

# What's in a Name?

## Selkirk Street Naming Policy Selkirk

The type of projects Municipal Heritage Advisory Committees (MHAC) can undertake is limited solely by the imagination. In Selkirk, the Committee produces a list of suitable street names for new residential and business developments in the city. This simple but valuable project ensures that Selkirk's rich heritage lives on.



In 2000, the Selkirk Mayor and Council decided it would be useful to have a list of appropriate, pre-approved names for newly developed streets. In 2001, a Council resolution created *The Assignment of Street Names Policy* outlining the process and procedures to be used for naming new streets. Citizens, interest groups, Council and Selkirk MHAC were encouraged to submit names for consideration. The job of nominating and researching each name and presenting a list to Council became part of the MHAC's mandate.

The Committee discovered most existing streets were named for former Selkirk citizens who made a significant contribution to the community. This tradition was continued. Proposed names were researched, checked for duplication in the area and a written rationale for each sent to Council for approval. Council has about 20 names at any one time from which to choose. Having a clear policy and names at the ready makes Council's job easier.

The Committee researches the names by interviewing family members and citizens who knew the nominee, reviewing newspaper back issues and history books, scouring old maps and seeking documentation in libraries and archives.

**opposite** Captain William Robinson, one of Selkirk's earliest and most imaginative entrepreneurs, is honoured by Robinson Avenue  
**right** possibly Selkirk's earliest street, Eveline is named for Eveline Irving who married John Greig, the local hotel owner

Financially this costs the City of Selkirk virtually nothing since the research and recommendations are done by their volunteer MHAC. Though it is an ongoing project, no future costs are foreseen.

The benefits reverberate throughout the community. Families are pleased and proud to have their ancestor's achievements recognized and preserved for posterity. For a time the *Selkirk Journal* carried a *Street Names* column which increased public awareness and interest. As people learned the history of their street name through the column, they often contributed fresh information.

There is also a safety aspect to the project. It ensures there will be no duplication of names to cause confusion for drivers, especially emergency vehicles.

The project's success has grown quietly but steadily in Selkirk and area, building a new sense of community pride. A quiz has been developed around street names, and a cemetery study for Grade 6 students matches up street names with headstones.

Doreen Oliver, Chairperson of Selkirk MHAC recommends, "Take a look at your project and figure out the best way to manage it. Break it down



into parts and list them in the sequence in which you will do them.

"Always aim for the highest standard in the work you are doing and seek help from the appropriate sources. Help is out there, whether from the staff at Historic Resources Branch or a person with recognized expertise in the subject. People in the heritage world are willing to share!

"Check all of your facts for accuracy; we are attempting to tell a story, not create a new one! Credit your sources so that interested people can do further research on the subject. Our final goal is to interest and help those who will eventually become our replacements."

[www.cityofselkirk.com](http://www.cityofselkirk.com)

# Tradition is a Non-Renewable Resource

## Portage Collegiate Institute Archives Portage la Prairie

What began as an archive for Portage Collegiate Institute (PCI) has evolved into a living and significant history of the city and district.

The PCI Millennium Committee was looking for a project when history teacher James Kostuchuk suggested a school archive. Much of PCI's history (the oldest operating collegiate in Manitoba dating back to 1882) was lost in a 1954 fire. An archive could fill that void, preserve discovered and donated materials and collect oral history.

In 2001, a credit course in archives, designed by James Kostuchuk for Grades 11 and 12, created intense student interest. Collecting and conservation began in 2002.

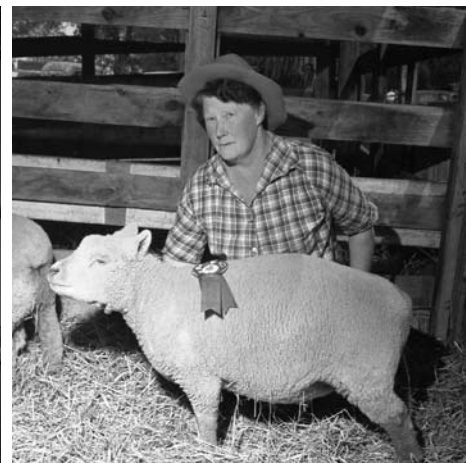
In the archival course, 25 students work on one or two projects per year. One facet of the course is oral history gathered by interviewing seniors who attended PCI. Over 250 interviews have been conducted. Material items, a video library and a web site provide access for the public.

One student discovered a collection

of 25,000 fully captioned negatives taken by photographer Yosh Tashiro between 1952 and 1974 for the local newspaper, *The Daily Graphic*. This discovery received local and national media coverage, resulting in great interest in the community.

The PCI archive adopted the collection in 2003. Fifteen students are scanning and indexing the negatives. Once the world sees the Tashiro images - some expected online in 2006 - the archive will expand as a school initiative.

In 2004, archive student Lisa Pao published a 200-page PCI history book researched solely from the archive.



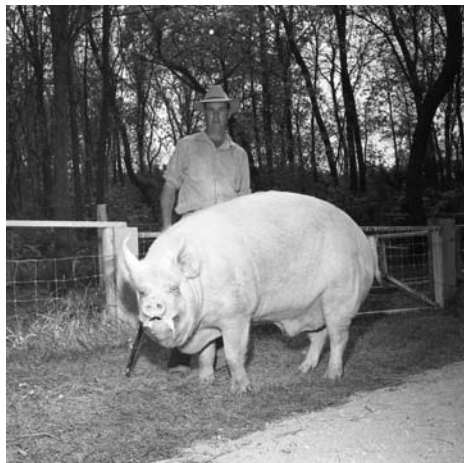
Portage School Division governs the archive and provides a teacher, office and classroom space. Total cost for computers, scanners and basic conservation supplies was \$15,000, all fundraised using a 15-minute student-centred presentation. Financial support came from many groups including the City and RM of Portage, Manitoba Historical Society, Thomas Sill Foundation, Lion's Club, Kinsmen, ANAF Legion, Portage Genealogy Group and private donations.

Provincial government resources flowed through the Association for Manitoba Archives which provided professional support.

Frequent coverage in *The Daily Graphic*, *Winnipeg Free Press* and CBC, and exposure through the Manitoba Historical Society helped promote the project.

A benchmark of success, the archive is seeking provincial accreditation, creating a how-to presentation so other schools can start archival programs, and hoping for a public room to present historical materials.

**below** five Yosh Tashiro photographs representing local events and people



“Tradition cannot be begged or borrowed.”

The archive brought together the school division, principal, student body and community, renewing old connections and creating new ones spanning generations.

“Tradition cannot be begged or borrowed. Tradition is a non-renewable resource and needs to be conserved.”

Wise words from James Kostuchuk who offers this advice for your project, “Promote it like mad. We presented to every service group and community organization that would have us. Use an audio-visual component – very important! You need to show people what you do, not just talk about it. We made a professional brochure.

“Ask for money but for specific projects. People will come on board if they can make a real connection with a person or event.

“Once you have money, show them some results. Go back to them and thank them.”



right Yosh Tashiro cradles his camera,  
late 1940s or early 1950s

[www.plpsd.mb.ca/pci/archive](http://www.plpsd.mb.ca/pci/archive)