

Promoting Geoheritage through Collaboration

J. Allan Donaldson, Ottawa-Carleton Geoscience Centre, Dept. of Earth Sciences, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON K2C 2J9, Canada (donaldson6427@rogers.com)

Since initiation of the Ottawa-Gatineau Geoheritage Project in 2002, efforts of our group to increase public understanding and appreciation of the geosciences have been advanced primarily through talks to school classes, service groups, retirement organizations, church-based learning seminars and field-naturalist clubs, supplemented by exhibits, field excursions and recently instituted annual Geoheritage Days. Outreach programs recently developed in collaboration with other organizations concerned with improving scientific literacy, however, are proving to be extremely productive. One example of success in this regard came about after a visit to the Mill of Kintail, a heritage building now housing a museum 50 km west of Ottawa. The Mill, administered by the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority, features the Naismith Boulder of basketball fame, as well as displays related to earlier use of the building as a studio for physician/sculptor R. Tait McKenzie; in addition to building stone in the Mill walls, walking trails on the surrounding property offer considerable potential for explaining the significance of geological features displayed by outcrops, glacial erratics and overburden. Preliminary discussions with MVCA representatives have opened the way for creation of a brochure about this site's geoheritage, and the addition of geological sessions for visiting school groups, to complement current biological sessions that presently form the core of this site's outreach program. Another example is provided by a display of Precambrian rocks in Perth, Ontario. More than 30 multi-tonne blocks have been arrayed within this town's Civitan Court, but no geological information is presently provided through either signage or brochures. OGGP members intend to soon fill this gap in collaboration with the Civitan service organization responsible for creation of this impressive display of igneous and metamorphic rocks representative of the local Grenville substrate. This site has the potential for becoming a geoheritage park complementary to an independently created display of sedimentary rocks in Metcalfe Geoheritage Park in Almonte, a nearby town that is underlain by Paleozoic strata. A third example is provided by a small indoor geological display in Matheson House, an eclectic museum in Perth. Geological specimens on display were collected in the mid-nineteenth century by Perth resident James Wilson, discoverer of the first occurrence of *Climactichnites* trackways, as well as the mineral perthite. Many additional specimens collected by this contemporary and friend of Sir William Logan reside in the basement of Matheson House; arrangements are now in place for OGGP members to evaluate this collection in 2010. As a final example of the potential for expanding geoheritage awareness through collaboration, recent discussions with canoeists, kayakers and rafters have opened yet another avenue for enhancing geoheritage education. OGGP members intend to capitalize on the potential for creating geoheritage brochures to describe and illustrate geological highlights along key segments of the Ottawa River, as well as along other popular waterways within eastern Ontario. Representatives of several whitewater tour groups operating within the Ottawa Valley have endorsed this approach to geoscience outreach. Extensive waterways from coast to coast offer potential for increasing the scope of this promising collaborative project across Canada.