A councillor working in the area at the time of the debate summed up the connection between identity and place names by stating that:

It is now well known that the Aboriginal people have a very close relationship with their environment and that their removal from their land and the forceful imposition of our Western culture on those that survived almost destroyed an ancient culture. The claim to be made should be taken in the context of time: European settlement has lasted only some 200 years but there has been an Aboriginal presence of some 17 to 20,000 years. The Aboriginal people now have the opportunity to re-establish and re-assert their cultural heritage and we should assist this process.

Toponymic Dependence: Maps and Tourism

In addition to linking people with their cultural heritage and identity, toponyms can be relied upon to provide locational information and also used as marketing or promotional tools. Literature on how places can act as locational devices and marketing tools often discusses this phenomenon in regards to the term ‘place dependence’. As outlined earlier, Williams and Vaske regard *place dependence* as one of the two components of *place attachment*. I want to suggest that toponyms can also act as locational tools, and would define this use of place names as ‘toponymic dependence’.

People rely and depend upon their homes as repositories of meaning and identity. When their home is affected in some way, through fire, flood or other destructive phenomena, the level of dependence a person feels towards the place of their home is displayed. Without the walls, floors, adornments and features of the home, the person can feel lost, without an identity. People are attached to their homes because essentially they depend on them to be the locus of memories. I propose that people are also dependent on place names to act as repositories of memories, and without them they can feel lost and devoid of a community or personal identity.

¹¹ Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 42.

¹² D Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

People who have never travelled to Paris, but have heard stories about it, read books about it, or even seen movies filmed within it, use the place name *Paris* to ground their understandings of the place they have never visited. Where the geographer Milligan explains that the meanings that people attach to place 'is linked to the idea of the site, represented by the site, and made possible by the site',¹³ I would argue that people can use toponyms to attach meanings to a place they have never physically visited. People also use toponyms to discuss places they have visited in their travels, and the explanation of the tourism experience is often associated with the place name. In this way people are dependent on toponyms to be symbols of unvisited or visited places.

Places are not just lived in by locals, but also visited by tourists, seeking to discover new sights, sounds, flavours and to interact with a new culture or group of people. Tourism boards in different countries around the world spend millions of dollars every year promoting their places to potential tourists. Apart from the use of images and phrases to promote the place, the name of the place is often used as a marketing tool. A new international journal *Place Branding* has recently been established with the aim of discussing the marketing opportunities that are available in place names. Place names often act as marketing tools for products such as wine (*Champagne*), cheese (*Fetta*) or even cigars (*Cuban*) and in the case of the National Park they are used to promote tourism. At the time of the original government proposal to restore Indigenous names in Gariwerd/Grampians, the issue of tourism was often discussed by people in favour of or against the proposals. Some local tourism operators argued that the restoration of Indigenous place names would have an adverse affect on their business because the 'replacement of stationary and the need to change the tourism brochures for the area would cost millions of dollars'. Here the tourism operators were, amongst other things, acknowledging the dependence they had formed with the place name *Grampians*. A tourism operator in the area in 1989 who could see the importance of Indigenous name restoration, ignored the critics and asserted that 'the Gunditjmarra Tribe represents about 4000 people and a culture that is unique and extremely attractive to the tourism market...Changing the name of the Grampians will add to that appeal and give people a better understanding of Aboriginal ways and customs'.

In the Gariwerd/Grampians area today there is an equal mix of tourism promotion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage. The government granted funds for the establishment of an Indigenous cultural centre called *Brambuk* in 1989, and today Indigenous and non-Indigenous people recognise the importance of, and are dependent on, the names *Gariwerd* and *Brambuk* to promote the possibilities of Indigenous-focused tourism in the area.

Resistance to Change: Pathways to Restoration

Place names are an important part of a country's cultural heritage. They can be symbols of Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities and can convey a sense of a place's history and significance. During the Gariwerd/Grampians debate there was much discussion of

¹³ M Milligan, "Interactional Past and Potential: The Social Construction of Place Attachment," *Symbolic Interaction* 21, no. 1 (1998): p. 9.

the fact that the prevailing culture placed colonial heritage at the forefront of local and national ideologies, to the detriment and exclusion of Indigenous heritage. According to a government spokesperson, the Victorian Government's initial proposal to restore Indigenous names for and within the National Park was meant to 'restore balance and acknowledge that Indigenous culture has an important role in Australian society'. Whilst this proposal seemed fair and balanced in writing, the government underestimated the amount of negative community reaction that would ensue from the idea of removing non-Indigenous names. Key issues that parts of the non-Indigenous community opposed to were: inability to dual-name; lack of consultation; perception that Indigenous people did not exist in the area; concern about the pronunciation of Indigenous names; spending of government funds; and, deficit in community knowledge of Indigenous cultural heritage. Discussion of the key issues that arose from the initial proposal can help in providing an understanding of how Indigenous place names restoration projects should be run to maximise community acceptance and foster a relationship of respect and understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Dual-Naming

The major issue faced in the Gariwerd/Grampians debate was the fact that the government's legislation did not initially allow for dual-naming. Some people who supported the initial proposal stated that it was time to recognise the fact that colonial culture had only been in the area for about 150 years, and that Indigenous place names linked to a more ancient heritage of the land. These people identified strongly with the Indigenous place names and were willing to see them as the only officially recognised names for the area. Other people who supported the restoration of Indigenous names also asserted that removing the non-Indigenous names could be likened to 'historical revisionism'. They stated that a landscape devoid of non-Indigenous names would almost be like trying to remove the influence of colonial-culture on the land for the past 150 years. People who did not identify with Indigenous culture, or who had no prior understanding of it, held deep attachments with the non-Indigenous place names, based on identity and dependence, and stated that 'removing the names will remove our history'. Obviously from this type of statement, the history they talked about was one which did not fully include Indigenous people, but was nonetheless compelling because it was part of that particular group's identity.

In recent interviews I have conducted, people who supported the restoration of Indigenous names in one way or another mainly endorsed the idea of dual-naming. Many people in this category insisted though that the Indigenous names should come first in signage, regardless of the current dual-naming policy in Australia and Victoria which states that for previously named features the place name most frequently used by the local community should take precedence (and in Victoria the majority of the population is non-Indigenous, although many official place names are Indigenous in origin). People who had originally feared the removal of non-Indigenous names stated they could accept restoration of Indigenous place names within a dual-naming program. Of this group of people, many believed that they could see the benefit in recognising the Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage of the area through dual-naming.

Lack of Consultation

Another concern from all areas of the community was the lack of consultation the government undertook before making the Indigenous place name restoration proposal known to the public. Current Australian policy states that ‘the right to decide the use of name rests always with the Indigenous people whose language or place names are being used for official naming purposes’. In the Gariwerd/Grampians case the Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung communities were not specifically consulted before the government announced its intention to restore Indigenous place names. In a recent interview, one Indigenous elder in the local community stated that he was first informed of the proposal when the media started to make contact and ask for his opinion about it. This lack of prior consultation disadvantaged the Indigenous community in regards to the proposals. An unintended consequence of this was that the people who opposed the government’s proposals also claimed that the restoration of Indigenous place names was a political game, a shallow act, devoid of meaning because Indigenous people were not involved in the initial proposals. This Gariwerd/Grampians case study exemplifies how important the involvement of the Indigenous community is in the decision to restore their place names. In Australia and Victoria, thanks to national policy and guidelines developed by UNGEGN and the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia (CGNA) since 1991, restoration projects have involved Indigenous communities from the onset and this has been welcomed by the communities.

Community Knowledge of Indigenous Cultural Heritage

In addition to the lack of consultation, the deficiency of mainstream community acknowledgement and understanding of Indigenous cultural heritage meant that the government’s proposals were rejected by some in the community because they could not see the value of Indigenous place name restoration. At the time of the initial debate some people stated that ‘Indigenous people have never lived here, and none live here now. Why are we pandering to a minority voice?’ When some people were asked in recent interviews why they believed there was no Indigenous culture or people in the area, they stated they had never learnt about Indigenous culture and were therefore wary of accepting the restoration of names they had no knowledge or information about. UNGEGN and CGNA resolutions and policies acknowledge that part of the restoration processes need to involve ‘the education of the wider community about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and the importance of place names to that culture’. When asked about the possibility of receiving an educational package about Indigenous cultural heritages in the area, most people (who originally opposed the proposals) stated that they would appreciate the opportunity to learn about the cultures and that this would help them in accepting and acknowledging the Indigenous place names. As discussed earlier in this paper, part of toponymic attachment is linked to identity, and if non-Indigenous people can gain an educated understanding of Indigenous cultural heritage and identity, they will be more willing to use and acknowledge Indigenous place names.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

CGNA guidelines were developed to ‘ensure that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place names are recognised by all Australians as being part of Australian

heritage and need to be preserved'.¹⁴ In situations where an official non-Indigenous name already exists and the adoption of an Indigenous name is not 'possible or acceptable', the guidelines recommend the use of a dual naming system. In the State of Victoria, the *Guidelines for Geographic Names* encourages the use of traditional Indigenous place names, and allows for dual naming in situations where a feature has an existing non-Indigenous name that has been in common use for a long period of time. It also accepts the use of a word from a local Indigenous language as a source of a place name. Dual naming policies exist in several States and Territories within Australia, and there are several high profile examples of successful dual naming in Australia, such as Uluru/Ayers Rock and Kata Tjuta/Mount Olga.

Official recognition of Indigenous toponyms is an important step towards reconciliation and can aid in fostering respect and understanding of Indigenous culture. I am aware that UNGEGN has a Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names which has done excellent work in establishing international guidelines and policy in regards to the promotion and restoration of Indigenous place names. CGNA in 2001 recognised the importance of acknowledging 'Aboriginal footprints in the sands of time' through the preparation of guidelines designed to encourage the promotion and more frequent use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place names. I hope that the information contained in this paper will aid in developing enhanced UNGEGN resolutions on the meanings of place names to everyone, because people become attached to, identify with and depend on place names. Place names are symbols of cultural heritage and also act as devices for cultural promotion. In addition, the Gariwerd/Grampians case study exemplifies the necessity for each country to adhere to UNGEGN resolutions regarding the engagement of Indigenous communities in place name restoration programs. Further, it illustrates the potential for developing and instituting educational programs on Indigenous cultural heritage and place names for the wider community. Proactive leadership in the area of Indigenous place name restoration (and dual-naming) will have many benefits, such as furthering reconciliation processes, preserving cultural heritage (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous), and avoiding the issues associated with cultural practices which place Indigenous heritages on the peripheries of mainstream societies.

¹⁴ William Watt, "Guidelines for the Recording and Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names" (paper presented at the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardisation of Geographical Names, Berlin, 27 August - 5 September 2002b).