

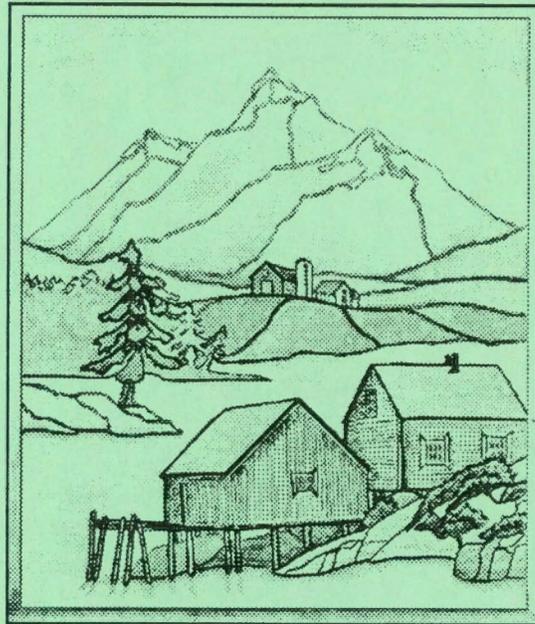
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# THE CANADIAN PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES AND CANADA'S TOPONYMY



**CPCGN-CPCNG**  
**1897-1997**

Helen Kerfoot

1997

Canadian Permanent Committee  
on Geographical Names

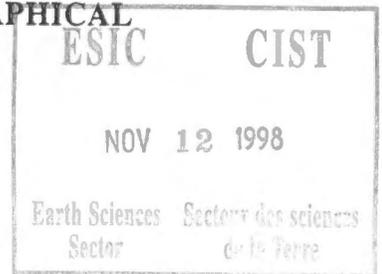
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THE CANADIAN PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON GEOGRAPHICAL  
NAMES AND CANADA'S TOPONYMY



**Helen Kerfoot**  
**Executive Secretary, CPCGN**

[Written in 1994 for *Mapping a Northern Land: the Survey of Canada 1947-1994*,  
volume 4 of *Men and Meridians*. Minor updates made in 1997.]

### **Introduction**

At a brief meeting in Ottawa's Langevin Block on May 15, 1946 seven members of the Geographic Board of Canada regrouped after a lack of such gatherings during the years of World War II. This rebirth of the Board increased the level of geographical naming activity in Canada, following the very limited duties undertaken by the Secretary, J.H. Corry, and a small Executive Committee in the Depression and war years.

The next five decades would bring extensive changes to the operation of the Board, with increased provincial and territorial participation, and the creation of advisory committees to address particular areas of toponymic concern. They would herald major strides forward in methods of record-keeping and communication with the use of computers, and witness Canadian participation internationally in geographical names standardization. Field collection of geographical names would increase in importance, principles and procedures for naming would be updated, and dissemination of data in printed and digital form would increase in importance.

### **The first fifty years of Canada's names authority (1897-1947)**

The roots of Canada's national names authority<sup>1,2</sup> can be traced back to the 1880s. For years surveyors, geographers, geologists and mapmakers had recognized the need for a single body to which questions of geographical nomenclature and orthography could be referred for decision. Inconsistencies in spelling and application of geographical names, particularly on federal government maps, marine charts and other documents could then be avoided. At the 1888 annual meeting of the Dominion Land Surveyors Association in Ottawa, feature names given by Lieut. Frederick Schwatka's American military reconnaissance in the Yukon River basin (1883) drew considerable negative reaction. He had applied "... entirely new names to features which were well known and had already been named by miners." The resulting *Report of Proceedings* notes "... the numerous conflicts and absurdities in geographical names that were to be met with in all parts of the Dominion". A month later, the D.L.S. Association President, E.J. Rainboth, submitted to the Minister of the Interior six recommendations concerning the standardization of geographical names and the compilation of an authentic reference dictionary.

In 1890, through the work of A.H. Whitcher, the Department of the Interior made efforts to ensure uniformity of nomenclature on federal government publications and issued a list of existing feature names to surveyors in northwestern Canada. Early in 1892, at the request of the Deputy Minister of the Interior, acting Surveyor-General W.F. King,

submitted a recommendation for the appointment of a Board on Geographical Nomenclature. In 1897, it was pointed out that "... in consequence of our inaction ... the United States Board is now ruling upon Canadian names". Only then was prompt action taken by Order in Council of December 18, 1897 to establish the first national names authority - the Geographic Board of Canada.

The early days of the Board were ones of federal authority, with six members from different departments, with F. Gourdeau, Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries, as Chairman, and A.H. Whitcher of the Department of the Interior, as Secretary. (See Table I and Table II.) Rules of nomenclature were drawn up, the Royal Geographical Society rules of orthography (R.G.S. II System) were adopted, and departments were directed to use the names and orthography as approved by the Board. Quickly it was realized that participation of the provinces was desirable. A new Order in Council in 1899 gave each province and the North-West Territories (as it existed at the time) the right to appoint a member to advise the Board, provided that their government accepted Board decisions. Quebec declined this arrangement; the province did provide names to the Secretary of the Board, and Ottawa referred questions to the Quebec Geographic Board established in 1912. Despite assurance to provincial members that they had equal status with federal members, the recommendations they made to the Geographic Board of Canada were not always accepted without amendment, and on several occasions Board meeting minutes indicate that the functioning of the Board was being questioned and that better cooperation with the provinces was being urged.

At monthly Board meetings<sup>3</sup> members discussed names proposed for inclusion on particular topographic and geological maps, and hydrographic charts of various scales. Local usage became of prime importance, and new names to be considered for approval were divided between "established" and "contentious", usually based on the criterion of usage. Names for post offices and railway stations came before the Board, as did public submissions, such as lists of names supplied by explorers.

Between 1900 and 1928 the Board published nineteen reports, containing principles of nomenclature and decisions on names. Two were of particular significance: the Ninth Report of 1910, which included maps and origin information on names in the Northwest Territories, as well as lists for Quebec and the Thousand Islands; and the Eighteenth Report of 1924, which contained a cumulative list of decisions since the inception of the Board in 1897. Various names studies were published by the Board prior to World War II. James White (Board member 1898-1928) wrote the studies in the Ninth Report; Robert Douglas (Board Secretary 1916-1930) produced place-name booklets, including those for Prince Edward Island, Alberta and Manitoba.

In the late 1930s the Board was only able to meet on an occasional basis, and as the War years drew on, most of the work was carried out at the clerical level, with names lists for a large number of maps being circulated to available Executive Committee members for their concurrence.

### **Post-war developments (late 1940s and 1950s)**

After the war, meetings of the Board were restarted on a monthly basis<sup>4</sup> and the purpose and functions of the Board discussed. In 1947, a new Order in Council was passed providing the Board with staff and a publications budget; the Board's name was then altered to the Canadian Board on Geographical Names (CBGN). Representation from the

provinces was encouraged by holding annual spring meetings in collaboration with meetings of the Canadian Institute of Surveying.

The Board continued standardizing post office, railway and national park names, as well as approving names for an increased number of federal maps being compiled for publication. Various issues required resolution, including increased emphasis on local usage, map sheet titles, alphabetizing standards, the use of possessive forms of names, and generic terminology.

With a larger staff, the new Board was able to address the need to publicize official names. The *Gazetteer of Canada* series was initiated in 1952 with the production of a volume on Southwestern Ontario. Since then volumes in the series have been published on a province by province basis, with several editions completed for each jurisdiction, except Quebec. The Commission de toponymie du Québec has maintained its own detailed records and has published three editions of its own répertoire. The Canadian Hydrographic Service has produced two editions of a *Gazetteer of undersea feature names* for the CPCGN (see Table III).

Soon after World War II, one of Canada's most contentious name changes brought forth public outcry in support of established names and provincial names management. In 1946, Castle Mountain, near Banff, Alberta, was renamed on instruction from the Prime Minister's office to recognize the contributions of General Dwight D. Eisenhower to the Allied victory. Copious files of correspondence from the public accumulated on this single name change, until in 1979 a decision was reached that would satisfy the supporters of both names. Castle Mountain was restored and Eisenhower Peak was designated for the most prominent summit on the mountain.

The post-war years were also busy days in the mapping and naming of Canada's North - many islands were individually identified, for example, those of the Borden - Mackenzie King group. The later stages of this phase of "completing the map of Northern Canada" lead to the "discovery" and naming (in 1949) of an island in Foxe Basin for Prince Charles. Subsequently, one of the last features to be named for the Royal Family was the archipelago north of Parry Channel, which in January 1954 received the appellation Queen Elizabeth Islands.

In the 1950s, the first steps were taken to commemorate Canadians who had given their lives in World War II. This programme, which was to blossom in later years, started with the assignment of the names of decorated war casualties to features in the northern Prairie Provinces and the Northwest Territories. Still now in the 1990s, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, in particular, actively continue to name geographical features for war casualties, and to present commemorative scrolls to their families in association with these programmes.

The original rules of nomenclature of the Board had been written in 1898. They received minor modifications through the years, until, in 1955, the CBGN undertook a complete revision<sup>5</sup> of the principles and procedures and outlined the duties and responsibilities of the Board, its three-member Executive Committee, and the Secretary. In later years, the publication *Principles and procedures for geographical naming* would be updated on a regular basis.

### A new approach (1960s and 1970s)

The Board was again reorganized in 1961 to create the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN). In accordance with a recommendation from Prime Minister Diefenbaker, appropriate federal and provincial ministers were given the authority to decide on names within their jurisdictions. Responsibility for names in the Northwest Territories and Yukon Territory, however, would still remain with the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development until devolution of these functions in 1984. No longer was there in the 1960s a need for the Executive Committee in the decision-making process, but the position of Executive Secretary for the CPCGN was formally designated. Initially the Chair of the CPCGN was the Director of the Geographical Branch, but in the mid-1960s this responsibility was assigned to the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister of the federal Energy, Mines and Resources. With great interest, enthusiasm and integrity, Jean-Paul Drolet provided strong leadership in this role and chaired the CPCGN annual meetings<sup>6</sup> for over 20 years, from 1965 to 1988. In recent years the position of CPCGN Chair became a ministerial appointee from the private sector.

The methods of collecting and verifying toponyms changed quite considerably in the 1960s and 1970s. Prior to the mid 1960s, the process of updating nomenclature on federal maps depended to a large extent on the survey crews of Topographical Survey and Canadian Hydrographic Service. Other sources of new names information came from the CBGN members and from the public. However, collection and verification of names at that time<sup>7</sup> could not be considered either systematic or comprehensive.

Several field studies were then undertaken by federal/provincial cooperation. The first comprehensive survey, in Renfrew County (Ontario) in 1964, revealed that some 20 percent of existing names on federal maps needed correction when reviewed by local inhabitants for contemporary relevance. The field work essentially doubled the existing stock of toponyms in current use. Several systematic studies of complete provinces followed: New Brunswick (1967-69); Prince Edward Island (1966, 1970-71); Nova Scotia (1972-74); and Manitoba (1975-76). These detailed projects added substantially to the toponymic records for Canada, they reinforced the importance of local usage and, particularly in the case of Manitoba, the studies laid the ground work for recognition of aboriginal names from unwritten languages.

In conjunction with the field work considerable archival research was undertaken, either by the individuals leading the projects or by contractors. After perusal of various archival map collections they gathered a wealth of historical toponymic material. For Nova Scotia and Manitoba most of this documentation remains in manuscript form. The information from the Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick work, however, was prepared by Alan Rayburn for the first two (and only two) *Toponymy studies*, published by the Surveys and Mapping Branch for the CPCGN (Prince Edward Island, 1973; New Brunswick, 1975).

While some provinces entered into federal/provincial projects where costs and expertise were shared, others developed and implemented their own independent studies. Quebec, Ontario and Alberta were among the latter group, each gaining its own experience in establishing programmes in urban, rural or remote settings, and developing ways of resolving questions on such subjects as the language treatment of names or urban area names.

Several years later, in the early 1980s, federal/provincial cooperation was again possible to initiate comprehensive field work in the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland. For several

years summer projects added to the bank of locally-collected names and helped improve the toponymy on topographic maps, many of which still showed only the names from the early British Admiralty charts.

Another item of interest from Newfoundland ... by virtue of its relatively recent discovery in 1976, Landsat Island, off the coast of Labrador, could be considered noteworthy in Canadian geographical naming. After several name proposals were made, the current name was selected, as this small piece of land had been identified through the use of Landsat satellite imagery.

During the late 1960s and the 1970s the CPCGN appointed several advisory committees to provide expertise in areas of special interest to members. Two committees established at that time still have ongoing responsibilities - undersea features, and toponymy research. A third has recently changed its focus from the original nomenclature of glaciological and alpine features to the wider scope of nomenclature and delineation of geographical features.

In 1967 an advisory committee under the direction of the Dominion Hydrographer was created to deal with undersea features in maritime areas of interest to Canada. Over 4000 names have been endorsed since the inception of the committee; information brochures have been printed and two editions of the *Gazetteer of undersea feature names* have been published from the data base, now (in the 1990s) stored in digital format and maintained by the Canadian Hydrographic Service for the CPCGN.

The Advisory Committee on Toponymy Research (ACTR) was organized in 1975 to advise on issues and priorities of geographical names research. The committee has played a strong role in the promotion of workshops on gazetteer production, creation of toponymic data bases, recording and treatment of Native names, and development of procedures for transboundary naming. In the late 1980s, the ACTR was also responsible for preparing the first strategic plan for the CPCGN, encouraging the production of the CPCGN video *What's in a toponym? The story of Canada's geographical names*, and holding working sessions on alternate names, Native names, and urban names.

Also in 1975, the Advisory Committee on Glaciological and Alpine Nomenclature (ACGAN) was established to develop guidelines for the treatment of names relating to permanent ice features and alpine regions. This committee has been particularly useful in resolving jurisdictional questions in alpine areas. In considering appropriate generic terminology for alpine features, the committee cooperated with Translation Bureau of the Department of Secretary of State to produce, in 1987, Terminology Bulletin 176, *Glossary of generic terms in Canada's geographical names*. In addition, ACGAN developed the text for a pamphlet<sup>8</sup> to assist the general public in submitting name proposals. Later, in 1991, this committee, as the Advisory Committee on Nomenclature and Delineation, had its terms of reference widened to deal with more general questions of feature delineation.

In 1975, the CPCGN Secretariat started producing *Canoma*, a twice-yearly publication of news and views in Canadian toponymy. Now in its twentieth year, this journal has become a useful collection of toponymic material about Canada, providing administrative and policy information on the CPCGN and provincial and territorial programmes, as well as historical material on Canadian names. One particular series carried in the journal in the late 1970s and 1980s provided information on place names gathered early in the century. In 1905, James White, Chief Geographer of Canada, had sent a circular letter to postmasters across Canada requesting information on the origins of the names of their

communities. Responses were received from some 3000 locations; some of these are detailed in *Canoma*.

### **Days of language issues and data base development (1980s and 1990s)**

In the early 1980s, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages exerted strong pressure to have both English and French forms of geographical names recognized for official federal use on maps and in documents. Considerable discussion was held with the Official Languages Branch of Treasury Board, culminating in the policy *Official languages and geographical names on federal government maps*<sup>9</sup> documented in TB circular 1983-58. This includes a list of some eighty "pan-Canadian" names (provinces, territories and well-known major features) endorsed by the CPCGN for use in English and French on federal maps.

Translation Bureau of the Department of Secretary of State extended this policy to develop guidelines for the use of geographical names in English and French in federal texts. In the late 1980s this was followed up by Translation Bureau's CUENGO committee which elaborated on some elements of translation policy, and the CPCGN Secretariat prepared a document listing all features in Canada which for a variety of reasons carry more than one official name.

Increasingly, the CPCGN Secretariat has been called upon to provide geographical names not just for maps of Canada, but also for international maps. As a result, in 1982, the CPCGN approved guidelines<sup>10</sup> for "Names outside Canada for official Canadian use". This action has meant increasing Canadian acceptance of geographical names approved by names authorities of other countries, and Canadian use of names in keeping with Romanization systems recognized by the United Nations.

The years of the 1980s and 1990s have been ones of considerable progress in the conversion of geographical names record card collections into digital data bases, which include official and cross-reference names, with some 20 to 30 fields of locational and cultural attribute information. At the federal level, within the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, this step was first taken in 1979, primarily to facilitate the production of gazetteers and to improve the process of names compilation for National Topographic System maps. Since then enhancements to the system have led to a national-coverage toponymic data base, the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base, which contains records for over 500 000 names, of which about 70 percent are currently official, as approved through the CPCGN.

In addition, several provinces and territories - notably Quebec, Manitoba, Alberta, Northwest Territories, British Columbia and Ontario - maintain their own files in a digital environment. Most other jurisdictions are now moving towards such digital toponymic data storage systems.

To facilitate the development of a "vision" for Canadian digital toponymy, to develop national standards, and to guide CPCGN members in this aspect of their work, the CPCGN established the Advisory Committee on Canadian Digital Toponymic Services in 1992. Its leadership will be crucial in the expansion of digital exchange and dissemination.

The 80s and 90s have also brought considerable increase in awareness of the toponyms used by Native people of Canada. In 1979 the Commission de toponymie du Québec had

held a workshop on the writing and terminology of Quebec Amerindian names. In 1986, the CPCGN sponsored a symposium on Native geographical names, with presentations and workshops on collection, writing, funding and future prospects. Twenty-seven resolutions from the symposium were subsequently endorsed by the CPCGN, and have formed the basis for activity in subsequent years. Many names of Native communities in Quebec (in the 1970s) and in the Northwest Territories (in the 1990s) have been changed to reflect local preferences. Particular efforts in the field collection of Native names have been made in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Alberta, Yukon Territory and British Columbia. Also the CPCGN has published reference tools, such as the *Guide to the field collection of Native geographical names* and *Native Canadian geographical names: an annotated bibliography*.

In the 1990s the tasks lying ahead of the CPCGN centre on collection, recording and dissemination of authoritative geographical names information. In March 1990 a new Order in Council (P.C. 1990-549) gave more appropriate recognition to the decision-making responsibilities of the provinces and territories within the CPCGN framework. The technical and cultural roles of geographical names authorities in the preservation of Canadian heritage have now been expressed and the CPCGN has reviewed its mission, responsibilities and goals while developing a strategic plan for the 1990s.

A major technological breakthrough has helped the CPCGN make geographical names information available worldwide. In summer 1994, the CPCGN records on the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base, maintained at Natural Resources Canada, were launched as the core of the GeoNames World-Wide Web site. The CPCGN became the first national names authority to provide on-line search capabilities on Internet. Access to the data base and information about the Committee, its publications, and toponymic issues, is now readily available to a rapidly growing Internet community. Since 1995, a toponymy module (with names histories and origins) has been started for educational purposes, as part of Industry Canada's SchoolNet project.

The thrust of Canadian toponymy into the twentieth century will be to achieve at least a basic field coverage of names collection across the country, to develop suitable names policies and procedures to recognize standard versions of geographical names, to provide appropriate tools for those working in this field of endeavour, and to continue the development of widely-available digital toponymic data. With these goals must go the dissemination of accurate geographical names information for Canada, as well as outreach to other countries, to increase the consistency of toponymic usage throughout the world.

### **Provincial and territorial names boards and activities**

Now the CPCGN has federal, provincial and territorial government members. Federal participation comes from departments involved with mapping and charting, archives, defence, national parks, statistics, and translation/terminology - all significant users of geographical names. In addition to one representative from the departments responsible for the geographical names programmes in each province and territory, the chairs of advisory committees have membership on the CPCGN during their terms of office. Currently (1997) there is a total of 25 CPCGN members.

The orders in council for the CPCGN have quite clearly placed decision-making authority in the hands of provincial ministers, and since 1984 also with territorial ministers. Decisions in federal lands (national parks, Indian Reserves and military bases) within the

provinces and territories are the joint responsibility of federal and provincial/territorial jurisdictions. This was discussed at CPCGN meetings in the 1970s and formally agreed in 1979.

Geographical names activity varies in degree and intensity from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. In some provinces and territories the responsibility for names authorization rests with one person or a few people who recommend decisions for their Minister's signature. More sophisticated procedures exist in jurisdictions where a committee or board has been established, in most cases by provincial (/territorial) law. By 1997, five provinces and one territory had names boards (with public and private sector participants), to provide recommendations; the other provinces and territory have various bureaucratic structures for this purpose. In addition, the degree of digital data storage and processing currently varies considerably across Canada.

**Quebec** Quebec has one of the world's most sophisticated toponymic authorities. Stemming from the Quebec Geographic Board created in 1912, the Commission de toponymie du Québec (CTQ) was established in 1977 within the framework of the Charter of the French Language. The Commission, a seven-member board, which meets every two months to authorize name decisions, is supported by a full time staff, which since 1977 has maintained a level of 20-30 staff. The CTQ has had a prolific publishing programme and systematically has addressed standardization issues: publishing guides for editors and cartographers, developing general toponymic guidelines and methodologies, a research series and Native language names manuals. The CTQ has produced three editions of the *Répertoire toponymique du Québec*, together with regular cumulative supplements. The *Dictionnaire des noms de lieux* (1994) was a landmark publication, providing the history behind some 20 000 names of places and features. Digital data storage became a fact of life of the CTQ in the 1980s, with the development of the TOPOS data base. The Commission has provided continuing leadership in initiatives in geographical names standardization at the United Nations level; Quebec hosted the 1988 U.N.-sponsored toponymy training course and Henri Dorion, President of the Commission, was Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names from 1987 to 1991.

**Ontario** The Ontario Geographic Names Board (OGNB) was established by provincial legislation in 1968. Membership consists of five appointees from the private sector, the Surveyor-General for Ontario (ex-officio), and the Executive Secretary, by ministerial appointment. In 1975, Ontario published its *Principles of geographical naming*, subsequently updated in 1977 as *Naming Ontario*. The Ontario government has published jointly with the Quebec government (in 1987) *A manual for the field collection of geographical names*, based on the original French *Méthodologie des inventaires toponymiques*, published by Quebec in 1986. During the past two decades Ontario has been very involved in geographical naming in a bilingual context; of particular interest has been Ontario's ability to provide advice to other countries in the treatment of minority languages at a provincial level. Also notable has been the province's work with Native groups, including support for the 1993 publication of the *Historical map of Temagami*. The Ministry of Natural Resources provides support for the OGNB; it maintains names for mapping purposes and recently has put resources into establishing the extents of features (i.e. geographical names applications) for its digital mapping programme.

**Newfoundland** In 1904 (over 40 years before Newfoundland joined Confederation) a names authority was first established. The programme saw years of feast and famine in the amount of geographical naming activity undertaken. A new act was passed on May 21, 1974 establishing the Newfoundland Geographical Names Board consisting of six

members (including Chair and Secretary); in 1991 its name was changed to the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board. In the 1980s, Newfoundland undertook extensive field recording of geographical names, largely under the direction of the Department of Geography at Memorial University, especially in the Avalon Peninsula, Trinity Bay and parts of Labrador. As a result, several thousand locally-used names were approved and added to the official names of the the province.

**Alberta** Alberta set up its own geographical names authority immediately after World War II, followed in 1975 by establishment of the Historic Sites Board, as part of the Alberta Historical Resources Act. A Geographical Names Committee makes recommendations to this Board, which then reports to the Minister (in 1993, the Minister of Alberta Community Development). Alberta has developed its own principles, procedures and policies which were published in its *Geographical names manual* in 1987. With a strong emphasis on cultural aspects of geographical names, Alberta has produced publications for students, tourists and the public in general. In the late 80s, work started on a four-volume reference series *Place names of Alberta*; all volumes were published between 1991 and 1996. Very valuable support has been provided by the Friends of Geographical Names of Alberta Society formed in 1988; the group has been instrumental in the computerization of Alberta's geographical names data and in the very active publication programme. A considerable amount of field work has been undertaken in the province and recently emphasis has been placed on Native cultural studies.

**Saskatchewan** The Saskatchewan Geographical Names Board was established in 1974. The Board is chaired by the General Manager of the Central Surveys and Mapping Agency, and has developed a structure that over the years has represented the interests of aboriginal groups, the Canadian Legion, the Provincial Archives, the Saskatchewan Natural History Association and the Multicultural Advisory Council. The Saskatchewan geographical names programme is closely tied to provincial mapping and it has strong support for commemoration of war casualties, with over 3600 features named in this way.

**Yukon Territory** In 1984 the responsibility for geographical names in Yukon Territory devolved from the federal government (DIAND) to the Government of Yukon; the Yukon Geographical Names Board (YGNB), with government and public membership, was then established in 1987. Land claims settlements in the early 1990s have given rise to equal Native/non-Native participation on the six person board. Yukon concerns in the past ten years have been with Native language toponymy, as well as with other names of historical interest. The Yukon Native Language Centre has been closely linked with the Heritage Branch of the Ministry of Tourism in encouraging geographical names field work and standardized approaches to recording names in Native languages, such as Tlingit, Gwi'chin, and Northern Tutchone. An information brochure on the programme has been produced.

**Other provinces and territories** In other provinces and the Northwest Territories geographical names decisions are made by a government minister, with the support and recommendations of office staff, but without recourse to the advice of a geographical names board.

**British Columbia** has had an active names programme over the last half century. Thousands of detailed names records were collected on index cards, which became the source of names data for provincial mapping. Although no comprehensive field work has been undertaken in the province, special attention has at various times been given to the hierarchy of mountain nomenclature. In 1991, the Ministry of Crown Lands published a

brochure, *Geographical names in British Columbia*, presenting the policies, principles and procedures for naming features in the province. Today's programme is now supported by a digital toponymic data base with strong ties to digital mapping, and increasing cooperation with Native language groups in the province.

*Manitoba's* geographical names programme is also located within the provincial mapping branch. In the mid 1970s the federal/provincial field survey provided some 8000 decisions on names in local use, including many in Chipewyan, Sauteaux and Cree. The province has an active commemorative naming programme, with some 4000 geographical features named for Manitobans who died in war service. During the 1970s Manitoba produced its own *Annual directory*, but discontinued this with the production of the 1981 *Gazetteer of Canada: Manitoba*. Provincial names data were converted to digital files in the 1980s; this was followed by a major data base upgrade in the mid 90s. A brochure *Manitoba's geographical names* was first published in 1988.

The *Northwest Territories* government's cultural heritage programme took over responsibility for geographical names from DIAND in 1984. Since that time considerable emphasis has been put on field collection of toponyms and associated oral history from elders and various communities across the North. Thousands of new records have been created and a tiered names authorization system has been established, to cope with both straightforward and controversial situations. Greater recognition of the indigenous forms of names for Native communities was initiated with the change of Frobisher Bay to Iqaluit in 1987. The current approach of the Northwest Territories to the preservation and promotion of traditional names is documented in the 1993 publication *NWT geographic names program manual*.

In *New Brunswick, Nova Scotia* and *Prince Edward Island* authority for names has fallen variously under mapping, municipal affairs, executive council, or taxation offices. Field work studies were undertaken by federal/provincial agreement in the late 60s and early 70s; for each province this meant several thousand new names records - a work effort that has provided a good base for the decades to follow. Although the names programmes have not been particularly active at the provincial levels, all have contributed to the work of the national names authority and are now increasingly becoming involved with digital names data and questions relating to the language of official names and to naming newly created municipal hierarchies.

### **International leadership and cooperation**

Canada has been active on the international scene in efforts to promote the global standardization of geographical names. To the first United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in Geneva in 1967, Canada sent a delegation of five, under the leadership of Jean-Paul Drolet, then Chairman of the CPCGN. Since that time a further five conferences and sixteen meetings of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) have been organized. Although not by any means having the largest number of delegates, Canada is one of the few countries that has participated in every meeting (see Table IV).

In 1987, Canada had the honour of hosting the Fifth Conference in Montréal. Jean-Paul Drolet was elected President of the Conference; Alan Rayburn was Rapporteur; Helen Kerfoot was Assistant Editor; Henri Dorion a Committee Chairman; and Jean Poirier a Committee Rapporteur. In the work of the Group of Experts, Canada has contributed in a

number of areas - for example, national programmes, gazetteers and toponymic data files, toponymy training courses, toponymic terminology, and toponymic guidelines for map and other editors. Papers presented at each conference have been published in the two-volume UN reports. In addition, Canada produced English and French versions of Canadian papers for the first five conferences.

UNGEEN is responsible for the programme of the conferences held every five years and for implementation of conference resolutions. Three Canadians have held leadership roles in UNGEEN. Alan Rayburn, Rapporteur (1982-87); Henri Dorion, Chairman (1987-1991); and Helen Kerfoot, Vice-Chair (1991- ). Within the divisional framework of UNGEEN, Canada participates in two linguistic/geographic divisions, namely the USA/Canada and Romano-Hellenic divisions.

One very important element of the United Nations geographical names standardization activities is the support of toponymic training programmes. To further these goals, the Commission de toponymie du Québec (CTQ) hosted a session in Québec in 1988. This two-week course, including field collection and office treatment of toponyms, was designed for participants from French-speaking African countries. The CTQ has also been in the forefront of providing assistance programmes, for example, to Morocco and Cameroon. Nine other UN training courses and seminars have been held up to 1997. Canada has participated by providing teaching staff in Cipanas, Indonesia (1989), Pretoria, South Africa (1992 and 1993), Wellington, New Zealand (1994), and in Riga, Latvia and Seoul, Korea (1997).

Apart from the work in United Nations activities, Canada has contributed in various ways to the international exchange of toponymic knowledge. Frequent collaboration has existed with the United States Board on Geographic Names since the early years of the century, and in 1990 representatives from the CPCGN participated in the USBGN's celebration of their centennial. Canada has often provided toponymic information and policy advice - from Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat) to New Zealand, and from China to Venezuela.

### **The road ahead**

1997 marks the 100th anniversary of a national names authority in Canada. Celebrations for the occasion will include an exhibit *Every name tells a story: 100 years of official place naming in Canada*, being prepared by Parks Canada and the National Archives, and an illustrated lecture *Geographical names of Canada: historical treasure chest*, to be presented by Henri Dorion, and jointly sponsored by the CPCGN and The Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

Quite clearly many steps forward have been taken since the first efforts to standardize the use and spelling of Canadian geographical names. Ahead still lie many challenges in policy development, toponymic heritage preservation and the dissemination of data files through new and exciting electronic media, increasingly reaching out to a wider public. Cooperation between federal, provincial and territorial governments will remain crucial to the authority and effectiveness of the work of the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names.

## Endnotes

1. Kerfoot, Helen. 1988. Towards the formation of the Geographic Board of Canada in 1897. Canoma, 14, 2, 16-21.
2. Kerfoot, Helen and Alan Rayburn. 1990. The roots and development of the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names. Names, 38, 3, 183-192.
3. Geographic Board of Canada. 1897 - 1947. Minutes of Board meetings. mss.
4. Canadian Board on Geographical Names. 1948 - 1961. Minutes of Board meetings. mss.
5. Canadian Board on Geographical Names. 1955. Revision of regulations, principles of nomenclature and by-laws. 8p. mss.
6. Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names. 1962 - present. Proceedings of Committee meetings. mss.
7. Munro, M.R. 1979. Toponymic fieldwork and related office procedures: federal and provincial perspectives. III. Government participation in toponymic fieldwork. Canoma, 5, 1, 20-23.
8. Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names. 1990 (reprinted 1993). Naming Canada's geographical features. Energy, Mines and Resources Canada. pamphlet.
9. Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names. 1993. Principles and procedures of geographical naming. Ottawa: Energy, Mines and Resources Canada. p.17-19.
10. Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names. 1993. Principles and procedures of geographical naming. Ottawa: Energy, Mines and Resources Canada. p.15.

TABLE I

**Chairs  
of the Geographic Board of Canada,  
the Canadian Board on Geographical Names, and  
the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names**

Name	Dates in office
Gourdeau, François F.	1898 - 1910
Anderson, William P.	1911 - 1913
Déville, Édouard G.	1913 - 1924
Anderson, William P.	1924 - 1926
White, James	1927 - 1928
Craig, John D.	1928 - 1931
Boyd, Walter H.	1932 - 1940
Dickison, Alexander	1940 - 1945
Peters, Frederic H.	1946 - 1948
Chipman, Kenneth G.	1948 - 1949
Palmer, Philip E.	1949 - 1954
Smith, Cyril H.	1954 - 1959
Nicholson, Norman L.	1959 - 1964
Drolet, Jean-Paul	1964 - 1988
O'Donnell, J. Hugh	1988 - 1990
Dorion, Henri	1990 - 1991
O'Donnell, J. Hugh	1991 - 1992
Price, E. Anthony	1992 - present

TABLE II

**Secretaries  
of the Geographic Board of Canada,  
the Canadian Board on Geographical Names, and  
the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names**

Name	Dates in office
Whitcher, Arthur H.*	1897 - 1916
Douglas, Robert	1916 - 1930
Corry, J. Harry	1931 - 1946
Palmer, Philip E.	1946 - 1948
Skinner, Lyman B.	1948 - 1953
Munroe, Max G.	1954 - 1962
Fraser, J. Keith	1962 - 1968
Delaney, Gordon F.	1968 - 1973
Rayburn, Alan	1973 - 1987
Kerfoot, Helen	1987 - present

\* Also acted in secretarial capacity from 1892 to 1897, prior to the establishment of the Geographic Board of Canada

TABLE III

**Gazetteer Production****Gazetteer of Canada Series**

Canada - concise	1997			
Newfoundland	1968	1983		
Nova Scotia	1961	1977	1993	
Prince Edward Island	1960	1973	1990	
New Brunswick	1956	1972	1994	
Ontario	1952 (Southwestern Ontario)			
	1962	1974	1988	
Manitoba	1955	1968	1981	1994
Saskatchewan	1957	1969	1985	
Alberta	1958	1974	1988	
British Columbia	1953	1966	1985	
Northwest Territories	1971 (provisional)		1980	
N.W.T. & Yukon	1958			
Yukon Territory	1971 (prov.)	1976	1981	1988

**Répertoire toponymique du Québec**

	1969*	1978	1987
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\* Répertoire géographique du Québec

**Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names**

	1983	1987
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TABLE IV

**United Nations Conferences  
on the Standardization of Geographical Names**

No.	Year	Location	Canadian participation
1.	1967	Genève	J.-P. Drolet; J.K. Fraser (Chair, Committee IV); J. Poirier, E.J. Holmgren (Rapporteur, Committee I); R. McKinnon
2.	1972	London	J.-P. Drolet; G.F. Delaney; J. Poirier (Rapporteur, Committee I); M.B. Smart (Rapporteur, Committee IV); H. Dorion; J.B. Rudnyckyj
3.	1977	Athína	J.-P. Drolet; H. Dorion; J. Poirier; M.B. Smart; Y. Slavutych; A. Rayburn (Rapporteur, Committee I)
4.	1982	Genève	J.-P. Drolet; A. Rayburn (Rapporteur); F. Beaudin (Rapporteur, Committee II); P. Millman; L. Fillion; J.B. Rudnyckyj
5.	1987	Montréal	J.-P. Drolet; A. Rayburn (Rapporteur); H. Dorion (Chairman, Committee III); J. Poirier (Rapporteur, Committee I); H. Kerfoot; T. Jolicoeur; L. Fillion; R. Freeman; G. Holm; A. Karamitsanis; M.B. Smart
6.	1992	New York	H. Kerfoot (Editor-in-Chief); A. Lapierre; J. Revie

