



# Northern Visions

## New Perspectives on the North in Canadian History

EDITED BY

**Kerry Abel and Ken S. Coates**

broadview press

Peterborough, Ontario  
2001

## CHAPTER THREE

# Parks Canada and the Commemoration of the North: History and Heritage

**David Neufeld**

Every human group holds a set of intellectual tools based upon the experience and example of its forbearers to guide relations within itself and with the wider world. This council from the past plays a dual function. First, it provides members with a sense of group identity and articulates a set of values that help individuals live a fulfilling life. This set of values has been described as heritage. Second, it provides members with the skills to enable more effective interaction with the surrounding environment and larger society. This capability is drawn from what we know as history.<sup>1</sup> To preserve these beliefs and to ensure they live into the future, communities develop a host of resilient activities, rituals, and ceremonies that become embedded in language, institutions and place. The preservation and representation of these beliefs are central features of cultural reproduction.

Modern societies often consider that it is the responsibility of good government to support this cultural reproduction through, among other things, programs to commemorate places and events that are deemed significant. The government of Canada has used various commemoration programs to both develop and sustain a national identity and to foster regional cultural identities. In meeting the need for commemoration, the Canadian government began establishing national parks in the late nineteenth century to emphasize the geographic heritage of place. By the early twentieth century, as protection was extended beyond scenic wonders to historic places, the politics involved in the process of defining sites became increasingly problematic. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), an appointed body of regional experts, was established in 1919 to consider and recommend sites, events, and people for the government's recognition. Since that time, this advisory body has tried to balance the needs of politics and bureaucratic stewardship

to find the right balance of history and heritage. Not surprisingly, the question of what beliefs should be represented and by whom has changed over the eighty years since the establishment of the Board. What exactly should the balance be between history and heritage?

Certainly, both history and heritage have always been integral components of the national commemoration program. Parks Canada has made an important contribution to the process through providing historical research that has been used to identify the relationships between the site and the larger community and to explain these to visitors. In order to establish whether something is historically significant, an understanding of the role of different forces that shaped Canada is required. At Parks Canada, professional researchers utilize a range of archival and community sources to produce an explanation of what has happened and how things came to be to.<sup>2</sup>

However, historic site designation also has to contend with the place of heritage. Largely unattainable by traditional methods of historic research, but equally important to a designated place, is the process of determining the heritage values associated with that place. Groups embrace and celebrate their past for the contribution it makes to their group coherence and identity. The responsibility for the articulation of these values rests with the group, and is often restricted to the group. Historian David Lowenthal emphasizes that herein lies the distinctive character of heritage. "Heritage passes on exclusive myths of origin and continuance, endowing a select group with prestige and common purpose...heritage is diminished and despoiled by export."<sup>3</sup> While not visible to the public, and often not even an explicit part of the national commemoration process, the overall direction and purpose of the national historic sites program have been shaped largely by distinctive voices proclaiming their heritage.

In its representation of Canada's north there has been a dynamism in the National Historic Sites Program as history and heritage are used to determine the purpose of a site. In the past, history in the North was often used as an extension of southern ideas of what Canada is and how the North has contributed to this vision. It is only in the last few decades that a distinctly northern heritage voice has been able to make more effective and meaningful contributions to the national discussion on the North. There has been a broader recognition of the North as another region in the country with its own view of how things came to be.

The development of the national historic sites commemoration program in the north has been driven by two main objectives. First is the fostering of a national understanding of our history: how the

place, person or event has shaped the present. Through a public representation of the past, site visitors are asked to acknowledge and respect those who made a contribution to the nation. A second objective, however, is the community's private desire to forward community values and models which they use to guide their lives to their children and grandchildren. Historical research serves a useful purpose in the commemoration of historic sites only in so far as it contributes to both these ends.

### *The Players in National Commemoration*

In considering the contribution of the national commemoration program to Canadians' understanding of northern history and heritage, we need to know about the players involved. The Parks Canada program of historic site commemoration originated before the World War I. The Dominion Parks Branch, a part of the Department of the Interior, was initially charged to protect some of the splendours of the western mountains. Rocky Mountains Park (later expanded and now known as Banff National Park) was established in 1887 with several other park reserves in the region following soon after.<sup>4</sup> By the first decade of the new century, the Branch was interested in gaining more popular support for its work and sought ways of reaching out of the West to the more populous East. A program of new national parks (featuring the *geographic* national heritage) in the east was deemed too expensive and difficult to attempt. Instead the Branch suggested the establishment of parks to commemorate *history* throughout eastern Canada.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time there was a growing historical consciousness amongst eastern Canadians, expressed by a demand that the Government provide support to regional initiatives for the presentation of national history and the preservation of selected historic sites. Activists in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes were especially prominent in demanding action. As a result of direct popular action, the Parks Branch acquired Fort Chambly in Quebec and Fort Anne in New Brunswick as national park properties.<sup>6</sup>

To control the regional political pressure for action and facilitate the Parks Branch desire to reach into the East, the government proposed a program to identify and preserve Canadian heritage. Though delayed by the war, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada was established in 1919.<sup>7</sup> The Board, consisting of knowledgeable individuals, was appointed to advise the Minister on noteworthy aspects of Canadian history and to recommend

meaningful ways of commemoration. It also intended to serve as a political neutral body to deal with regional pressure groups.

Reflecting the political pressure for preservation and commemoration, the Board's initial membership included members only from Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. In 1923, F.W. Howay was appointed to represent British Columbia, the Board's first expansion beyond the original compliment. Howay was also expected to represent western and northern Canada. Driven by a combination of nascent nationalism and a sense of cultural leadership, these members felt "commemoration served a useful patriotic function in educating citizens about common traditions."<sup>8</sup> Not surprisingly, the common traditions commemorated in this period reflected those of the St. Lawrence Valley and the Maritimes.

There was intense national pride in the post-war period. Canada had fielded a substantial military force in France and looked for some Imperial recognition of new national status. Nevertheless, the country remained attached to its trans-Atlantic links to Britain and much of the Board's work in the 1920s also evidenced a powerful anti-American sentiment. Sites recommended for commemoration in Ontario focused on the seminal role of the United Empire Loyalists in shaping modern Canada and its political traditions, and the militia "victories" of the War of 1812. Further east, attention was paid to the early contributions of French settlers, the battles of the French and English wars and the contributions of the Atlantic provinces.<sup>9</sup> Thus through its structure of regional representation, the Board remained sensitive to local heritage claims on its attention and actively promoted regional versions of Canadian national history. This dual characteristic of commemoration remains a prominent element in the Board's continuing work.<sup>10</sup>

Variations on this bicameral vision of national history caused problems, particularly when heritage and history conflicted. In the 1930s, the Board stirred up controversy in Saskatchewan when it recommended an alien, that is, eastern Canadian, interpretation for the commemorations of the North-West Rebellion of 1885. Identified in the early 1920s, the battle sites were originally selected to represent the legitimate expansion of the Canadian state. However, the publication in 1936 of G.F.G. Stanley's regional perspective on the resistance forced a re-evaluation of the understanding of these sites in national history.<sup>11</sup> The resulting furor over what national history should address led to the creation of new seats on the Board for both Manitoba and Saskatchewan in 1937 and a re-affirmation that the question of national significance would continue to be defined by

each region of the country. The Manitoba and Saskatchewan seats were followed by Alberta in 1944 and Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island in 1950.<sup>12</sup>

From limited beginnings, the agency that administers national parks and historic sites has grown to be one of the Canadian government's single largest among land and resource management agencies. Through its history the departments responsible for these protected areas have used the Parks Branch to forward government policy in various ways. In the initial period under the Department of Interior (until 1936) and the Department of Mines and Resources (1936 - 1950), the branch was too small to be much of a player in government and was largely ignored. However, the creation of the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources in 1953, with its mandate to increase the emphasis on northern Canada,<sup>13</sup> began to change the official perspective on the role of parks and historic sites. The subsequent re-organization of the department in 1966 into Indian Affairs and Northern Development reflected the growing government concern with northern matters.

From the early 1950s, there was an increasing public interest in the value and possibilities of northern Canada. Canadians were growing tired of a history that was concerned only with links to European wars, and were looking for a history that emphasized Canadian distinctiveness and independence. The North was perceived as an area without a past and hence a major contributor to what made Canada distinct. Furthermore, as the 1950s boomed, the North was increasingly seen as the country's economic future, a place just waiting for an aggressive program of resource development. The stunning victory of John Diefenbaker's Conservatives in 1958 was built partially upon his promotion of a "northern vision" for Canada. Gordon Robertson, deputy minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, concluded a presentation in 1960 with the observation, "We own the north. . . It belongs to us. Canadians for this reason, must look to the north to see what it is good for, to see how to use it."<sup>14</sup>

In the desire to open up the North, the Government not only developed a range of new policies and programs, but also made use of existing programs. The national commemoration program was drawn into the department's activities. Although there were regular warnings from Board members about centralizing the direction of national historical commemoration,<sup>15</sup> the department moved ahead with plans to conscript national parks and historic sites into the northern development process. History, along with minerals, water power and timber, became one of the North's exploitable national resources. Heritage was set aside.

### *The Federal Commemoration of Northern History*

How had the North been nationally commemorated before the rise of government interest in mid-century? What themes or interests had been represented? And who had determined the history of the North?

By 1955 the Historic Sites and Monuments Board had identified twenty-five northern events, people and places of national historic significance.<sup>16</sup> The Historic Sites Branch acquired ownership of three of these, Prince of Wales Fort and York Factory on Hudson Bay and Fort St. James in northern British Columbia. An additional twelve sites were marked with a plaque, most at northern locations. The remainder were officially commemorated only through the minister's approval of the Board's recommendations. (See Appendix 1)

The northern site commemorations in this period were exclusively in the Canadian Northwest. The fur trade in the northern parts of the western provinces and the various trade routes emptying into Hudson Bay accounted for ten of these. Another nine designations described voyages of exploration and discovery. Of these, five were directly related to the Northwest Passage. Another four celebrated the extension of southern administration and government into the North. Finally, individual commemorations acknowledged the work of the Oblate missionary, Adrien-Gabriel Morice, and the wartime partnership between Canada and the United States in the construction of the Alaska Highway. Although northerners were contacted for information on a number of these commemorations, it was the southern Board members and managers within the parks branch who identified these sites and the reasons for their importance. What is striking about this early commemorative approach to the North is how different it was from that followed in the south. In the south, the regional heritage interests were the determining factor in selecting and celebrating Canadian national history, while the North was perceived as a place where regional heritage interests were irrelevant and national visions of history could define what mattered there. The heritage values of the North were not consulted or even expected to exist. In effect, the historic sites program was utilized to explain the prominence and importance of the south exclusively.

To mid-century, and beyond, it was the influence of professional Canadian historians and their ideas on metropolitanism and the staple theory and the imperatives of Dominion Government interest



that shaped the commemoration of northern history. Harold Innis's seminal work in the 1920s and 30s, that described the economic history of Canada connected the exploitation of the country's originally abundant natural resources with the importance with the trans-Atlantic communication links back to the centre of the British Empire in England.<sup>17</sup> His subsequent work, and that of his intellectual off-spring, expanded the idea to include such other staple industries as the Atlantic cod fishery (Innis, 1940), the timber trade (Arthur Lower, 1932) and the mercantile empire of the St Lawrence valley (Donald Creighton, 1937). All of these works focused upon the importance of the St. Lawrence as the core of the Canadian economic and political system. The resulting historiographic direction, described as the "Laurentian thesis", became the central analytical framework for the study and understanding of Canadian history until the 1960s.

The Laurentian thesis grew out of the primary concern of Canadian intellectuals in the first half of the century - the fixing of Canada as a distinct and organically logical country in its own right. The thesis incorporated the transcontinental transportation system of rivers, and later railways, and built upon trade and communication in defining what seemed the logical boundaries of early Canada. This approach also emphasized the importance of the major metropolitan centres of the country, all located in the St. Lawrence Valley, that extended these links outward into the periphery of the country, knitting it into a single national entity. On the darker side, the Laurentian thesis was a distinct nationalistic reaction against the republican environmental determinism of the frontier thesis of American historian Frederick Jackson Turner. However, by emphasizing the importance of the connection to the metropolitan centre, the Laurentian thesis was anti-regional in understanding the country. Not surprisingly, commemorations based on this historiographic representation of the country tended to emphasize the role of the expanding centre rather than the regions themselves.

The northern commemorations also served Dominion Government ends. From the 1870s, when the British Government had transferred its claims over the Arctic to Canada, there had been periods of acute concern over national sovereignty in the arctic.<sup>18</sup> This concern permeated the civil service. In the early 1920s, J.B. Harkin, Director of National Parks and secretary for the HSMBC, also sat on the government's Advisory Committee on Wildlife. While negotiating international migratory agreements, he became uneasy about the legitimacy of Canada's northern claims with the

United States.<sup>19</sup> And in 1930 when the Norwegian challenge to the ownership of the Sverdrup Islands was rebuffed, the HSMBC designated Parry's 1819 winter camp at Winter Harbour on Melville Island as a site of national historic significance, thus reinforcing Canada's Arctic claims. Four subsequent commemorations of British Arctic exploration and the search for the Northwest Passage to 1945 continued the department's use of northern historic sites as assertions of Canadian arctic sovereignty.

Commemorations of the North to mid-century were largely extensions of central Canadian interests. While not a conscious denial of northern heritage, the lack of northern representation or consultation on issues of northern concern by the commemoration program effectively denied the region anything beyond a supporting role in Canadian history. In fact the commemorations were clearly designed for the south. This pattern was cogently re-inforced in early 1963 when the Historic Sites Division of the National Parks Branch reviewed a draft departmental economic development proposal for northern national parks and historic sites.<sup>20</sup> The Division chief noted:

the primary objective of the Historic Sites Division is the commemoration of history. The weight of its work is thus directed to those parts of Canada which have been settled the longest. On this scale, the Division ranks the north last. Furthermore, because it places its primary emphasis on the commemoration of sites, events, buildings and people, rather than in the commemoration of ways of life as such, it has found little reason for taking much interest in the north.<sup>21</sup>

The contribution of the past to identity in the North, that is, to the heritage of its inhabitants, was similarly dismissed. The opportunity to ensure that both history and heritage were represented was being missed.

### *The Klondike Gold Rush*

After a gloriously colourful gold rush explosion at the turn of the century, by 1912 Dawson and the Klondike Goldfields had settled into the more mundane existence of a corporate mining camp. Then war cut off capital investment and postwar inflation further eroded the attractiveness of northern dredge mining. By the early 1920s, the Klondike mining industry was in a shambles.<sup>22</sup> The community,



Dawson children on their decorated bicycles in the Discovery Day parade of 1949. *Yukon Archives, Lewis Billard Collection.*

anxious to remain a viable entity, sought some alternatives.

The experience of the gold rush remained the single, central event of history in the Territory at the time. With the presence of much of the population and an economy directly associated with placer gold, it is no wonder that discovery was of great importance. The community recognized, and celebrated, the importance of the gold rush in their lives. In 1912, the Territorial Council designated Discovery Day (August 17) as a public holiday: an affirmation of the heritage importance of the event in defining the goals of the newcomers in Yukon society. The annual Discovery Day parade in Dawson re-inforced the creation of their northern society and celebrated their values of individual freedom and self-government.<sup>23</sup> The subsequent opening of Robert Service's rustic cabin in Dawson for tourists not only re-inforced the importance of this event locally, but also, through the popularity of Service's poetry, celebrated gold rush history with outsiders.<sup>24</sup>

Although of limited economic value, by the early 1920s cultural tourism came to be considered a helpful supplement to the local



YOOPs (Yukon Order of Pioneers) organizing before their hall in Dawson for the start of the 1985 Discovery Day parade. Pierre Berton, author of *Klondike*, is at the head of the parade carrying the YOOP flag. *Parks Canada*.

economy. The Dawson *Daily News* editorialized in June 1921 under the headline “Pleasing the Tourist” that “the tourists distribute many a good dollar incidental to each day’s sightseeing.”<sup>25</sup> The first Dawson tourism association, the Yukon Boosters’ Association and Front Street Intelligencer League, was established the following spring.<sup>26</sup> To assist in the development of points of interest for visitors, Acting Gold Commissioner G.I. McLean, the territory’s chief administrative officer, suggested in the fall of 1925 that a bronze tablet be set in a boulder commemorate the Klondike discovery. F.W. Howay, the British Columbia member of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, quickly acknowledged the national historic significance of the discovery and started research for a suitable plaque inscription.<sup>27</sup>

Howay spent almost a year collecting letters from Yukon old timers and reviewed numerous historical sources in trying to determine who discovered the gold and where. He appears to have wandered innocently into a quagmire and was soon well aware of the difficulties and thankless nature of assigning historical credit for the famous discovery. Howay appears to have innocently wandered into an attempt at defining the regional heritage values associated with discovery through the description of a historical event. In the end, he concluded it was not possible. In preparing his plaque text, Howay decided to avoid the discovery itself and focus instead on the less troublesome, more easily described history of the exploration activity that preceded discovery. In a letter to J.B. Harkin, he reported; “We

*Figure 1 Discovery Claim Plaque Text Unveiled In 1932*

To the memory of the indomitable prospectors and miners, who braving extreme dangers and untold hardships, crossed over the Chilkat and Chilkoot passes into the unexplored valley of the Yukon, and thus paved the way for the discovery in 1896 of the rich gold fields with which the names Robert Henderson and George W. Carmack are inseparably connected.

are purposely avoiding the Klondike rush of '98 and doing homage to those who pioneered the way."<sup>28</sup> The resulting plaque was unveiled in Dawson as part of the Discovery Day celebrations of 1932. (see Figure 1) Clearly, describing an historical event to define regional heritage values was not a simple matter.

Although Yukon placer gold mining had enjoyed a revival of fortunes during the Depression, by the early 1950s it began a long slide to economic oblivion. In Dawson, the community again turned to its heritage resources, and the national government, as a possible avenue of salvation. George Black, the Yukon member of Parliament, initially proposed a national commemoration plan to promote tourism, but this was rejected by the HSMBC in 1953.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, growing interest in architectural preservation rising from the Massey Commission on Canadian culture and the arts and changing government attitudes to the North brought Yukon issues back to the attention of the Board by the end of the decade.<sup>30</sup>

In the summer of 1959, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker went on a wide northern circuit trip to seek opportunities for advancing his "Northern Vision". He was especially taken with the possibilities of rescuing Dawson, and a flurry of tourist investment and related commemorative activity followed. The Palace Grand Theatre and Robert Service's cabin in Dawson were both recommended as national historic sites by the Board and four sternwheeler river boats in Whitehorse were also acquired by the Program for preservation. Alvin Hamilton, Minister of Northern Affairs, addressed the Board at its November meeting: "The Yukon, particularly areas related to the Gold Rush Era, have [sic] tremendous tourist potential. It is essential that a true historical picture be extracted from this image of romance and legend. The Board is asked to give this matter thought. Since this is a federally-controlled region consideration could be given to adapting municipal regulations to the needs of historical preservation." The Board obediently fell into the northern

development lock step and recommended that Dawson be regarded as a “historical complex” of national historical significance.<sup>31</sup> This, along with the co-incident Dawson Festival, was the first step in a massive federal program of tourism development that inadvertently swept aside the community's own sense of itself. In Dawson a kind of heritage guerilla warfare resulted.<sup>32</sup>

The Dawson Festival, initiated in 1959, was an idea developed in Ottawa. Planning proceeded without any local consultation and the event was announced by the Minister in March, 1960.<sup>33</sup> The key feature of the Festival was a major off-Broadway production, *Foxie*, for the Palace Grand Theatre. A number of expensive retail outlets were also persuaded to set up seasonal operations in Dawson.<sup>34</sup> The planners however, were frustrated in their attempts to galvanize support for the Festival in the local community. In the fall of 1961, just months before the Festival was to open, its president harangued a public meeting in Dawson, “whether the people of Dawson want it or not, they had a Festival on their hands’... because Pierre Berton, the Minister and the press said so.”<sup>35</sup>

The Festival failed economically, but the commemoration of the gold rush continued to be the main element of Dawson's conversion to a tourist destination. Parks Canada became the lead agency to fulfill this transformation. Buildings in Dawson were purchased and restored, sections of the goldfields were put in federal reserves and an interpretation program was established to present Klondike history. Parks Canada also re-opened the issue of commemorating the actual discovery of gold. On July 2, 1962, Walter Dinsdale (minister of Northern Affairs) and Klondike old-timer Harry Leamon unveiled a new plaque on what was thought to be the site of the original discovery claim (see Figure 2).<sup>36</sup>

***Figure 2 Discovery Claim Plaque text unveiled in 1962***

*Tipped off by veteran prospector Bob Henderson, George Carmack and his fishing partners, Skookum Jim and Tagish Charlie, searched the creek gravels of this area. On August 17, 1896, they found gold and staked the first four claims. A few days later at Fortymile, Carmack, in his own name, registered the Discovery Claim where this monument stands. Within days Bonanza and Eldorado Creeks had been staked from end to end and when the news reached the outside the KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH was on.*

**Figure 3 Discovery Claim Plaque Text Approved In 1972**

*The names Robert Henderson, Skookum Jim, Tagish Charlie and George Carmack are inextricably linked to the discovery of gold on Bonanza Creek. Henderson was the first to systematically explore the gold bearing potential of the region, only to have the major find elude him. Then on 17 August 1896 Jim struck gold, and with Charlie and Carmack staked the first claims. A few days later at Forty Mile, Carmack in his own name registered the Discovery Claim where this monument stands. Within days Bonanza and Eldorado Creeks had been staked and when the news reached the outside the Klondike Gold Rush was on.*

The new plaque grasped the nettle of discovery gently by mentioning a host of people involved. However, ten years later the plaque was revised by the HSMBC, following historical research by Parks Canada, and the discovery was attributed to Keish, better known as Skookum Jim, a Tagish First Nation man (see Figure 3).

There was an immediate uproar across the Yukon as people demanded respect for their history. Ken Snider, the Yukon observer at the Board meeting, protested the text vigorously and requested that the words “Jim struck gold” be removed because of the possibility of local controversy; he stated that in the opinion of the people of Yukon Territory the Board was “tampering with history”.<sup>37</sup> Art Fry, a gold miner in the Klondike operating on Bonanza Creek, staked what he declared was the real discovery site and refused to consider any applications for commemoration by Parks Canada. In fact, Mr. Fry’s will stipulated that the claim be passed onto a community group with the stipulation that Parks Canada never obtain control of it.<sup>38</sup>

While this series of events is often interpreted as just another example of a white majority wanting to keep Aboriginals out of their history, a more subtle reading offers another perspective. The Yukon Historic Sites and Monuments Board, a citizens group established in 1971 to advise the Yukon Government, complained that they were tired of outside groups interpreting and making up their history:

You must realize that we who live here, sometimes second and third generation, get very exasperated with professionals from the “outside” spending a few weeks

in the country, reading a few books and then submitting this sort of material..... We might ask are we to only have two short years of the Gold Rush as our history? ... we do feel, as persons interested in the authentic preservation of our history, that we should be given an opportunity to participation its presentation.<sup>39</sup>

This appeal was recognized and in 1975 a Board seat for the Yukon was established.<sup>40</sup>

Associated with the Dawson commemoration was the far more expansive concept for a Klondike Gold Rush International Historic Park. Designed to promote heritage tourism in both Alaska and Yukon, joint planning between the US National Park Service and Parks Canada began in 1969.<sup>41</sup> A year later the Canadian Provisional Development Plan stated that the "Park" was "to encompass the whole Gold Rush route between Skagway and Dawson City", including the Chilkoot Trail, the Yukon River route to Dawson and elements in Dawson and on Bonanza Creek. Joint promotion of the route and a co-ordinated interpretation completed the co-operative character of the project.<sup>42</sup>

A decade later, during the Parks Canada Centennial celebrations, the gold rush retained centre stage in the commemorative forum. In 1985, the Klondike Heritage Mail Run left Seattle and travelled through Skagway and then down the Yukon River by boat. Special guests and events were laid on. One event which did not go quite as planned, however, was the dinner and overnight stay at Fort Selkirk. The Selkirk Indian Band (now the Selkirk First Nation) had been invited to join the group for the celebration but the band graciously declined, noting that their efforts to participate in overall planning for Fort Selkirk "had fallen on death [sic] ears. To participate at this time in ceremonies would only smack of tokenism."<sup>43</sup> Like the miners in the goldfields the Selkirk Indian Band refused to accept the southern interpretation of its history or to compromise its interest in its heritage.

With such broad local passive resistance to the national commemoration program, one may ask exactly what *was* being celebrated. While the gold rush was clearly part of the history of the North, the national and international commemoration of the history of this event through the 1960s and 70s focused on national identity, rather than any regional expression of that history. On the surface, the story told of the race into the North for gold. However, a more detailed exploration of the nature of the commemoration reveals a



series of more subtle themes. These include the role of inland water and rail transportation in connecting the North to the south, corporate industrial development of the North by the south, and finally, the celebration of modern urban development in the North supported by southern government forms. In fact what was being commemorated in many respects was the northern industrial development dreams of the 1950s and 1960s. The emphasis on commemorating the gold rush had thrown the regional identity of northern peoples into a deep shadow.

The contest over meaning in historical commemoration has not been unique in Canada, of course; Americans have had similar experiences. In the summer of 1998, President Clinton opened the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Monument in Washington. The planning of the monument was never dull. For the first time, a first lady was commemorated in a presidential monument. Eleanor Roosevelt was depicted wearing her favourite coat with the fox-fur boa; the statue was modified after the loud protests of the anti-fur groups in the capital. Nor was Roosevelt himself left out of the scramble. Groups representing the disabled argued that it would be important to present the President in his wheelchair - a fact which the President himself worked diligently to minimize and hide from public view. It seems that modern needs were superseding the image of FDR as a symbol of leadership during the near-collapse of the American economy and society in the Depression, or his place as guide while the state expanded its role in a revitalized nation. One letter writer to the *Washington Post* noted "As a monument to the 1990s, I think it couldn't be better." <sup>44</sup>

### *Northern Aboriginal History*

The Parks Canada operation in Dawson still struggles with its legacy of southern vision, but it now works co-operatively with regional groups to incorporate regional visions more effectively into the notion of both regional and national significance. One of the most important changes has been in dealing with aboriginal history. Today, national historic sites in the north do not only commemorate newcomers, but northern Aboriginal commemorations are fairly recent additions to the system. The first was declared only in 1956. Nearly 30 sites with a northern Aboriginal connection are currently commemorated. And while the designations have not been subject to the same departmental imperatives for development, there have been several important influences affecting their selection (see Table 1)

***Table 1 Northern Aboriginal Sites Designated By The HSMBC***

<i>Date</i>	<i>Commemoration</i>	<i>Original Commemorative Intent</i>
1956	Discovery of Coppermine river - Hearne and Matonabbee	culture contact
1969	Sea Horse Gully remains - Dorset and pre-Dorset remains	archaeology
1969	Inukshuk group of 100 at Enusko Pt.	archaeology
1971	Kitwanga Fort	archaeology
1972	Arctic exploration and Inuit culture	culture contact
1972	Herschel Is.	culture contact
1976	Bering-Yukon Refugium,	archaeology
1976	Eastern Arctic whaling industry	shared activity
1978	Bloody Falls, prehistoric fishing/hunting sites	archaeology
1978	Iglolik Is	archaeology
1978	Kittigazuit	archaeology
1978	Port Refuge	archaeology
1978	Thule Migration	archaeology
1981	Kitwanga Totem poles	ethnographic
1981	Ebierbing and Tookoolito, help explorers	culture contact
1981	Ipirvik and Taqulittuq, help explorers	culture contact
1981	Matonabbee, helped Hearne	culture contact
1981	Peter Pitseolak	artist
1985	Blacklead Island whaling	shared activity
1985	Kekerton Island whaling	shared activity
1992	Hay River Mission Sites, Mission bldgs, Dene community	community
1994	Skookum Jim	culture contact
1995	Arviat and Qikiqtaarjuk, Inuit summer occupation sites	community
1995	Fall Caribou Crossing, Inuit hunt site	community
1996	Grizzly Bear Mtn and Scented Grass Hills (X2)	community
1996	Deline Fishery	community
1997	Nagwichoonyik	community

Nominations to the early 1980s (18 of the total 30) commemorated the importance of northern indigenous peoples exclusively from a newcomer or non-regional perspective. An analysis of these early commemorations illustrates three general themes; culture contact, shared activity and archaeology. From this analysis it can be seen that history, that is, an attempt to explain why things are the way they are, has been the prime determinant in the early northern aboriginal commemorations. More recently, heritage, or the recognition of those identity components of the past, has been acknowledged in the Parks Canada program's commemoration of Aboriginal sites.

The first commemoration noting Aboriginal presence was the designation in 1956 of Samuel Hearne's "discovery" of the Coppermine River. The role of the Chipewyan chief Matonabee in guiding Hearne and negotiating with other northern people on Hearne's behalf was noted. Matonabee was subsequently given his own commemoration for this assistance to Hearne in 1981. The theme of Aboriginal support for northern exploration was reinforced in the 1972 commemoration of Arctic exploration. Nine years later, specific commemorations to honour the service of two Inuit couples to northern explorers were added. The shared or co-operative nature of cross-cultural northern resource exploitation was also underscored in the 1976 commemoration of eastern Arctic whaling. In 1985, the commemoration of whaling activity was expanded by the designation of both Blacklead Island and Kekerton in Nunavut. In all of these instances, the support of indigenous peoples in the exploration of their homelands and the exploitation of northern natural resources by Euro-Canadians is being commemorated.

Another set of designations in this period highlighted archaeological research into the populating of the Canadian Arctic. During the 1950s and 60s, there had been a number of studies of important culture sites and resources in northern Canada, and archaeologists complained that there was little legal protection for these important cultural resources on Crown land. They called on the HSMBC to designate archaeological sites in the North as a form of protection for cultural sites with high research value. The identification of Dorset and pre-Dorset remains near Churchill was commemorated in 1969, while the roles of the Bering-Yukon Refugium and the Thule migrations in shaping Arctic populations were recognized in the late 1970s. Various professionals thus protected and promoted the subjects of their work on northern history by requesting designation that would recognize their subject's significance to the nation's history.

Since the late 1980s, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board

and Parks Canada have reconsidered the direction of the national designation program. Several under-represented groups (including women, ethnic minorities and Aboriginal peoples) were identified as possibly being interested in the program. In the North, an active program to support Aboriginal cultural research and foster nominations for national designation was initiated. Generally the most interesting are those nominations with the most active community involvement: that is, where the community sees some heritage value in having a site designated. One notable success is Nagwichoonjik National Historic Site in the far northwestern Northwest Territories. The Gwichya Gwich'in nominated and manage the site.

The Gwichya Gwich'in live in the lands at the confluence of the Teetl'it gwinjik (Peel River), Tsiigehnjik (Arctic Red River) and Nagwichoonjik (Mackenzie River). Their long presence in these lands has allowed them to construct a cultural identity intimately woven into the living landscape and carried forward through the subsistence practices and life ways of the people. Their rich oral tradition describes the origins and shaping of the world, their relations with neighbouring people, and their welcoming of newcomers from far away. In addition, they have a deep traditional knowledge that rises from their intimate and detailed familiarity with their lands, the seasons, and the various animals, plants and minerals that live with them there. Their presence on the land is marked by the remains of long ago quarries for stone tools, the sites of their fish and winter camps, and the trails that connect the extended families who continue to live here.<sup>45</sup>

Over time the Gwichya Gwich'in developed a range of activities and associations with their lands that acted as tools or methods of cultural reproduction, that is, ways of passing on their values, their skills, their heritage to their children and grandchildren. These include the direct association of their oral history with regional landmarks, the use of placenames as mnemonics, and the regular passing along of these stories to youth by the Elders in the relaxed and intimate family atmosphere of fish and winter camps. The continued use of the land and rivers for subsistence however, has been subject to considerable change in the last 30 years. The central elements of cultural reproduction have frayed, as communication and transportation links to the larger world strengthened and new forms of resource development grew up beside the old subsistence patterns. Children do not spend as much time at camps and the Elders have lost some of their traditional role as the people settle into larger communities with public schools and television.



Tools of the trade - fish camp on Nagwichoonjik (Mackenzie River). *D. Neufeld*

In the late 1980s, there was growing concern amongst Gwich'in Elders and others about this apparent erosion of Gwich'in culture and language.<sup>46</sup> In the 1992 Gwich'in Assembly, following the signing of the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, the Gwich'in Tribal Council established the Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute (GSCI) with a mandate; "To document, preserve and promote the practice of Gwich'in culture, language, traditional knowledge, and values." The principles guiding their work within the community include highlighting the important role of the Elders as teachers, protecting their lands, ensuring knowledge of family history is kept, and recognizing the responsibility of all Gwich'in for this work. The community also acknowledges the importance of cross-cultural understanding and awareness between Gwich'in and non-Gwich'in before a better world can be built.<sup>47</sup> The GSCI has outlined an ambitious and far-reaching program of cultural renewal that recognizes the importance of both heritage and history in the future of the Gwichya Gwich'in.

One aspect of this approach is their use of the National Historic Sites Program. Initially, the GSCI worked with the program to gain modest support for an ongoing Gwich'in oral history project. As their project progressed, the GSCI felt that a national historic site might be a useful element in the education programs for their children

and would also assist in enhancing cross-cultural understanding and awareness. To this end, they established a community committee of Elders and young adults to consider what might be nominated as a site. A report on this process noted;

At the outset, the Elders were uncomfortable with the idea of identifying and commemorating only one place as a national historic site. The idea that one place on the land was more important than another was considered strange as was the idea that the commemoration of Gwichya Gwich'in history and culture could be represented by a single site. "All the land is important", they said. However, they agreed to participate as they perceived this as a unique opportunity to document and promote Gwich'in culture and history at both the local and the national level. They felt strongly that this commemoration would help to educate both visitors and the children in the local schools about their own history and culture.

As the committee's discussions proceeded, they decided to focus on places closer to the community... They did this so that they could share their culture and history with visitors, yet at the same time retain control and ensure that the community would benefit. Consequently, discussions focused on the Mackenzie River.<sup>48</sup>

The GSCI forwarded a nomination for Nagwichoonyjik as a National Historic Site in 1997. *Nagwichoonyjik*, "a big water flowing through a big country", creates a dramatic slash through the Gwichya Gwich'in country. Even at low water, the flow of water is enormous and the spring flood raises water levels some ten to fifteen metres. The river is bounded by an almost continuous wall of high cliffs from Thunder River, some 140 kilometres upstream from Tsiigehtchic. The Lower Ramparts, just above Tsiigehtchic, rise some 100 metres above low water. Below Tsiigehtchic, the land gradually flattens and at Point Separation, the cusp of the delta, the valley broadens and elevation has retreated far from the river. These cliffs are cut frequently by the many creeks draining into the river, each opening offering a place for a fishcamp or a trail-head into the lakes and country beyond.

To the Gwichya Gwich'in, Nagwichoonyjik is part of their home.



Young Gwich'in girl stalking a seagull in Nagwichoonjik NHS. *D. Neufeld*

The river is an avenue to their country, providing access to many of the trail-heads and family camps. It is also an important source of food, the inconnu or “connie” fish still providing a dietary mainstay. Like much of the country, the river is layered with meanings - stories tied to place and marked by placenames, subsistence skill sets, family camps and nearby, the ancestors' graves. As one writer put it, “[Through the nomination], the Gwichya Gwich'in were able to satisfy their own way of looking at the land as a whole - with people, their cultures and the land intimately intertwined.” Their emphasis on the identification and interpretation of sites along the river also enhances visitors knowledge and appreciation of the Gwichya Gwich'in and their land. It appears there has been an effective integration of the national historic site program into the life of the community.<sup>49</sup> In January 1998, Nagwichoonjik was declared a National Historic Site by the minister of Canadian Heritage.

### *Conclusion*

National historic designations play a dual role in shaping our understanding of Canada. By presenting the history of Canada and by laying out forces that have shaped the present, they provide citizens with an opportunity to consider and understand not only why things are the way they are, but how they themselves can effect meaningful change. Also, by acting as anchors for the heritage of Canadians, these sites provide a variety of communities with a public commitment to respect their values and life ways. National historic designations reinforce the vivacity of the cultural mosaic

that is our national identity.

The commemoration of sites in Canada's North through this century raises many themes familiar in Canadian history. A review of the origins of these designations also provides some interesting insights into how Canadians have viewed and understood the North in the twentieth century. There are national historic commemorations presenting the far-flung extensions of eighteenth century European world wars, sites and plaques highlighting Euro-Canadian prowess in exploration, and celebrations of the successful exploitation of northern resources. There are sites illustrating the life of the North's earliest inhabitants. More recently, northern Aboriginal people themselves have begun to present their own stories through the national historic system.

It is also interesting to see how and why the program of historical site designation has been used. Who has taken advantage of the national historic sites system and what objectives did they have? Were the national designations helpful in reaching these objectives? And how has the program evolved in response to changing expectations? The national historic designation program was initially established to extend the reach of the Dominion Parks Branch to all Canadians and to recommend to the government appropriate ways of commemorating Canada's past. With over 1700 geographically dispersed designations, historic commemorations have now reached across the country. With the gradual, if occasionally reluctant, extension of representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, the system is pro-actively attempting to make the system more widely available to Canadians.

Initially, the system was used in the North by southern Canadians to justify their vision of Canada as a northern nation. Hence, the designation system was an imperial extension of southern values and perceptions onto northern places and people. Northern exploration was celebrated as a component of national sovereignty and the Klondike gold rush was depicted as a precedent and justification for the northern development policies of the 1950s and 60s. The extension of science into the North, though more subtle, was effectively part of the same process. Archaeologists use designations as a form of protection for culture sites with high research value. Through these sites, archaeologists promoted their professional theories of northern migration and lifeways. Nevertheless, while southerners nominated these sites, many of these designations also have value for northerners and, over time, were adapted to meet northern needs as well.



More recently, northerners, and especially Aboriginal communities, are beginning to see the program as a useful tool for cultural reproduction. As northern communities evolve to meet contemporary changes, they are exploring the value of designations for their own heritage purposes. With these values foremost in their minds, they are calling on managers of northern national historic sites to provide programs for community youth, to support Elder involvement and to develop a calendar of activities that reach out to the local community. The community priority is to identify cultural values and to pass on a sense of identity to the young. A national historic site that fails to deliver on these elements serves little purpose and will not be supported by the community.

While heritage concerns are being met, the question of historical representation remains. How and where can history and heritage intersect? By presenting their history to the larger public, communities gain an acknowledgment of their existence and foster an informed respect for their interests. Thus a celebration of heritage to meet internal community needs and a presentation of history to cement positive relations with the wider world can be combined in an effective national historic site designation.

The role of the public historian in mediating the complex interplay of program, participants and audience, demands both the recognized research and writing skills of the profession and an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the community's heritage interests. A Parks Canada historian must remain aware of the institution's role in presenting an accurate picture of place, person or event to the broader public, while remaining sensitive to the definitions of heritage that the community has evolved. To this end it is important for the public historian to gain a detailed background knowledge of the history that has shaped the region or people represented by the site. Without this clarity, the presentation to visitors will remain unconvincing and false and the objective of gaining wider acknowledgment and respect for the host community will have failed.

At the same time the Parks Canada historian must develop a working relationship with the community. Community confidence in the process will ensure that their heritage needs are identified and enshrined in some form. The site designation program cannot fulfill all the heritage needs, but it must recognize their existence and foster the use of the designation for these purposes. It is the historian who can facilitate this conversation between program and community. It is the historian who can ensure that both history and heritage are addressed.

## *Appendix 1*

### National Commemoration of History and Heritage in Canada's North 1920 - 1997

<b>Date</b>	<b>Commemoration</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Commemorative Intent</b>
1920	Fort Churchill	MB, Churchill	Built by Samuel Hearne, 1763, reached by rail in 1929
1920	Prince of Wales Fort	MB, Churchill	18th century stone fur trade fort on Hudson Bay
1923	Explorations of Mackenzie	BC, Prince George	Discovered Mackenzie River (1789), reached Pacific overland
1926	Yukon Gold Discovery/Claim	YT, Bonanza Creek	Gold reported in 1840s, expanded in 1870s, rush in 1897-98
1929	Collins Overland Telegraph	BC, Quesnel	Intended to link Europe and America via Russia, abandoned in 1867
1930	Parry's Rock Wintering Site	NT, Winter Hbr	Wintering site of Wm Parry's expedition of the NW Passage, 1819
1932	Norway House	MB, Norway House	Major 19th century Hudson's Bay Co. post
1933	Methye Portage	SK, La Loche	Only practical link from east to Athabasca region from 1778 to 1820
1936	York Factory	MB, York Factory	HBC principal fur trade depot from 1684-1870's
1936	Hearne, Samuel	MB, Churchill	Explorer, Coppermine River, Governor Ft. Prince of Wales, 1745-1792
1937	Dawson, Dr. George Mercer	NS, Pictou	Director of the GSC, 1849-1901
1937	Simpson, Thomas	MB, Winnipeg	Arctic explorer, charted the western Arctic coast, 1808-1840
1938	Belcher, Sir Edward	NS, Halifax	Canadian-born naval officer and surveyor, led Franklin search, 1799-1877
1938	Steele, Sir Samuel	ON, Orillia	Soldier, Superintendent of the NWMP (1885-1903), 1849-1919
1943	First eastward NWPassage	SK, Regina	Arctic voyage of the "St. Roch", Vancouver to Sydney, 1940-42
1945	Franklin, Sir John	NT, Beechey Is.	Explorer, charted Arctic coast, lost in 1845, 1786-1847
1948	Morice, Adrien-Gabriel, O.M.I.	BC, Fort St. James?	Oblate Missionary, N British Columbia, Athapaskan dictionary, 1859-1938
1948	Ross, James Hamilton	SK, Regina	Member North-West Council, Commissioner of the Yukon, 1856-1932
1948	Fort St. James	BC, Fort St. James	1806 fur trade post founded by Simon Fraser
1951	Pond, Peter	SK, Prince Albert	Explorer and fur trader, one of the founders of the NW Co., 1740-1807
1953	Fort Reliance	NT, Reliance	Oldest continuously operating HBC post, 1833
1953	Fidler, Peter	SK, Meadow lake	HBC trader on the Saskatchewan and Churchill Rivers, 1769-1822
1954	Alaska Highway <sup>1</sup>	YT, Soldiers Summit	Joint US-Canada defence project 1941-43, Dawson Creek to Fairbanks
1954	Alaska Highway	BC, Contact Creek	Joint US-Canada defence project 1941-43, Dawson Creek to Fairbanks
1954	Ile-a-la-Crosse	SK, Ile-a-la-Crosse	HBC fur trade site
1956	Discovery of Coppermine River	NT, ?	Samuel Hearne and Matonabee, 1771, overland from Prince of Wales Fort
1957	Frobisher, Sir Martin	NT, Iqaluit	Arctic explorer, led 3 expeditions, first charting of E Arctic, 1539-1594
1957	Moose Factory Buildings	ON, Moose Factory	1673, second HBC post in Canada
1959	Dawson Historical Complex	YK, Dawson	Important urban complex from the Klondike Gold Rush
1960	Bush Pilots of Canada	NT, Yellowknife	Vital role in charting and developing the Canadian north
1961	Bernier, Capt. Joseph-Elzear	PQ, L'Islet	Establishing Cdn sovereignty over Arctic archipelago, 1852-1934
1961	S.S. Keno	YK, Dawson	Importance of river transport, 1922 wooden steamboat
1962	St. Roch	BC, Vancouver	First vessel to navigate northern passage west - east
1962	S.S. Klondike	YK, Whitehorse	Importance of river transport, largest and last commercial Yukon steamboat
1964	Stephansson, Stephan G.	MB, Arnes	Arctic explorer, major expeditions (1906-07, 1908-12, 1913-18), 1879-1962
1964	Frobisher site	NT, Kodlunarn Is.	Martin Frobisher habitation and iron smelting, 1576-1578
1967	Walsh, James Morrow	SK, Fort Walsh	NWMP Superintendent, Yukon Commissioner (1897-1899), 1840-1905
1967	Dredge No.4	YK, Bonanza Creek	Importance of dredging operations (1899-1966) evolution of goldmining
1967	Transportation in the Yukon	YT, Whitehorse	Paddlewheel, railway and air travel networks
1967	Chilkoot Trail	BC, Chilkoot	Transportation route to Klondike gold fields
1968	Fur Trade	PQ, Lachine	An important industry during most of Canada's history
1969	Slave River Rapids	NT, Fort Smith	Only obstacle to navigation from Lake Athabasca to Arctic Ocean
1969	Discovery of Mackenzie River	NT, Fort Providence	Discovered in 1789 by A. Mackenzie, followed to Arctic Ocean
1969	Fort McPherson	NT, Fort McPherson	HBC post, 1840
1969	Inuksuk	NT, Enuks Point	Inuit complex of 100 stone landmarks
1969	Fort Simpson	NT, Fort Simpson	NWCo (1804) and HBC (1822) posts
1969	Bartlett, Capt. Robert Abram	NF, Brigus	Explorer, Peary Expedition, Arctic voyages, 1875-1946
1969	Sea Horse Gully Remains	MB, Churchill	Large Dorset and Pre-Dorset site

1970	Holy Trinity Church	SK, Stanley Mission	Early Anglican mission church in the west
1970	Tyrell, Joseph Burr	YT, Dawson	Explorer, historian with the GSC (1882-99), 1858-1957
1970	Hopedale Mission	NF, Hopedale	Important Moravian Mission established 1782 (3 bldg)
1970	Ogilvie, William	YT, Dawson	Surveyor, author, Commissioner of Yukon, 1846-1912
1971	Parry, Sir William Edward	NT, Melville Is.	Arctic explorer, led three North West Passage expeditions, 1790-1855
1971	Kitwanga Fort	BC, Kitwanga	Tsimshian village
1972	Button, Sir Thomas	MB, York Factory	Arctic explorer, 1612 expedition discovered Nelson River, 1580-1634
1972	Davis, John	NT, Pangnirtung	Arctic explorer, three northwest passage expeditions, 1550-1605
1972	Baffin, William	NT, Pangnirtung	Arctic explorer, mapped Hudson Strait and Davis Strait, 1584-1622
1972	Foxe, Luke	NT, C. Henrietta Maria?	Arctic explorer, discovered Foxe Basin, «North-West Fox», 1586-1635
1972	Ross, Sir James Clark	NT, Spence Bay	Arctic explorer sailed with Parry, led 1848 Franklin search, 1800-1862
1972	Herschel Island	YT, Herschel Is.	Canadian sovereignty in W Arctic, intercultural contact, whaling industry
1972	McClintock, Sir Francis Leopold	?	Arctic explorer, commanded 1857-59 final search for Franklin, 1819-1907
1972	McClure, Sir Robert John	?	Arctic explorer, crossed NW passage search of Franklin, 1807-1873
1972	Ross, Sir John	NT, Spence Bay	Arctic explorer, led NWPassage trips, Franklin search, 1777-1856
1972	Arctic Exploration & Inuit Cultur	No plaque planned	Contact between explorers and Inuit
1973	Copper Industry	PQ, Noranda	Discovery of Copper ore in NW Quebec, 1920s led to Rouyn-Noranda
1973	Gold Mining	ON, Porcupine	Gold production entered new era with discovery of Porcupine, 1909
1973	Back, Sir George	NT, Fort Reliance	Artist and arctic explorer, Franklin's expeditions, 1796-1878
1973	Iron Mining	NF, Labrador City	In the 1890s major deposits were discovered in western Labrador
1973	Mining	ON, Sudbury?	One of Canada's most important industries
1973	Nickel Mining	ON, Sudbury	Tied to the Sudbury basin, produced most of the metal in this country, 1883
1973	Frobisher, Thomas	-	Fur trader, founded post at Ile-a-la-Crosse on Churchill River, 1744-1788
1973	Hudson, Henry	PQ, Fort Rupert	Arctic explorer, discovered Hudson Bay, James Bay, ?-1611
1973	Silver Mining	ON, Cobalt	Important mineral for Canada's economy since the Cobalt Boom, 1903
1973	Fort Resolution	NT, Fort Resolution	Main post on Great Slave Lake, 1821
1973	Jenness, Diamond	ON, Ottawa	Anthropologist, studies Copper Inuit, discovered Dorset culture, 1886-1969
1973	Uranium Industry	NT, Great Bear Lake?	G. Lane's discovery at Great Bear Lk. led to Canada's 1st Uranium mine
1973	Rae, John	NT, ?	Fur trader, arctic explorer, searched for Franklin, 1813-1893
1974	Oaks, Harold Anthony «Doc»	MB, Winnipeg	Pioneer bush pilot, founded Patricia Airway, 1896-1968
1974	May, W.R. «Wop»	AB, Edmonton	Pioneer of bush flying in Canada, Order of the British Empire, 1896-1952
1974	De Havilland Beaver	ON, Downsview	Single engine highwing aircraft developed for bush flying in 1946
1974	Group of Seven	ON, Kleinburg	First exhibited in 1927, Canadian landscape painting
1974	Noorduyn Norseman	PQ, Dorval	Designed in 1935, highwing aircraft designed for bush flying
1975	Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825	BC, Stewart	Established boundary between British/Russian possessions on west coast
1976	Hebron Mission	NF, Hebron, Labrador	1830's complex of linked Moravian Mission Bldgs
1976	Whaling Industry in E. Arctic	NT, Pond Inlet?	Aboriginals and Europeans caught Bowhead and Beluga whales
1976	Bering-Yukon Refugium	YT, Old Crow	Migration route between Siberia and America
1977	Fifth Thule Expedition	NT, Danish Is.	Danish expedition, 1921-24, identified Thule Culture of AD 900-1450
1977	Church of our Lady of Good Ho	NT, Fort Good Hope	Early northern Oblate Mission Church, outstanding interior
1978	Port Refuge	NT, Port Refuge	Prehistoric occupations and trade with Norse colonies
1978	Kittigazuit archaeological sites	NT, Kittigazuit	Beluga hunting, Kitegaryumiut and Mackenzie delta
1978	Igloodik Is. archaeology sites	NT, Igloodik Is.	Archaeological sequence, 2000 BC - AD 1000
1978	Bloody Falls	NT, Coppermine	Prehistoric hunting and fishing sites
1978	Thule Migration	?	Ancestors of modern Inuit spread from Alaska, ca 1000-1300 AD
1981	Kitwanga Totem Poles	BC, Kitwanga	Totem poles record families of Kitwanga fort
1981	Cdn sovereignty in Arctic archip	NT, Melville Is.	Events associated with exercise of Cdn sovereignty
1981	Matonabee	MB, Churchill	Cree Chief, guided S. Hearne overland to the Coppermine River, 1737-1782
1981	First Intern'l Polar Year 1882-83	NT, Fort Conger	Scientific studies by 11 countries, 1882-83

1981	Ipirvik and Taqullittuq	NT, Iqaluit	Inuit couple, Baffin Is., assisted arctic expeditions in the 1860-70s
1981	1954 Voyage of HMCS Labrador	NT, Resolute?	First navigation of the Northwest Passage by a deep draft ship
1981	Pitseolak, Peter	NT, Cape Dorset	Artist, photographer, hunter and historian, 1902-1973
1981	Ebierbing and Tookoolito	NT, Frobisher Bay	Inuit couple, Baffin Is., assisted arctic expeditions, 1860s-70
1983	Canol Road	YT, Johnson's Crossin	American military project in 1941 to exploit Norman Wells oil field
1983	Canol Road (other end)	NT, Norman Wells	American military project in 1941 to exploit Norman Wells oil field
1984	Boyle, Joseph "Klondike Joe"	YT, Bonanza Creek	Entrepreneur, founded Klondike Mining Co. (1904), 1867-1923
1985	Blacklead Island Whaling Statio	NT, Blacklead Is.	Aboriginal and European bowhead whaling
1985	Kekerton Island Whaling Station	NT, Kekerton Is.	Aboriginal and European bowhead whaling
1986	White Pass & Yukon Route	Rw YT, Whitehorse	Skagway to Whitehorse, completed rail access to west coast
1987	Pulp and Paper Industry in Can	?	One of the most important industries in 20th century Canada
1987	Judge, Father William S.J.	YT, Dawson	Missionary in Dawson during Klondike Gold Rush (1897-98), 1850-1899
1987	Black, Martha Louise	YT, Dawson	Second woman elected as MP (1935), prominent Yukon figure, 1866-1957
1988	Churchill Rocket Research Ran	MB, Churchill	Upper atmosphere research centre
1988	Sisters of Ste. Anne	PQ, Lachine	Founded in 1850 by Marie-Esther Blondin for education and care of the sick
1988	Missionary Oblates of Mary Im	ON, Ottawa	Arrived in Canada, 1841, missionaries in remote settlements
1988	Jesuit Fathers	PQ, Quebec	Missionaries and educators in Canada since 1625
1992	Hay River Mission Sites	NT, Hay River I.R.	Mission buildings, significant to Dene community
1992	Erebus and Terror	NT, Erebus Bay	Ships of Franklin's last expedition, 1845
1993	Beechey Island Sites	NT, Beechey Island	Related to 19th century arctic exploration (5 sites)
1994	Mason, Skookum Jim "Keish"	YT, Carcross?	Discoverer of first major Yukon gold fields, c. 1850-1911
1994	Dawson to Ashcroft Telegraph L	YT, Whitehorse	One of longest, most remote telegraph lines completed over land
1995	Arvia'juaq and Qikiqtaarjuk	NT, Arviaq	Inuit summer sites, rich history and extant in situ resources
1995	Fall Caribou Crossing	NT, Kazan R.	Site of critical importance to the historical survival of Inuit Community
1995	Dickens, C.H. 'Punch'	AB, Fort McMurray?	Bush pilot and development of commercial aviation in Cdn north, 1899-1995
1996	Scented Grass Hills	NT, Scented Grass Hi	Interrelationship between landscape, oral history, graves+ cult resourc
1996	NWT and Yukon Radio System	YT/NT, Dawson, Ykni	Pioneer in radio communications in extreme conditions of north
1996	Grizzly Bear Mountain	NT, Grizzly Bear Mtn	Interrelationship between landscape, oral history, cult resources
1996	Traditional Dene Fishery	NT, Deline?	Culturally significant to the occupation of the region by the Sahtu Dene
1996	Remains of Fort Franklin	NT, Deline	Wintering quarters of Sir John Franklin and his 2nd expedition
1997	Nagwichoonjik (Mackenzie R.)	NT, Tsiigegechtchic	River in Gwitch'in lands, cultural, social, spiritual significance

## *Endnotes*

1. D. Lowenthal, Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History (New York: Free Press, 1996), pp. 128-132, addresses the very different character of heritage and history but notes their absolutely complementary nature while R. Rosenzweig and D. Thelen in The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life (New York: Columbia University, 1998) make essentially the same point, proposing that a thorough knowledge of history permits human agency in managing social relations.
2. Lowenthal, Possessed by the Past, p. 128.
3. Lowenthal, Possessed by the Past, p. 128.
4. W.F. Lothian, A History of Canada's National Parks, Vol. 1 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1976) pp. 26, 31-32.
5. C.J. Taylor, Negotiating the Past: The Making of Canada's National Historic Parks and Sites (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990) p. 30-31.
6. Taylor, Negotiating the Past, p. 29-30.
7. *Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada - An Introduction* in Thomas Symons, ed. The Place of History - Commemorating Canada's Past (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1997) pp. 333-334. The Board was established in law in 1955 with the passage of the "Historic Sites and Monuments Act."
8. Taylor, Negotiating the Past, p. 75.
9. Parks Canada, Register of Designations of National Historic Significance: Commemorating Canada's History (Ottawa: Parks Canada, March, 1999).
10. Taylor, Negotiating the Past, p. xiv.
11. G.F.G. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1961, first published 1936). Frieda Klippenstein, *First Nations Involvement in the 1885 North West Rebellion/Resistance* (HSMBC Agenda Paper, December, 1998.) notes the evolution in the understanding of these sites as part of national history. Taylor, Negotiating the Past, p. 89. The change in the name from rebellion to resistance in the 1990s was a formal and practical recognition of the need to recognize the heritage values associated with the commemoration.

12. List of Board members in Symons, ed. The Place of History, p. 345 ff. The strength and priority given to regional representation and understanding of national history is the theme of Taylor, Negotiating the Past.
13. W.F. Lothian, A History of Canada's National Parks, Vol. 2 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977) pp. 20.
14. G. Robertson, *Administration for Development in Northern Canada: The Growth and Evolution of Government*, Journal of the Institute of Public Administration in Canada, Vol. III, No.4, December, 1960. pp. 362. A few years later, Lester Pearson voiced similar sentiments with the reorganization of the Department in 1966, "the joining of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is a national step which cannot but strengthen both the well being of Canada's indigenous peoples and the cause of northern expansion and development." from Lothian, Canada's National Parks, Vol. 2, pp. 23.
15. Taylor notes several pointed examples between 1953 and 1966, Negotiating the Past, p. 152-153.
16. For the purposes of this essay, northern sites were loosely defined as those north of 60° and those south of 60° which had direct and/or significant connections to the north. The list of commemorations was prepared using Parks Canada, Register of Designations.
17. Innis's primary work is The Fur Trade in Canada (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930; reprinted University of Toronto Press, 1962 and 1970) though he also completed an interesting analysis of the Klondike development in W.A. MacIntosh and W.L.G. Joerg, eds. Canadian Frontiers of Settlement series, *Settlement and the Mining Frontier*, (Toronto, McMillan Co., 1936 and Millwood: Kraus Reprint Co, 1974).
18. M. Zaslow, The Opening of the Canadian North 1870-1914 (Toronto: McMillan and Stewart, 1971) pp.251-55, 264-268, M. Zaslow, The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967 (Toronto: McMillan and Stewart, 1988) p. 199-202 and Nancy June Fogelson, *Arctic Exploration and American-Canadian Relations: 1900-1932, A Period of Expanding National Interests*, PhD. diss, University of Cincinnati, 1983, especially chapters III and V. Northern Affairs Library, Ottawa JX4044.D63, *Documents concerning Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic*, prepared for Northern Affairs and Natural Resources in 1956/57.
19. Taylor, Negotiating the Past, p.38.
20. *Prospects for National Park Development in Parts of the Yukon and Northwest Territories*, begun by Professor William Baker for the National Parks Branch in the early 1960s and completed in May 1963.

He recommended an aggressive program of national park and historic site development in the North to meet the recreational needs of southern Canadians and to prod economic development.

21. NAC, RG84, Series A-2-a, Vol. 1983, f.U2-20 pt.2 Memo of January, 1963.

22. D. Neufeld and P. Habiluk, Make It Pay! Gold Dredge #4 (Missoula, Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1994) pp.18-19.

23. *An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 1 of the Consolidated Ordinances of the Yukon Territory, 1902, Being the Interpretation Ordinance*, (assented to June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1912.) Consolidated Ordinances of the Yukon Territory, 1902. and D. Neufeld, *Public Memory and Public Holidays: The Goldpanner, Corporate Capital, Tourism and the Yukon's Discovery Day Holiday*, Public History Review, No. 8, 2000.

24. R. Stuart, The Robert Service Cabin, Dawson, 1902-1970 (Parks Canada, Microfiche Report No. 90, 1983).

25. June 20, 1921.

26. Dawson Daily News June 22, 1922. R. Stuart, *Recycling Used Boom Towns: Dawson and Tourism*, The Northern Review, No.6. Winter, 1990, pp.109-110.

27. NAC, RG 84, Vol. 1398, f. HS-10-46 pt.1 Oct., 1926 - Sept., 1930, ltrs of Oct. 15, 1925 and Dec. 17, 1925.

28. NAC, RG 84, Vol. 1398, f. HS-10-46 pt.1 Oct., 1926 - Sept., 1930, ltr of Feb. 21, 1930. Julie Cruikshank provides an interesting complement to Howay's files on the white miners' thoughts, by drawing on the oral traditions of the Carcross-Tagish people, the descendants of Keish (Skookum Jim) in her *Skookum Jim or Keish: Another View of the Klondike Gold Rush*, Dan Dha Ts'edeninth'e Reading Voices: Oral and Written Interpretations of the Yukon's Past (Vancouver, 1991) pp. 121-139.

29. Stuart, *Recycling Used Boom Towns*, pp. 117-118. Stuart also notes the community debate over tourism in Dawson through the 1950s. There was a real reluctance amongst many Yukoners to build a future on their past, pp. 114-115.

30. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1175 Historic Sites-General Vol. 12/pt.1 Ja/49-My/53 and Taylor, Negotiating the Past, pp. 170-175.

31. Stuart, *Recycling Used Boom Towns*, p. 119 and Minutes of the HSMBC, November, 1959.

32. Jim Lotz, *Dawson City, Y.T. A Survey of the Planning and Community Needs involved in the 1962 Dawson City Festival* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1962).
33. Stuart, *Recycling Used Boom Towns*, pp. 116-117.
34. Personal communication from Peter Bennett, retired NHS staff, August, 1998.
35. Lotz, *Dawson Survey*, p. 4 via Stuart *Recycling Used Boom Towns*, p. 117.
36. NAC, RG 84, Vol. 1398, f. HS-10-46 pt 2 and 3.
37. HSMBC Minutes of Oct. 19, 1972.
38. Personal communication from Mona Sprokkreeff, Dawson Mining Recorder's Office, June, 1996.
39. Parks Canada Central Records C-8400/D61-10 85/1 Discovery Claim, ltr. Ione Christensen to Peter Bennett, May 17, 1972. A less diplomatic spokesman for the Yukon government said the decision was "strictly political". "Indians are in this year, and Chretien's image hasn't been all that great, that's why Skookum Jim gets all the credit. Well, perhaps the role of the two Indians in the discovery should be given more publicity, but that's no excuse for Ottawa to try and re-write history." *Ottawa accused of rewriting Klondike history*, Edmonton Journal, Ap 17, 1972.
40. Parks Canada Central Records C-8400/D61-10 85/1 Discovery Claim, ltr. DIAND Administrator, Whitehorse to Senior ADM John Gordon, June 19, 1972 and List of Board members in Symons, ed. The Place of History, p. 345 ff.
41. F. Norris, *Administrative History of Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park*, pp. 97-100.
42. Parks Canada Central Registry, C-8400/K153 Vol. 1 - My/68-Oc/70. Memo Senior SDM to Minister DIAND, Dec. 10, 1969.
43. Parks Canada, Whitehorse Central registry, f.1140-100B, ltr Selkirk Indian Band to Parks Area Superintendent, July 5, 1985.
44. O. Graham, *On the Mall, a Monument to the Nineties*, The Public Historian, Vol. 19, No.3, Summer, 1997.



45. This description relies on Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, "*That river, it's like a highway for us.*" *The Mackenzie River through Gwichya Gwich'in history and culture*, HSMBC Agenda Paper, April, 1997 and conversations with Alestine Andre and Ingrid Kritsch, both of the GSCI. The April, 1997 minutes of the HSMBC deliberations on Nagwichoonyik National Historic Site were also helpful, as was my own visit to the site as a guest of the Gwichya Gwich'in at Tsiigehtchic in September, 1999.

46. Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute, *Into the Next Millennium: The Five-Year Plan of the Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute, 1996-2001*, n.p., n.d.

47. GSCI, *Into the Next Millennium*, Mandate and Guiding Principles, inside front cover.

48. *Nagwichoonyik NHS*, New Parks North, Vol. 7, March, 1998.

49. *Nagwichoonyik NHS*, New Parks North, 1998.