



Historic Sites and  
Monuments Board  
of Canada

Commission des lieux et  
monuments historiques  
du Canada

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# Criteria

## General Guidelines

## Specific Guidelines

for evaluating subjects of potential national  
historic significance

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*Spring 2008*



# Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada

## Criteria, General Guidelines & Specific Guidelines

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
About the National Commemoration Program	1
About this Booklet	1
<b>1. Criteria for National Historic Significance (1998)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. General Guidelines (1998)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Specific Guidelines: Place</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Extra-Territorial Commemorations	7
3.2 Commemoration of Cemeteries	7
3.3 Churches and Buildings Still in Religious Use	7
3.4 Archaeological Sites	8
3.5 Facades of Historical Structures Integrated into Modern Developments	8
3.6 Identification of Historic Districts of National Significance	9
3.7 Identification of Schools of National Significance	9
3.8 Monuments Which Themselves Have Commemorative Purpose	10
3.9 Commemoration of Movable Heritage Property	10
3.10 Identification of Parks and Gardens of National Significance	10
3.11 Identification of Rural Historic Districts of National Significance	11
3.12 Country Grain Elevators	11
3.13 Assessing Sites Associated with Persons of National Historic Significance	11
3.14 Built Heritage of the Modern Era	12
3.15 Framework for Identifying and Assessing Settlement Patterns	13
3.16 Historic Engineering Landmarks	13
3.17 Assessing the National Historic Significance of Lighthouses	14
3.18 Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes	14
3.19 Shipwrecks of National Historic Significance in Canada	14
3.20 Commemoration of Court Houses	15
<b>4. Specific Guidelines: Person</b>	<b>17</b>
4.1 Commemoration of Governors-General	17
4.2 Provincial Figures Both Prior to and Subsequent to Confederation	17
4.3 Commemoration of Prime Ministers	17
4.4 Individuals of Importance in the Canadian Economy	18
4.5 Canadians Who Developed an Image of Canada Abroad	18
4.6 Evaluating Canadian Architects	18
4.7 Evaluating Canadian Athletes	19
<b>5. Specific Guideline: Events/Other</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1 Origins of Settlements	21
5.2 Pre-Confederation Events	21
5.3 Assessing the Role of Organized Religion in the Social Development of Canada	21

5.4	Ethnic or Religious Groups _____	22
5.5	Disasters and Disaster Areas _____	22
5.6	Commemoration of Post-Secondary Educational Institutions _____	22
<b>6.</b>	<b><i>Specific Guidelines: Forms of commemoration</i></b> _____	<b>23</b>
6.1	Monuments Not Owned by the Department _____	23
6.2	Distinctive Monuments _____	23
6.3	Quality and Content of Plaque Inscriptions _____	24
6.4	The Use of Non-Official Language on Commemorative Plaques _____	24
6.5	Consultation on Commemorative Plaque Texts _____	25
6.6	Style and Layout of Plaque Inscriptions _____	25
6.7	Dual or Multiple Plaquing of a Designation _____	26
<b>7.</b>	<b><i>Specific Guidelines: Procedure</i></b> _____	<b>27</b>
7.1	Original Fabric on the Ground Floors of Buildings _____	27
7.2	Deferred Matters _____	27
7.3	National Historic Sites Whose Commemorative Integrity Has Been Destroyed _____	27
7.4	Preparation of Submissions to the [Status of Designations] Committee _____	28
7.5	Determining Designated Place _____	28
7.6	Changing the Directory of Designations of National Historic Significance _____	29
7.7	Guidelines for Establishing Names for National Historic Sites _____	30

# Introduction

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## About the National Commemoration Program

Since 1919, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) has advised the Minister responsible for Parks Canada on the designation of nationally significant places, persons and events and on the marking of these subjects to enhance awareness, appreciation and understanding of Canada's history. The HSMBC is a statutory advisory group composed of members from each province and territory in Canada.

The HSMBC encourages the public to become involved in the commemoration of Canada's rich and diverse heritage. Nominations are received by the HSMBC's Secretariat, which verifies the subject's conformity with the Board's criteria and guidelines. If the application satisfies requirements, the subject is brought forward for the consideration of the HSMBC in the form of a formal research paper at either its Fall or Spring meeting. The Board's recommendations to the Minister of the Environment are recorded in the form of Minutes of Proceedings. Once the Minister has approved the Minutes, applicants are informed of the outcome of their nominations.

## About this Booklet

Over time, the HSMBC has developed a number of policies, criteria and guidelines within which to frame its advice to the Minister. The terminology has evolved with the Board's adoption of the "Criteria for National Historic Significance and General Guidelines" in 1998. "Policy" now refers solely to Parks Canada's "Guiding Principles and Operational Policies." The "criteria" are those found in the "Criteria for National Historic Significance." And the term "guideline" refers to both the "General Guidelines" as adopted by the Board in 1998, and the "Specific Guidelines," which are based on Board decisions to address specific aspects of commemoration, adopted through the years.

This booklet contains direct citations from the Board's Minutes. Where the terminology has been changed in citations to reflect current usage, the change is indicated by square brackets [ ]. Italics are used to reflect the commentary and explanatory notes added by the HSMBC's Secretariat to place the citations into context. The specific guidelines in each section are presented in chronological order. The

booklet will be updated annually by the Secretariat to include any new guidelines approved by the Board. This version is a compilation of Board decisions regarding criteria and guidelines up to and including those recorded in its Spring 2007 Minutes.

# 1. Criteria for National Historic Significance (1998)

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Any aspect of Canada's human history may be considered for Ministerial designation of national historic significance. To be considered for designation, a place, a person or an event will have had a nationally significant impact on Canadian history, or will illustrate a nationally important aspect of Canadian human history.

Subjects that qualify for national historic significance will meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. **A place** may be designated of national historic significance by virtue of a direct association with a nationally significant aspect of Canadian history. An archaeological site, structure, building, group of buildings, district, or cultural landscape of potential national historic significance will:
  - a) illustrate an exceptional creative achievement in concept and design, technology and/or planning, or a significant stage in the development of Canada; or
  - b) illustrate or symbolize in whole or in part a cultural tradition, a way of life, or ideas important in the development of Canada; or
  - c) be most explicitly and meaningfully associated or identified with persons who are deemed of national historic importance; or
  - d) be most explicitly and meaningfully associated or identified with events that are deemed of national historic importance.
2. **A person** (or persons) may be designated of national historic significance if that person individually or as the representative of a group made an outstanding and lasting contribution to Canadian history.
3. **An event** may be designated of national historic significance if it represents a defining action, episode, movement, or experience in Canadian history.





## 2. General Guidelines (1998)

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Considerations for designation of national historic significance are made on a **case-by-case basis**, in accordance with the above criteria and in the context of the wide spectrum of Canada's human history.

An **exceptional** achievement or **outstanding** contribution clearly stands above other achievements or contributions in terms of importance and/or excellence of quality. A representative example may warrant a designation of national historic significance because it eminently typifies a nationally important aspect of Canadian history.

An **explicit** and **meaningful** association is direct and understandable, and is relevant to the reasons associated with the national significance of the associated person or event.

**Uniqueness or rarity** are not, in themselves, evidence of national historic significance, but may be considered in connection with the above criteria for national historic significance.

**Firsts**, per se, are not considered for national historic significance.

In general, only **one commemoration** will be made for each place, person, or event of national historic significance.

### PLACES (2007)

Buildings, ensembles of buildings, and sites **completed by 1975** may be considered for designation of national historic significance.

A place must be in a **condition that respects the integrity** of its design, materials, workmanship, function and/or setting to be considered for designation of national historic significance, insofar as any of these elements are essential to understand its significance.

The **boundaries** of a place must be clearly defined for it to be considered for designation as a national historic site.

Large-scale **movable heritage properties** that would not normally be considered suitable for museum display may be considered for designation of national historic significance.

### PERSONS

Persons **deceased for at least twenty-five years** may be considered for designation of national historic significance, with the exception of Prime Ministers, who are eligible for commemoration immediately upon death.

## **EVENTS (2002)**

Events that **occurred at least 40 years ago** may be considered for designation of national historic significance. Historic events that continue into the more recent past will be evaluated on the basis of what occurred at least 40 years ago.

### 3. Specific Guidelines: Place

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#### 3.1 Extra-Territorial Commemorations

*In 1960, the Board considered a proposal for the Government of Canada to take over the General Simcoe family burial ground at Wolford in the United Kingdom.*

It was moved, seconded and carried,

That the Board deem it not advisable to recommend historical commemorations outside the boundaries of Canada.

*The Board continues to not recommend the designations of sites that are not on Canadian soil, however, the Board has recommended the commemoration of persons and events outside of Canadian territory.*

#### 3.2 Commemoration of Cemeteries

*Prior to 1990, the Board had long held a policy of not recommending the commemoration of grave sites, save for those of the Fathers of Confederation and those of archaeological significance. The Board recommended in October 1969:*

that, in view of the fact that Board [guidelines] excludes from commemoration graves, except for those of Fathers of Confederation, no action can be taken with respect to the Old Loyalist Burial Ground, Saint John, N.B.

*In June 1990:*

The Board then reaffirmed its long-standing interest in the commemoration of cemeteries and graves of archaeological significance and of the graves of the Fathers of Confederation. Further, following discussion, the Board recommended that its [guidelines] respecting the commemoration of cemeteries be expanded as follows:

that the Board consider eligible for commemoration only those cemeteries which are exceptional examples of designed or cultural landscapes in accordance with the following criteria;

- 1) it is a cemetery representing a nationally significant trend in cemetery design;
- 2) it is a cemetery containing a concentration of noteworthy mausoleum, monuments, markers or horticultural specimens;
- 3) it is a cemetery which is an exceptional example of a landscape expressing a distinctive cultural tradition.

#### 3.3 Churches and Buildings Still in Religious Use

*For a number of years, churches and other buildings still used for religious purposes were excluded from commemoration; however, in June 1970, the Board recommended that:*

in the consideration of churches and other buildings still in use for religious purposes the same [guidelines] of historic and/or architectural significance as in the case of other matters coming before the Board should apply, and that commemoration of such structures should normally be by plaquing only, with the possibility of architectural advice being provided when necessary; only in cases of outstanding historical and/or architectural significance should a recommendation for financial assistance be made.

*This recommendation was further refined in June 1976, and in June 1977, when the Board recommended:*

that the June 1976 recommendations, which, in summary, state that all religious buildings should be evaluated as any other building using the [guidelines] already established by the Board, be reaffirmed;

that these [guidelines] be applied in a judicious manner so as to provide proper selection of religious buildings for commemoration;

that the following definition of a religious property be adopted:

A religious property is a building whose greater part is in active and frequent use either for public religious worship, or by a religious community or for other religious purposes, whether or not secular events also occur within that building. Any other building which is adjoining or adjacent to it, perceived as part of the same architectural complex, under the same (or related) ownership, and of related use shall be considered as a portion of the same religious property; that it resist any suggestion to establish quotas based on denominational or regional consideration.

*Current guidelines do not, of course, preclude churches and other buildings still used for religious purposes from commemoration.*

### **3.4 Archaeological Sites**

*In June 1978:*

Concerning archaeological sites in general, the Board recommended that a declaration of national significance be based on one or more of the following [guidelines]:

- a) substantive evidence that a particular site is unique, or
- b) that it satisfactorily represents a particular culture, or a specific phase in the development of a particular cultural sequence, or
- c) that it is a good typical example, or
- d) that it otherwise conforms to general Board [guidelines] touching the selection of historic sites for national recognition.

### **3.5 Facades of Historical Structures Integrated into Modern Developments**

*In November 1986:*

The Board then turned to the question of whether facades integrated into modern developments were suitable subjects for commemoration and, if so, under what conditions. Following discussion, the Board expressed its opinion that when the facade of a structure alone is retained, the integrity of the building that once existed has to all intents and purposes been destroyed. Consequently, it recommended that

the facades of historical structures incorporated into contemporary developments are not suitable subjects for commemoration at the federal level, save for those facades that could be considered, in and of themselves, to be of exceptional significance.\*

\* i.e., facades that are intrinsically works of art of major significance or those that represent a significant technological innovation.

### 3.6 Identification of Historic Districts of National Significance

*In November 1987, the Board adopted the following definition and guidelines:*

Historic districts are geographically defined areas which create a special sense of time and place through buildings, structures and open spaces modified by human use and which are united by past events and use and/or aesthetically, by architecture and plan.

- 1) Historic districts constitute appropriate subjects for commemoration, and those of national significance will include one or more of the following:
  - a) a group of buildings, structures and open spaces, none of which singly need be of national architectural significance, but which, when taken together, comprise a harmonious representation of one or more styles or constructions, building types or periods;
  - b) a group of buildings, structures and open spaces, none of which may be of individual historical significance, but which together comprise an outstanding example of structures of technological or social significance;
  - c) a group of buildings, structures and open spaces which share uncommonly strong associations with individuals, events or themes of national significance.
- 2) Above all, an historic district of national significance must have a “sense of history”: intrusive elements must be minimal, and the district’s historic characteristics must predominate and set it apart from the area that immediately surrounds it.
- 3) A commemorated historic district will be subject to periodic review in order to ensure that those elements which define its integrity and national significance are being reasonably maintained.

### 3.7 Identification of Schools of National Significance

*In November 1988, the Board agreed that:*

in order to be considered for possible commemoration on grounds of national historic and/or architectural significance, a school, be it rural public, urban public, private or [Aboriginal] must meet one or more of the [specific guidelines] which follow:

- 1) The school building or complex (and its setting) retains its integrity and is representative of type, particularly in the relationship of form to function.
- 2) The school building or complex (and its setting) retains its integrity and is representative of significant developments or changes in educational practices and theory which found expression through architectural design.
- 3) The school building or complex is a superior example of an architectural style prominent in the context of Canadian architecture.
- 4) The school building or complex is of national historic significance by virtue of its associations with:
  - a) prominent Canadian educators;
  - b) important and innovative educational practices;
  - c) a number of individuals who, over time, graduated from it and gained prominence in later life.

### **3.8 Monuments Which Themselves Have Commemorative Purpose**

*In November 1989, the Board considered the possible significance of the Welsford-Parker Monument in Halifax, deferred from the previous June.*

Following considerable discussion, the Board recommended that

as a matter of policy, it not consider commemorating monuments unless those monuments were, intrinsically, works of art or architecture of national historic and/or architectural significance.

The Board shared the Committee's belief, however, that it would be entirely appropriate for it to make a monument the focus of a commemoration of a nationally significant aspect of Canadian history, if the monument were closely associated with the subject of commemoration and appeared to be the most appropriate location at which to recognize its significance. In such cases, it was suggested that the commemorative plaque be erected on a plinth or stand so as not to detract from the monument itself.

### **3.9 Commemoration of Movable Heritage Property**

*In July 2003, the Board replaced the former 1991 guidelines with the following:*

Nominations of large-scale movable heritage properties, particularly those that are in essence fixed at a specific place (excepting movement related to conservation), will be evaluated against the Board's standard criteria for sites of national historic significance. Only on an exceptional basis would large-scale movable heritage properties that remain mobile and easily moved, or frequently moved for reasons not related to conservation, be considered candidates for national commemoration, and then more probably as "events."

### **3.10 Identification of Parks and Gardens of National Significance**

*In November 1994, the Board recommended that:*

A park or a garden may be considered of national significance because of:

- 1) the excellence of its aesthetic qualities;
- 2) unique or remarkable characteristics of style(s) or type(s) which speak to an important period or periods in the history of Canada or of horticulture;
- 3) unique or remarkable characteristics reflecting important ethno-cultural traditions which speak to an important period or periods in the history of Canada;
- 4) the importance of its influence over time or a given region of the country by virtue of its age, style, type, etc.;
- 5) the presence of horticultural specimens of exceptional rarity or value;
- 6) exceptional ecological interest or value;
- 7) associations with events or individuals of national historic significance;
- 8) the importance of the architect(s), designer(s), or horticulturalist(s) associated with it.

The Board stated, however, that it expected the case for national commemoration of any garden or park would not rest solely on one of the eight guidelines adopted, save in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Further, with respect to guidelines 7) and 8) above, the Board felt that normally it would be more appropriate to recognize gardens and parks whose national significance derived from their associative values with individuals (architects/designers) or events of national significance through commemoration of the individuals or events themselves at the garden or park in question.

### 3.11 Identification of Rural Historic Districts of National Significance

*In November 1994, the Board adopted the following:*

#### Definition

Rural historic districts are geographically definable areas within a rural environment which create a special sense of time and place through significant concentrations, linkages and continuity of landscape components which are united and/or modified by the process of human use and past events.

#### [Guidelines]

Rural historic districts of national significance:

- 1) contain a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of landscape components, which when taken together comprise an exceptional representation and/or embody the distinctive characteristics of types, periods, or methods of land occupation and use, illustrating the dynamics of human interaction with the landscape over time; and/or
- 2) contain a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of landscape components, which when taken together comprise an outstanding example of a landscape of technological or social significance; and/or
- 3) contain a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of landscape components which share common associations with individuals or events of national significance.

### 3.12 Country Grain Elevators

*In November 1995, the Board adopted the following:*

A row of country grain elevators may be considered to be of national significance if:

- 1) the row is comprised of three or more adjacent elevators;
- 2) all the elevators in the row were built before 1965;
- 3) all the elevators in the row are substantially intact, mechanically and architecturally;
- 4) the row of elevators is accessible and stands on a rail line in a rural context within a grain growing region;
- 5) the row has some symbolic value in the region.

The Committee and the Board agreed ... that there might well be elevators brought forward for consideration, either individually or in groups, which did not meet the above [guidelines], but, which, because of technological, architectural or historical importance, clearly merited review. They also agreed that, should such situations arise, it would be reasonable to assess them on an individual basis.

The members then discussed the importance of attempting to ensure that any rows of country grain elevators designated by the Board had a chance of surviving intact over the long term.

### 3.13 Assessing Sites Associated with Persons of National Historic Significance

*The following guidelines first adopted in June 1996, and later amended in June 2001:*

1. The National Significance of the Associated Individual
  - 1.1. The national significance of an individual should be the key to designating places associated with them; the nominated sites must communicate that significance effectively.
  - 1.2. A nominated site should be assessed for all its pertinent associative and physical values.

2. Types of Association and their Evaluation
  - 2.1 For a site to be designated for its association with a nationally significant person, the nature of the association **will be important**, and will be one or a combination of the following:
    - A site directly and importantly associated with a person's productive life often best represents his or her significant national contribution.
    - A birthplace, a childhood home, or a site associated with a person's formative or retirement years should relate persuasively to the national significance of the person.
    - A site that is attributed to be the source of inspiration for an individual's life work requires scholarly judgement of that relationship.
    - A site associated with a consequential event in a person's life must be demonstrably related to his national significance.
    - A site that has become a memorial (that is, that has symbolic or emotive associations with a nationally significant person) must demonstrably speak to the significance of the person in the eyes of posterity.
  - 2.2 When a nominated site is reviewed for its association with a nationally significant person, all sites prominently associated with the individual will be compared, with a view to choosing the site(s) that best tell(s) the national historic significance of the individual.
  - 2.3 Where the associated individual is the designer of the site, and their national significance lies with that aspect of their lives, then the nominated site should be evaluated for physical as much as associative values.
3. Related Commemorations at One or More Places
  - 3.1 A long, complex or multi-faceted life can warrant more than one commemoration, provided nationally significant aspects of that life are reflected in each of the commemorations.
4. The Test of Integrity
  - 4.1. A site must retain sufficient integrity or authenticity to convey the spirit of the place, and/or to tell the story of the national significance of the person.
  - 4.2. The richness of association of the individual, or the closeness of the identification of the individual with the nominated site, may override degrees of physical modifications to the site.
  - 4.3. A site that has symbolic and emotive associations with a nationally significant person may be designated for that association where the degree of compelling emotive attachment is established by research and analysis.

### 3.14 Built Heritage of the Modern Era

*The following guidelines first adopted in November 1997, and later amended in July 2007:*

A building, ensemble or site that was created during the modern era may be considered of national significance if it is in a condition that respects the integrity of its original design, materials, workmanship, function and/or setting, insofar as each of these was an important part of its overall intentions and its present character; and

- 1) it is an outstanding illustration of at least one of the three following cultural phenomena and at least a representative if less than an outstanding illustration of the other two cultural phenomena of its time:
  - a) changing social, political and/or economic conditions;
  - b) rapid technological advances;
  - c) new expressions of form and/or responses to functional demands; or
- 2) it represents a precedent that had a significant impact on subsequent buildings, ensembles, or sites.



### 3.15 Framework for Identifying and Assessing Settlement Patterns

*In November 1997:*

The Board noted that this paper provided a useful and clear elaboration of [guidelines] for a multifarious subject and requested that any future briefing materials on priority sub-themes related to settlement patterns follow this framework.

The Board then accepted (with minor changes as bolded below) the subtypes of the categorical framework for settlement patterns proposed in Mr Mills paper as well as the [guidelines] for settlement pattern commemoration.

The subtypes are: Patterns of Distribution; Dispersed Rural Settlement; Nucleated Settlement Patterns - Hamlets and Villages; and, Nucleated Settlement Patterns - Towns and Cities.

The [guidelines] proposed to provide a conjectural framework for identifying settlement patterns of possible national significance are: Historical/ Precontact Associations; Representative Characteristics; and, Resource Integrity and Completeness.

*The definitions, characteristics, subtypes and specific guidelines for identifying and assessing settlement patterns are found in the report entitled “Canadian Settlement Patterns, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada Framework Study” (Fall 1997).*

### 3.16 Historic Engineering Landmarks

*In November 1997, “Historic Engineering Landmarks Project, Consultations on Prioritizing Sites for Potential Commemoration” was presented to the Board, which approved the following:*

Resources will be assessed primarily for their engineering significance, but also for their historical significance with respect to their impact on Canadian history and Canada’s development. A forty-year rule is also applied to preclude the selection of engineering landmarks of the present era.

To merit inclusion on the list of engineering landmarks, a site has to meet one or more of the following guidelines:

- embody an outstanding engineering achievement;
- be intrinsically of outstanding importance by virtue of its physical properties;
- be a significant innovation or invention, or illustrate a highly significant technological advance;
- be a highly significant Canadian adoption or adaptation;
- be a highly challenging feat of construction;
- be the largest of its kind at the time of construction, where the scale alone constituted a major advance in engineering;
- have had a significant impact on the development of a major region in Canada;
- have particularly important symbolic value as an engineering and/or technical achievement to Canadians or to a particular Canadian cultural community;
- be an excellent and early example, or a rare or unique surviving example, of a once-common type of engineering work that played a significant role in the history of Canadian engineering; and/or
- be representative of a significant class or type of engineering project, where there is no extant exceptional site to consider for inclusion.

### **3.17 Assessing the National Historic Significance of Lighthouses**

*In December 1998, the Board approved the following guidelines:*

A lighthouse or light station may be considered of potential national historic significance if its current physical context and historic integrity respect or potentially respect its ability to meet two or more of the following guidelines:

- 1) It illustrates a nationally important historical theme in maritime navigation.
- 2) It is an important engineering achievement related to its primary functions.
- 3) It is a superior or representative example of an architectural type.
- 4) It is nationally symbolic of the Canadian maritime tradition.

### **3.18 Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes**

*In June 1999, the Board recommended the following definition and guidelines:*

An Aboriginal cultural landscape is a place valued by an Aboriginal group (or groups) because of their long and complex relationship with that land. It expresses their unity with the natural and spiritual environment. It embodies their traditional knowledge of spirits, places, land uses and ecology. Material remains of the association may be prominent, but will often be minimal or absent.

- 1) The long associated Aboriginal group or groups have participated in the identification of the place and its significance, concur in the selection of the place, and support designation.
- 2) Spiritual, cultural, economic, social and environmental aspects of the group's association with the identified place, including continuity and traditions, illustrate its historical significance.
- 3) The interrelated cultural and natural attributes of the identified place make it a significant cultural landscape.
- 4) The cultural and natural attributes that embody the significance of the place are identified through traditional knowledge of the associated Aboriginal group(s).
- 5) The cultural and natural attributes that embody the significance of the place may be additionally comprehended by results of academic scholarship.

On the matter of self-definition by Aboriginal groups, the Board felt that appropriate consultations would alleviate any concerns about overlapping interests in a given area by different Aboriginal groups. It was agreed that the Board must be satisfied that there is agreement by all interested parties, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, before considering a cultural landscape for its historic significance.

### **3.19 Shipwrecks of National Historic Significance in Canada**

*In December 2000, the Board recommended:*

For designation purposes, shipwreck shall mean an artifact representing a ship, boat, vessel or craft, whatever its type, which is deemed to have sunk, been driven aground, run aground or wrecked, and has been abandoned, thus putting an end to its career.

The shipwreck will be submerged and possibly embedded in an ocean, lake or waterway floor, be lying or buried in a tidal flat, beach or any other type of shore, including a modified ancient shore.

The physical condition of the shipwreck may vary. The shipwreck may be in one piece or in the form of remains spread out over a large area. In the latter case, a shipwreck may be nominated as an archaeological site or as archaeological remains, depending on the approach necessary to document it.

Included in the definition of shipwreck or shipwreck site will be the vestiges associated with the structure, cargo, equipment, human remains and personal effects of occupants, fragmented remains associated with these items and any natural accretions following the shipwreck. By extension, a shipwreck designated an archaeological site will include the preceding elements and even any natural accretions following the shipwreck, which may help to reconstitute the context of the wreck's evolution and to clarify its specific attributes.

### **3.20 Commemoration of Court Houses**

*In June 1980, the Board recommended [...]*

that Court Houses selected for commemoration by the Board would be identified as falling into one of three distinct categories:

These categories are:

Category I: One Court House in each province, which is to be commemorated as being representative of the judicial institution in that province.

Category II: Court Houses, which are to be commemorated as being representative of significant functional types.

Category III: Court Houses, which are to be commemorated for reasons other than those stated in categories I and II; i.e., on the grounds of architectural merit, of aesthetic appeal or as exemplifying the work of a major architect.



## 4. Specific Guidelines: Person

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### 4.1 Commemoration of Governors-General

*This guideline was first adopted in June 1968, but was modified in December 2005 to read:*

A governor may be designated of national historic significance if that person, in the performance of his or her vice-regal duties, made an outstanding and lasting contribution to Canadian history. To be regarded as a subject of national significance, a governor:

- 1) will have had a determining influence or impact on the constitutional evolution of Canada; [and/or]
- 2) will have had a determining influence or impact on Canadian external relations or military issues; [and/or]
- 3) will have had a determining influence or impact on the socio-cultural or economic life of the nation; [and/or]
- 4) will have distinguished himself or herself in an exceptional way by embodying the values of Canadians [and/or] by symbolizing Canada at home and abroad.\*

\* A governor who is of national historic significance because of achievement(s) outside the functions of viceroy, and not within, will be considered only in light of the Criterion for Persons of National Historic Significance.

### 4.2 Provincial Figures Both Prior to and Subsequent to Confederation

*This guideline was first adopted in November 1973, but was modified in November 1990 to read:*

any provincial or territorial figure of significance prior to the entry of the province or territory, in which the individual is active, into Confederation may be considered to be of national significance; but, post- Confederation figures who are of provincial or territorial significance must be proven to be of historic significance on the national scale, if they are to merit federal commemoration.

### 4.3 Commemoration of Prime Ministers

*In December 2004, the Board asked that this guideline begin with the following statement:*

Prime Ministers are eligible for consideration as national historic persons immediately upon death.

*In May 1974, the Board recommended:*

- 1) that the commemoration may take a number of forms: in some instances only the standard plaque may be erected; in some instances a distinctive monument may be more appropriate; and in others it may be desirable and practicable to acquire a house associated with a Prime Minister for preservation;
- 2) that the Board recognizes the desirability of retaining for the nation memorabilia, papers and other artifacts associated with Prime Ministers and it recommends that exploratory discussions be undertaken as soon as possible between officers of the [National Historic Sites Directorate],

the [National Archives of Canada] and the [Canadian Museum of Civilization] with a view to determining the most desirable way of ensuring the preservation of such materials. In the context of these discussions consideration should be given to the possibility of entering into agreements with incumbent Prime Ministers concerning the disposition of the appropriate effects;

- 3) that when a decision has been taken to acquire a house it would be most appropriate to choose one that is either closely associated with the most important period in the Prime Minister's career or which has very close family ties. When the Prime Minister is survived by a widow then life tenancy to the widow will in all cases be granted should she desire it;
- 4) that the present policy of not, with very rare exceptions, commemorating birthplaces and graves of Prime Ministers should be re-affirmed.

*The National Program of Grave Sites of Canadian Prime Ministers is an additional form of commemoration.*

#### **4.4 Individuals of Importance in the Canadian Economy**

*In November 1990, the Board adopted the following guidelines for assessing the national significance of leaders in the economic field:*

- 1) Economic leaders must have made a contribution to Canadian life that is of a definite or positive or undeniable kind.
- 2) Economic leaders must have made contributions, which are of national significance rather than of provincial or territorial importance.
- 3) In the consideration of business or economic leaders, where it seems appropriate that in the absence of outstanding individuals, firms which are no longer in existence may be commemorated.

#### **4.5 Canadians Who Developed an Image of Canada Abroad**

*In November 1996, the Board recommended:*

In exceptional circumstances, Canadians whose major accomplishments took place abroad may be recommended to be of national historic significance irrespective of whether or not those accomplishments had a direct impact on Canada, as long as the individual developed or sustained an image of Canada abroad, as was the case with Dr. Norman Bethune.

#### **4.6 Evaluating Canadian Architects**

*In July 2003, the Board adopted the following guidelines:*

An architect or, when appropriate, an architectural firm of national significance will have made an outstanding and lasting contribution to Canadian history. In this context, a contribution to Canadian history is:

- 1) a significant and/or influential creative architectural design achievement, either as a practitioner or as a theorist, as exemplified by a body\* of consistently exceptional design work; and/or
- 2) a significant and/or influential contribution to the profession and discipline of architecture in Canada, as an exceptional educator, writer, organizer, or other activity not directly related to the architectural design process.

\* In cases where an architect's reputation is based on a single (or small number of) exceptional architectural achievement(s), the individual work(s) should be considered for designation of national significance, not the architect *per se*.

## **4.7 Evaluating Canadian Athletes**

*In July 2007, the Board adopted the following guidelines:*

An athlete may be considered of national historic significance if:

- 1 a) he or she fundamentally changed the way a sport in Canada is played through his or her performance; and/or,  
b) he or she greatly expanded the perceived limits of athletic performance; and
- 2) he or she came to embody a sport, or had a transcendent impact on Canada

Note: When these guidelines are applied to a sport team, the team will be presented to the Board as an "event" rather than a "person"





## 5. Specific Guideline: Events/Other

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### 5.1 Origins of Settlements

*In 1923*, the subject of settlements throughout Canada was thoroughly gone into in all its phases, and the following resolution was passed:

That the Board has considered with care the communication of Mr. W.H. Breithaupt, President of the Waterloo Historical Society, with reference to the proposed monuments to commemorate the pioneers of the County of Waterloo, as well as representations from other districts as to similar proposals therein, and desires to express its hearty approval of every effort to perpetuate and honour the memory of the founders of settlements, throughout the Dominion, and its high appreciation of Mr. Breithaupt's patriotic objects and efforts.

The Board, however, has to deal with so many sites of outstanding national importance which require priority of action that it feels it would **not be advisable for it to undertake at present action in the matter of the placing of memorials in connection with early settlements in Canada.**

*This policy has been reaffirmed numerous times. For example, in October 1967:*

In connection with the proposal to commemorate the Founding of Pictou, the Board reaffirmed its policy of not recommending the commemoration of settlement origins; but recommended that the Department suggest to the Government of Nova Scotia the appropriateness of a provincially sponsored commemoration.

*In October 1969:*

The Board reaffirmed its policy of not recommending the origins of existing communities for commemoration, but considered that the significance of former settlements and colonizing ventures should be considered each on its own merits.

### 5.2 Pre-Confederation Events

*In November 1973, the Board recommended that:*

pre-Confederation events should be regarded on their individual merits on a line basis, i.e., as significant events in the development of a region which later became a province of Canada.

### 5.3 Assessing the Role of Organized Religion in the Social Development of Canada

*In November 1973, the Board enunciated that:*

while recognizing the overwhelming impact of organized religion on the development of Canada, prefers for the present that the Board should deal with items in this category on an individual basis as they arise and that they be reviewed in the light of the Policy Statement's first stated [guidelines], i.e., a site, structure or object shall be closely associated or identified with events that have shaped Canadian history in a prominent way, or illustrate effectively the broad cultural, social, political, economic or military patterns of Canadian history.

## 5.4 Ethnic or Religious Groups

*In November 1977, the Board recommended that:*

religious and ethnic groups, per se should not be specifically commemorated but that we should pay particular attention to the contributions of such ethnic and religious groups as represented in buildings of national architectural or historical significance, individual leaders of national importance, or events of national historic significance.

*In June 2002, the joint Cultural Community and Criteria Committees recommended, and the Board accepted, that this guideline be amended as follows:*

The Board will assess the national historic significance of places, persons and events associated with the experience of ethnic or religious groups in Canada, rather than advocating an approach that would consider the commemoration of ethnic or religious groups themselves.

## 5.5 Disasters and Disaster Areas

*In November 1982:*

Following considerable discussion, the Board was unanimous in its recommendation that:

it continue to be guided in its deliberations by the 1967 “National Historic Sites Policy”

Amended as follows:

normally disasters will be excluded from consideration by the Board unless there is evidence that their long-term impact has been such that they would merit consideration under Criterion 1.6.ii of the general Board criteria [in the “Parks Canada Policy” (1979)], that is to say - as events which shaped Canadian history.

*In November 1997, the Board reviewed its existing guideline and:*

agreed that it would consider only the most exceptional disasters if they were seen to have caused changes to some facet of Canadian society, for example, changes to social programs, public policy, or causing long-standing economic impacts.

## 5.6 Commemoration of Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

*In February 1992, following three requests in one year asking that it consider the possible national significance of institutions of higher learning, the Board asked the Criteria Committee to reflect on the matter. In November 1992, the Committee and, in turn, the Board recommended:*

that due to the increasing number and complexity of post-secondary institutions which have been established in recent decades, and the consequent difficulty of assessing their significance to Canada in a rigorous and equitable manner, the Board should no longer recommend the commemoration of such institutions, per se. The Board, however, should continue to consider nationally significant aspects of universities, colleges and training schools, such as founders, administrators, faculty members, benefactors, and individual faculties or departments, as well as school and university architecture and research contributions.

## 6. Specific Guidelines: Forms of commemoration

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### 6.1 Monuments Not Owned by the Department

*In October 1967:*

The Board reviewed the proposal of the Montmagny-L'Islet Historic Monuments Society, requesting federal assistance for a monument to Étienne-Pascal Taché. Considerable discussion ensued on the Department's monuments [guidelines]. The Board then passed the following resolution:

The Board as a policy does not recommend that the Minister contribute to the construction of monuments not owned or built by the Department, and further, recommends that in those cases in which the Department builds a monument, the Department should determine and control the design.

*The above guideline was reiterated by the Board at its June 1985 meeting.*

### 6.2 Distinctive Monuments

*In June 1968, the Board recommended the following:*

The Criteria Committee of the Board has had under consideration the future [guidelines] that should be followed with respect to distinctive monuments. It makes the following recommendations:

- 1) It is essential, for the future guidance of the Board, that precise and more restrictive principles should govern the choice of such monuments;
- 2) The Board believes that in the vast majority of cases the desire for a distinctive monument could and should be satisfied by a slight modification to the existing setting of the standard plaque. Where practical and appropriate, the design of the setting could be varied so as to represent the achievement of the person or the nature of the event to be commemorated, and in a manner suitable to the location;
- 3) Where existing standard plaques or settings must be replaced, the principles given in (2) above should be borne in mind;
- 4) With respect to distinctive and more elaborate monuments the Board believes that even its limited experience has indicated the many and serious problems involved. In the light of that experience it seems clear that those subjects selected for such commemoration should be few in number and should, in the opinion of the Board be either persons of quite exceptional importance, especially outstanding or unique fields of significant endeavour, or events which would be nationally regarded as turning points of decisive importance in Canadian history.

The Committee then considered what guidelines should be followed by the [Program] in respect to the design of distinctive and elaborate monuments, and recommended that the following considerations should be borne in mind:

- a) The National Historic Sites [Directorate] should be leaders in the field of designing distinctive monuments, and should not be slaves to tradition. Designs in all cases should be distinguished and exciting and not second-rate or banal, and landscaping should always be carefully planned.
- b) The [Directorate] should, in the choice of sculptors, be guided by the advice of the Directors of the National Gallery of Canada and of the leading government-operated gallery in the province concerned, and of the Board member in that province.

- c) The type and design of the monument in each instance will vary according to the person or event to be commemorated, the theme to be emphasized, the location of the monument and any special local circumstances that have to be taken into consideration.
- d) Generally the design will not be completely abstract and should be able to convey to the average member of the public some feeling of the theme to be emphasized in connection with the person or event.
- e) The most important audience to reach in every instance is the younger generation, for whom Canadian history must be made to live in all its excitement and significance.

### 6.3 Quality and Content of Plaque Inscriptions

*In June 1988, the Board, following discussion, accepted the following recommendations regarding plaque inscriptions.*

The Board first stated that it believed that the primary purpose of its plaques was to educate and it followed, therefore, that plaque inscriptions should be above all else informative. With this in mind, the Board put forward a number of specific recommendations to serve as guidelines when drafting plaque inscriptions:

- 1) a plaque inscription must state clearly why the subject of commemoration is of national significance;
- 2) an attempt should be made to put a human face on all inscriptions, in order to make them understandable to a general audience;
- 3) appealing words and phrases (e.g., “legendary character”) should be used in inscriptions when appropriate, as they add colour and tend to make the text more memorable;
- 4) when possible the title of the plaque should be used to convey information – this information need not be repeated in the text;
- 5) if in the title, birth and death dates should not be repeated in the text;
- 6) dates should be used judiciously in texts and be inserted only when relevant;
- 7) texts dealing with architecture should, whenever possible, have a historical anchor;
- 8) architects and architectural firms need not be identified in an inscription if they are not of some prominence in their own right.

*In November 1997, the Board further added:*

that in preparing inscriptions, staff should ensure that the first sentence clearly indicate the reason for national significance. Further, national significance must be a single, compelling justification and not a layering of many unrelated items, none of which on its own would constitute grounds for national significance.

### 6.4 The Use of Non-Official Language on Commemorative Plaques

*In June 2000, a report was presented to the Board on the use of non-official languages on commemorative plaques. The Board approved the following guidelines:*

- The Board may recommend the use of non-official languages when the national historic significance of the subject makes it appropriate to do so.
- Inscriptions which include non-official languages must conform to the *Official Languages Act* and the “Federal Identity Program Policy” with respect to precedence of English and French, and bilingual HSMBC corporate signature.

- Additional languages appear with the official languages on one plaque. In exceptional circumstances the Board may recommend separate, non-official language plaques. Such plaques will be erected with the bilingual plaque and will carry the Board's bilingual corporate signature.
- Non-official language inscriptions will be written according to the same linguistic standards as the official languages.

## 6.5 Consultation on Commemorative Plaque Texts

*Since 1993, commemorative plaque texts have been sent to appropriate groups and/or individuals for comments or “vetting” before being reviewed by either the Inscriptions Committee or the full Board.*

*The vetting process provides stakeholders with the opportunity to verify historical facts and to offer their perspective for the text. While the Inscriptions Committee and the Board give every consideration to vettors' comments, not all comments may be incorporated into the final text.*

*The Board adopted the following guidelines in June 2000 and made modifications in November 2001. The final version reads:*

- A Board plaque commemorates a person, place or event of national historic importance. It has a commemorative objective defined by the Board, and from a technical point of view, it must conform to a standard length.
- The text, usually in its first sentence, must clearly indicate the reason for national historic significance, as described in the Board Minutes.
- The authorship of the plaque text lies with the Board, and final approval of the text is given by the full Board.
- The Board seeks consistency in style, tone and arrangement of its plaque inscriptions; vettors are therefore discouraged from making comments on these matters.
- A report of the vettors' comments is included with the text when it is submitted to the Inscriptions Committee for review.

## 6.6 Style and Layout of Plaque Inscriptions

*In June 2001, the Board approved the proposed plaque design and editing guidelines as follows:*

- Textual material should be written for a high school reading level.
- A dynamic writing style should be used as opposed to a documentary style, which is more suited for a specialized audience.
- Titles for plaque inscriptions should be brief, simple and set out in distinctive type, using familiar and descriptive language, designed to draw the readers attention.
- Length of text should be limited to a maximum of 500 characters in each language in order to attract and retain reader attention.
- Plaque inscriptions should be divided into three short paragraphs. Each paragraph should begin with a larger capital letter than the capital letters used in the text.
- A line of text should have at least 45 characters and not more than 55 to 65 characters to facilitate scanning the information.

- Type style should be a serif character, which helps to clearly delineate each letter. Goudy font meets this requirement and in addition, offers the proper combination of height, width and thickness of character to enhance text readability.
- The font size for the body of a plaque text should be between 40 and 45 points, with 60 points for the title and 40 points for the sub-title.
- Factors such as spacing between letters, lines and paragraphs facilitate scanning, as well as left and right text justification.

## 6.7 Dual or Multiple Plaquing of a Designation

*In December 2002, the Board approved these guidelines as follows:*

Under normal circumstances, a single plaque will be erected for each person, event, or site designated of national historic significance. In rare instances, a dual or multiple plaquing of a designation may be considered as an option:

- where two or more discrete locations are explicitly and meaningfully associated or identified with a *national historic person*, and are integrally related to the national historic significance of the person; or
- where there are two or more discrete locations in different regions that are explicitly and meaningfully associated with a *national historic event*, and that played an integral part in establishing its national historic significance; or
- where there are two or more distinct components or phases of a *national historic event* that played an integral part in establishing its national historic significance, and are essential in conveying national historic significance; and that are directly associated with different locations; or
- where the significance of a *national historic event* resides in its great geographical extent and impact on two or more regions, and its national historic significance can be conveyed in a substantially more explicit and meaningful manner by marking its geographical extent; or
- where the configuration of a *national historic site* is such that it would render the commemoration substantially more explicit and meaningful.

For national historic events that encompass great geographical extent, only one plaque should be erected in any one region or province.

## **7. Specific Guidelines: Procedure**

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### **7.1 Original Fabric on the Ground Floors of Buildings**

*In June 1988, the Board recommended that:*

as a guideline for future deliberations, the Board stated that the survival of original street-level entries and of original fabric on the ground floors of buildings brought forward for consideration were factors of such importance that the lack of either on a structure would seriously affect that structure's potential for designation.

*In November 1988, the Board reiterated its above recommendation, and:*

emphasized that, in future, architectural papers should clearly identify contemporary fabric in buildings when it was felt that the nature and extent of the use of new materials might be a determining factor in determining the significance of the structure in question.

### **7.2 Deferred Matters**

*In the context of a discussion of Fort Whoop-Up, Alberta, in November 1989, the Board noted that:*

often, matters are deferred in order that additional material may be brought together on the subject which will permit the Board to objectively assess its national significance and put forward a recommendation to the Minister, in that regard. As the practice of waiting for formal Ministerial approval of all Board recommendations often resulted in lengthy delays in the resubmission of deferred items to the Board, which seemed to it to be unnecessary, it recommended that

the Minister consider deferred items to constitute non-recommendations of the Board, in order that such items might be followed up in advance of his/her approval of the minutes in which they appear.

### **7.3 National Historic Sites Whose Commemorative Integrity Has Been Destroyed**

*In December 2002, the Board received a discussion paper that explored various approaches to the treatment of national historic sites that have lost their commemorative integrity and recommended that:*

On the advice of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, the Minister may transfer a National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC) from the official list of NHSC to a list of NHSC whose commemorative integrity has been destroyed. Such action will rarely be undertaken and then only when:

- 1) the commemorative integrity of the site has been destroyed through loss or impairment of the resources directly related to the reasons for designation, or
- 2) the reasons for designation of a national historic site can no longer be effectively communicated to the public.

## 7.4 Preparation of Submissions to the [Status of Designations] Committee

*In December 2000, the Board approved the following guidelines:*

- 1) In considering a proposal to clarify the designated place of an existing national historic site, the current Board will use a strict constructionist approach to interpreting Board recommendations of record (i.e. recommendations from previously approved Minutes of Board meetings), insofar as they relate to designated place.
- 2) In considering new proposals to expand the designated place of an existing national historic site, the Board will not be constrained by recommendations of record, but will treat each new proposal on its merits, and with the understanding that the owner(s) of property directly affected by the proposed expansion of the designated place would need to give their consent.
- 3) In the interests of efficiency and of documenting decisions regarding designated place and commemorative intent, submissions should consist of a briefing note format, with the most essential information and analysis in a short paper, and additional material, chiefly Board Minutes, any preceding Agenda Paper or Submission Report, and maps or plans, in appendices.
- 4) The Parks Canada multi-disciplinary team will assess the feasibility of organizing the issues which require the Committees attention according to province/territory, table these issues by province/territory, and arrange to have the Board member of the relevant province or territory attend the Committees meetings.
- 5) In light of the time-sensitive nature of many of the requests that will be brought forward for clarification, Parks Canada will determine an approach to expediting the Committees recommendations for review and approval by the Minister.

## 7.5 Determining Designated Place

*In the Fall of 1999, with amendments in June 2001, the Board approved the following guidelines:*

- 1) The approved Board Minute is considered the definitive statement of the Board's intent;
- 2) If the approved Minute refers to a description in an Agenda Paper or Submission Report relating to the extent of the "designated place," then that description should be consulted;
- 3) A plaque inscription will not be used to determine the "designated place";
- 4) The reasons given for national significance do not determine the "designated place";
- 5) The "designated place" is the place that was considered by the Board at the time it made its recommendation, unless otherwise specified in the Minute; and,
- 6) When the boundaries of a national historic site were not defined at the time of designation, and the physical feature named in the recommendation of national historic significance was located on a single legally-defined property at the time of designation, the boundaries of the designated place are deemed to be the boundaries of the property at that time, subject to the Scope and Exceptions statement that accompanies this guideline.

Scope:

- Date and wording of the designation: the national historic site was designated before 1999; it was not assigned boundaries at the time of designation, but instead was designated by name.
- Property boundaries at the time of designation: at the time of designation, the whole of the nationally significant feature (or features) was located on a single, legally-defined property or parcel of land, or on adjoining properties owned by the same person or persons.



- Current property boundaries: since the time of designation, the property has not been subdivided or had its boundaries redrawn in a way that affects ownership of the feature named in the designation.

Exceptions:

General exceptions: for reasons of size and complexity, several types of properties are excluded from the application of this guideline. These exceptions relate to sites where the designated feature forms all or part of any of the following:

- An institutional complex, such as a university, hospital, ecclesiastical precinct, or airport;
- Defence works, notably forts, and sites of military operations, such as battlefields;
- A trading post, whether styled a “fort” or not;
- A fairground;
- A linear route or property (e.g. railway stations, roundhouses, dams, bridges, aqueducts, canals and trails);
- A Canadian Forces Base;
- A First Nations Reserve;
- Lands administered by Parks Canada;
- An extensive property, such as an estate or an industrial complex, which was subdivided before designation in a manner that left potential Level One resources (either above or below ground) outside the administered place;
- Sites designated for their archaeological value, or as cultural landscapes of associative value.

Special exception: vessels which are considered to be “places”, shipwrecks, and moveable cultural heritage objects are also excluded. In some cases (e.g. Alexander Graham Bell museum collection) the objects themselves are Level One cultural resources.

## **7.6 Changing the Directory of Designations of National Historic Significance**

*In December 2002, the Board approved the procedures as follows:*

- Approved Minutes will continue to be used to determine the existence of designations and to determine the category to which they belong. Changes to the Directory will therefore be based on scrutiny of approved Minutes. Plaque texts, departmental publications and administrative correspondence may be consulted for context and corroboration, but will not be used to overrule the Minutes.
- When research confirms the existence of an administrative error in the Directory, an administrative process will be followed to correct it. That process will employ the interdisciplinary team which oversees reports to the Status of Designations Committee (SDC).
- The SDC will be informed in a brief note of each correction to the Directory which arises from administrative error in the past and which results in a change in the number of designations in any category. This note will be the official confirmation of the change.
- Changes arising from ambiguity or new knowledge will continue to receive the Board’s attention through formal reports to the SDC.

## 7.7 Guidelines for Establishing Names for National Historic Sites

*In December 2003, the Board approved the guidelines as follows:*

Four principles will be taken into account when site names are chosen; these are (i) well-established usage, (ii) historic usage, (iii) communication of the reasons for designation, and (iv) brevity and clarity. Ideally, Parks Canada and site owners will submit names which conform to all these principles. Often, though, it will be necessary for one or more principles to prevail over the others. The four principles are stated and explained in the first four proposed guidelines. The last two proposed guidelines deal with the use of official geographical names, and with the official status of names of national historic sites.

1. When a proposed or recommended national historic site already has an established name, that name should be used, unless there are good reasons to the contrary.

Notes:

- a. This principle is particularly appropriate when a site has had the same name throughout most of its recorded history. Established names may be one or more of the following: the name on the owner's publications or Web site; a name carved onto a building on the site, or written on a permanent sign; a name well-established in local usage. When there are variants of an established name, the full legal name will not necessarily be the best choice, especially if this is long, or generally not known in its locality; the choice shall be made in accordance with these guidelines as a whole.
- b. Bar U Ranch NHSC (Longview, Alberta), Fort Wellington NHSC (Prescott, Ontario) and Kicking Horse Pass NHSC (Yoho National Park of Canada, British Columbia) are examples of sites whose names were well established before they were designated as national historic sites.
- c. For sites not administered by Parks Canada, it is preferable for Parks Canada and the partner to use the same name. For example, the Emily Carr House NHSC in Victoria, British Columbia, is called Emily Carr House by its owner. However, if the name used by the site's owners or stakeholders communicates a different message than does the Board designation, the Board may recommend a different name. In the case of the Old Woodstock Town Hall NHSC (Woodstock, Ontario), the partner's name for the site is the Woodstock Museum. Since the Board designation clearly refers not to the museum, but to the architecture and former function of the town hall itself, Parks Canada uses a different name than does the partner.

In cases when a partner uses a different name than the official one, Parks Canada will use the generic "National Historic Site of Canada" ("lieu historique national du Canada") only with the Board-approved specific, and will encourage the partner to follow the same practice.

- d. A commercial name will not be used, even if it is the name used by the owner, unless this name reflects the reason for designation.
  - i. Maplelawn & Gardens NHSC (Ottawa, Ontario) is currently operated as a business called the Keg Manor. This name reflects its current use rather than its historic significance. In

this case, the historic name of the house, Maplelawn, is used by the Board and Parks Canada.

- ii. Commercial names can be used, however, when they are directly related to the national significance of the site. For example, the Gulf of Georgia Cannery NHSC (Richmond, British Columbia) or the Empress Hotel NHSC (Victoria, British Columbia) incorporate commercial names.
2. When a site's current or established name is not appropriate, for one reason or another, a historic name may be the best choice.

Notes:

- a. A historic name may be preferable in cases where a change in use or ownership has established a new name for a building or site. The Former Vancouver Law Courts NHSC, for example, currently houses the Vancouver Art Gallery, which is how the building is now known. The HSMBC name reflects the building's historic significance rather than its current function.
  - b. The advantage of a historic name is that it will continue to be appropriate over time even if the owner or use of the site changes.
  - c. When a site has had several names over time, and a choice must be made among these names, the name most closely associated with the site's national historic significance is generally preferable.
3. When possible, names should communicate the reasons for the designation of national historic significance.

Notes:

- a. Marconi Wireless Station NHSC (Port Morien, Nova Scotia), Riel House NHSC (Winnipeg, Manitoba) and St. John's WWII Coastal Defenses NHSC (St. John's, Newfoundland) are examples of names that clearly communicate the commemorative intent of the designation.
- b. A commemorative name may be appropriate for sites that are not associated with an established place name. In the past, for example, a number of descriptive, thematic names have been used, such as First Homestead in Western Canada NHSC (Portage La Prairie, Manitoba) or First Oil Wells in Canada NHSC (Oil Springs, Ontario)
- c. For certain types of designations, however, it is difficult to convey explicitly the commemorative intent in the site name:
  - when the designation arises through a thematic study, particularly an architectural study.

A site designated as "one of the finest examples of Carpenters' Gothic on the West Coast of Canada," for example, is not named Carpenters' Gothic NHSC, but rather Church of Our Lord NHSC (Victoria, British Columbia).

- when there are multiple reasons for national significance, requiring an arbitrary choice.

Rocky Mountain House NHSC was recognized in 1926 for “its connection with early trade, discovery and exploration towards the westward.” This was supplemented as follows in 1968: “and to interpret three major themes: the fur trade, David Thompson, and the role of the Peigan (Blackfoot) Indians.”

- when the factors that underpin national significance are too complex or abstract to express in a few words.

St. Mary’s Basilica NHSC (Halifax, Nova Scotia) was recognized “because of its central role in the religious history of Nova Scotia and more particularly because of its association with individuals and events that played a central role in the emancipation of Roman Catholics in the Province and in Canada.”

#### 4. An ideal name is brief, clear and pleasing.

##### Notes:

- All official names must include the generic “National Historic Site of Canada” (“lieu historique national du Canada”). In addition, official site names will normally appear as plaque titles. For the specific part, then, brevity is of particular importance.
- It will normally not be necessary to specify locality, religious denominations, or similar identifiers in a site’s official name. In exceptional cases, such words may be required to avoid confusion at a local or national level. For example, in the case of St. John the Baptist Anglican Cathedral NHSC (St. John’s, Newfoundland) and St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Basilica NHSC (St. John’s, Newfoundland), religious denominations are specified to distinguish between two sites with the same name, in the same locality.

Even if it is not part of the official name, this type of identifier may still be included in the descriptive note in the Directory of Designations.

- Dual or alternate names will be avoided in the future. The Directory of Designations, for example, currently contains entries such as Malahat Building / Old Victoria Custom House NHSC (Victoria, British Columbia), consisting of two names of apparently equal status. Rarely, separate aspects of a site’s history may be jointly reflected in a double-barrelled name joined by a long dash, for example, Port-la-Joye – Fort Amherst NHSC (Rocky Point, Prince Edward Island). In addition, it will sometimes be appropriate to use the conjunction “and” to link two places that are physically separate but jointly designated, for example, Arvia’juaq and Qikiqtaarjuk NHSC (Arviat, Nunavut).
- It is preferable not to use the word “site” in the specific part of the name, given that “National Historic Site of Canada” will always be part of the official name.
- “National Historic Site of Canada” is the only approved generic, and terms such as “National Historic District” or “National Rural Historic District” will not be used, either as a generic or within the specific.

5. When the name of a designation incorporates a geographic name approved by the Geographical Names Board of Canada, that approved form will normally be used.

Notes:

- a. The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) is the national body which coordinates all matters affecting geographical nomenclature in Canada. Geographical name decisions approved by the appropriate federal, provincial or territorial authority become official decisions of the GNBC (Order-in-Council P.C. 2000-83).
  - b. The GNBC-approved form of a geographic name should be used when it is part of the name of a designation. For example, the Smiths Falls Bascule Bridge NHSC incorporates the name of a settled place in Ontario, which has been approved by the GNBC as Smiths Falls (rather than Smyth's Falls or Smith's Falls, even though these forms were used in early official documents).
  - c. When a different, or earlier, form of a name than the one approved by the GNBC is used, it must be justified on historic grounds, or be part of an established name.
6. All official forms of names of designated national historic sites will be explicitly part of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada's advice to the Minister.

Notes:

- a. Names of designations will be among the details of the commemoration, which will be recommended by the Board to the Minister, and, when approved, will be the official names of these sites. Changes to official names will similarly require a Ministerially approved recommendation of the Board.
- b. All names of designations will have an official form in each of the official languages of Canada. These versions are not considered to be multiple names, but two forms of a single name, and they will be derived using established toponymic and translation rules. The Board may, at its discretion, recommend adoption of further forms of the name in another language that is directly related to the reasons for the commemoration.
- c. The present guidelines provide direction concerning the choice of names for future national historic sites, and name changes to existing designations, if required. These names will be considered official names.

Names, which have been explicitly addressed by the Board in the past, are also considered to be official. For example, in 1995 the Board recommended that the name Atherley Narrows Fish Weirs National Historic Site be changed to Mnjikaning Fish Weirs National Historic Site (Atherley, Ontario).

Procedures:

1. Names will be researched and documented at the time of preparation of submission reports. All submission reports will contain a documented statement of the proposed name(s) for designation.

This should include the current name as well as previous names by which the site has been known and, when appropriate, should reflect consultation with site owners or stakeholders.

2. Submission reports will provide the proposed name(s) only in the language of the paper. All required language forms of the name will be included in the Board minutes. The appropriate toponymic and translation authorities will be consulted in the derivation of the translated forms.
3. Name changes must be approved by the HSMBC.