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J. ROSS MACKAY, RECIPIENT OF THE 1993 W.A. JOHNSTON MEDAL

The W.A. Johnston Medal is the highest award of the Canadian Quaternary Association and is awarded for professional excellence in Quaternary research. Nominations can be made on behalf of anyone with a demonstrable record of achievement and publication that have contributed to Quaternary research in Canada or abroad. The nominator must be a member of the Canadian Quaternary Association and the nominee may be a researcher residing anywhere in the world. Normally the award is presented biennially at the General Meeting of the Association. Further information on the background of the W.A. Johnston Medal is given by Morgan (1988)¹ in the preamble of the first award announcement.

CITATION FOR THE 1993 AWARD OF THE W.A. JOHNSTON MEDAL

John Ross Mackay was born in Formosa of Canadian parents. In 1939 he graduated with a B.A. from Clark University and two years later obtained an M.A. from Boston University. He returned to Canada and enlisted in the Armed Forces (1941-1946), rising in rank from a private in the Royal Canadian Artillery to a Major in the Canadian Intelligence Corps. In 1946 he joined the Department of Geography at McGill University as an Assistant Professor and was there until 1949. In 1949 he obtained a Ph.D. from the Université de Montréal and accepted a position as Assistant Professor with the Department of Geology and Geography at the University of British Columbia. In 1953 Ross was promoted to Associate Professor and in 1957 to full Professor. Since 1981 he has been an Emeritus Professor at the University of British Columbia.

During his four decades at British Columbia Dr. Mackay gained international scientific recognition through his experimental and field investigations in geography, and especially on the topic of permafrost. His formidable publication record, over one hundred and ninety scientific communications in varied fields of endeavour, attests to his extensive research contributions in the Quaternary sciences. Samples of these publications are given in the selected bibliography listed below.

J. Ross Mackay has held several important offices in scholarly bodies, such as President of the Canadian Association of Geographers, President of the American Association of Geographers, Vice-President of the International Geographical Union, founding Secretary-General of the International Permafrost Association and Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Arctic Institute of North America. He has also served on many important national committees pertaining to environmental, geographical, geological and geotechnical matters.

Dr. Mackay has been honoured with many and diverse scientific awards, such as the Logan Medal of the Geological Association of Canada, the Miller Medal of the Royal Society of Canada and the Massey Medal of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. He was the first recipient of the Scholarly Merit Award of the Canadian Association of Geographers and the first recipient of the Roger J.E. Brown Memorial Award of the Canadian Geotechnical Society.

During his career, Ross served on the editorial boards of six international scientific journals. International recognition of his research contributions are demonstrated by his appointments as an Honourary Member to both the Chinese Society of Glaciology and Geocryology, and the Geographical Society of the U.S.S.R. He was also the first recipient of the G.K. Gilbert Award of the Association of American Geographers and was awarded the Kirk Bryan Award of the Geological Society of America. In 1986, Ross received further international recognition by the award of the Vega Gold Medal of the Swedish Society of Anthropology and Geography, presented by the King of Sweden.

A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and a Fellow (foreign) of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Dr. J. Ross Mackay has received four honorary doctorate degrees (for contributions in geography, geology and environmental studies) from the universities of Ottawa (1972), Waterloo (1981), Victoria (1986) and British Columbia (1987). He has been honoured by the Government of Canada in the form of a Centennial Medal, a Silver Jubilee Medal, he was awarded the Order



1. Morgan, A.V., 1988. Victor K. Prest, first recipient of the W.A. Johnston medal. *Géographie physique et Quaternaire*, 42: 3-5.

of Canada in 1982, and was the first recipient of the Centenary Medal for Northern Science presented by Governor General Sauvé in 1984.

By completion of his formal teaching service at the University of British Columbia, Ross had supervised six masters and eight doctoral students. His contributions are continued through the professional activities of these students. Since "official" retirement in 1981, Ross has continued to teach (voluntarily) a graduate course, undertake summer and winter field research in the western Arctic and has published twenty five papers in refereed journals.

In recognition of substantial academic and research contributions to the Quaternary sciences, the CANQUA awards committee has selected J. Ross Mackay as the recipient of the 1993 W.A. Johnston Medal.

Bruce E. BROSTER
Chair, Johnston Medal Committee

RESPONSE BY J. ROSS MACKAY

When I received word of the W.A. Johnston Medal from CANQUA I felt honored and was carried back in time to more than fifty years ago. Before I enlisted in the army in 1941, I was interested in the physiography (now the Quaternary history) of the Ottawa-Gatineau area and had purchased copies of Johnston's "Late Pleistocene Oscillations of Sea Level in the Ottawa Valley", Geol. Surv. Canada Mus. Bull. 24, 1916 and "Pleistocene and Recent Deposits in the Vicinity of Ottawa with a Description of the Soils", Geol. Surv. Canada Mem. 101, 1917. In late 1941, after completion of basic training near Toronto, I was sent for further training to the large artillery camp at Petawawa, on the Ottawa River. I took Johnston's two publications there with me. Since I hoped to continue with graduate studies after the war and had spare time for reading in the winter evenings, I wrote for reprints to several individuals who had published on the Ottawa Valley. The response, particularly from Dr. D.F. Putnam (University of Toronto) was most helpful to me. In late 1945, after the end of the war, I was stationed in Ottawa waiting for my discharge. Because cars were not available, I bought an army surplus Harley-Davidson motorcycle, not without misgivings, for weekend field work near Ottawa. After discharge I was fortunate in obtaining a teaching position at McGill, starting in the fall of 1946. Finally, in 1947, I was able to publish my first paper, a short note, on "The North Shore of the Ottawa River, Quyon to Montebello, Quebec" in the *Revue Canadienne de Géographie*, Volume 1 (Mackay, 1947). In rereading the paper for the writing of this response, I discovered, with pleasure, that the first reference in my paper was to Johnston's 1916 monograph on the Ottawa Valley, cited earlier. Although the *Revue* has since been renamed *Géographie physique et Quaternaire* (GpQ), the volume numbers continue from that of Volume 1, 1947.

When I came to UBC in 1949 I was reminded, once again, of Johnston's contributions to Quaternary research, this time through his Fraser River Delta Memoirs referred to by Bill Mathews in his 1991 W.A. Johnston Memoirs response (GpQ, 1992, 46: 6-7). After retirement in 1981, I started giving some of my library material to other colleagues. When I gave Johnston's GSC Memoir 125 on "Sedimentation of the Fraser River Delta" to a young colleague, he said in thanks "this is a classic."

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to CANQUA for the W.A. Johnston Medal, a much appreciated honor. In a very real sense, my indebtedness to Johnston has come around full circle.

J. Ross MACKAY

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