Introduction to Place-Name Game

As the concept of a language museum was being developed, it was quite early apparent that the theme of our national linguistic heritage was highly regarded as a topic that would interest many audiences. Thus, as we began the actual process of selecting the subject matter for our first projects, our linguistic heritage was a natural choice. Perhaps nothing touches us so closely as the language that we and those around us speak. The telling of the story of this heritage is a powerful and dramatic one. It involves exploration, colonization, fierce struggles not only of men and weapons, but of language and culture. It witnesses the coming together of many peoples, and the birth of a new “American English.” And sadly, it records the death, the extinction of many American Indian languages. The National Museum of Language wishes to tell this story to the people of America and of the world. And so, as we slowly develop our plans, we begin with this theme. Several initiatives are under way, and the Place-Name Game described here is the first to be completed.

Amelia C. Murdoch

A Traveling Exhibit: Place-Name Game
Sponsored by The National Museum of Language

Most museums have a variety of interactive exhibits in both adult areas and those intended mainly for children. The Place-Name Game represents a proto-type model of an exhibit that might be in the children’s section, although the principle may be applied in adult displays also. The place names in this model are those in the United States (of which there are many) named by early explorers from various countries who either were describing what they saw, or attempting to render into their own language(s) names they heard from Native Americans. The latter is a linguistic phenomenon in language encounters around the world. In an actual museum such a display might be housed in a showcase with a push-button switch for indicating the player’s responses. This concept can be used with a number of ideas such as a state mottoes game, or on an adult level an exhibit matching language learning theories with their chief protagonists, e.g., Skinner, Chomsky, etc., or language families.

The mechanics of this proto-type exhibit are described later in this article. The basic unit of the exhibit is a large colorful map of the United States showing state boundaries and major cities, towns, rivers, etc. The map of the United States is replete with names with interesting histories. Ten such names were selected for this matching game. Other groups of names could be used for other displays. The histories and/or legends concerning these names appear on index cards attached to the display board. The player must match a given card description with the correct place name on the map. A small light bulb is mounted at each place name location. When the player makes the correct match the light bulb will flash. Thus the player is involved with language learning, history and geography. Below is the list of place names used in this particular display, with their true meanings as they appear on the cards. However, in order to challenge the reader the lists are not entirely “matched.” The correct answers appear elsewhere in this newsletter. We hope that the reader will “play the game” before looking for the answers.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Newsletter is one of our most valuable links to our members and to those who wish to learn more about the National Museum of Language. It tells you who we are and why we are doing what we do. It tells you our vision, our plans, our achievements. It tells that we value your contributions, of whatever kind. And it tells you what we need if we are to continue to progress toward our ultimate goal.

We would like the Newsletter to appear quarterly, on a regular basis. As many of our readers know, we have not yet been able to publish on such a timely basis. Others familiar with the fate of newsletters express understanding when I note that we publish “a-periodically.” The present issue is a case in point. It contains committee reports covering months of deliberations and at the same time reports on the results of these deliberations.

It is a record of continuing accomplishment. Our intriguing Traveling Exhibit, the outstanding Symposium on the critical issue of Machine Translation, the distinguished Keynote Speaker we have obtained for the Annual Meeting, the initiation of an Intern Program all bear witness that our Board, Associates, and members are hard at work.

At the coming meeting of the Board of Directors, we will be electing officers, appointing Associates for the year, considering an important proposal for establishing a Website, and activating our Intern Program. These are the most urgent questions. Looking ahead, we mean to complete the Prospectus, review the missions and composition of our Committees, and pursue the highly important goal of fundraising. Our members have been most supportive. We urge you to maintain your interest and let us know what we do well, and send us your ideas to inspire and encourage us. We are counting on you.
NML Sponsors Symposium on Machine Translation

The NML sponsored a very successful symposium on Machine Translation on March 23, 2002, in the Council Chambers of the City of College Park City Hall. The first speaker, Florence Reeder, Principle Scientist at Mitre Corporation, addressed “The Real Usability of Machine Translation.” Dr. John White, a Director of Research and Development at Northrop Grumman IT, spoke on “The Integration of Machine Translation with Other Processes.” The final speaker, Mudar Yaghi, Co-Founder and Director of Applied Technology, Inc., discussed “Machine Translation in a High-Volume Multilingual Environment.”

NML members and the general public enjoyed the light refreshments served afterwards, a social period which gave those present a chance to discuss the topic of the day and the Museum itself. The symposium was video-taped and rebroadcast on local TV. Copies of the video were later presented to each speaker. Also, an offprint of an outstanding article by John Hutchins, “The development and use of machine translation systems and computer-based translation tools,” was made available to members of the audience.

Whitney Reed and Amelia Murdock
The Center for Applied Linguistics

Why it supports the National Museum of Language

From its establishment in 1959, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) has supported a wide range of activities that bridge the findings of the field of linguistics and related sciences to the practical needs of educators and the general public. CAL’s mission is to improve communication through better understanding of language and culture. It carries out this mission through research, professional development, test development, analysis and dissemination of information, instructional materials design and development, program consulting and evaluation, and policy analysis.

CAL’s mission, programs, and projects complement the mission of the National Museum of Language (NML), which is to enhance the understanding of the many aspects of language. By addressing language in history, contemporary affairs, and the future, the NML will serve as a valuable resource. Hence CAL wholeheartedly supports the NML’s important goal to reach a broad spectrum of professionals and the general public as well as creating a national forum for organizations and scholars to communicate more effectively to a broad audience. CAL endorses the NML and will participate in ways that it is able to further the NML’s mission and goals.

Donna Christian, President
Center for Applied Linguistics

[Editor’s note: The Center for Applied Linguistics not only supports the NML financially as an Organizational/Institutional Member, but it has also been an important source of young talent for the Museum. Among present and former CAL staff members currently assisting the NML: Helen Carpenter, formerly an Associate and now a member of the Board of Directors; Associate Lauren Raivel, Chair of the Museum Programs Committee; and Associate Sally Morrison, formerly Chair of the Web Committee. We are indebted to the many other CAL staff members who have contributed ideas in the past, and those who continue to contribute to the development of the Museum.]

NML Annual Meeting 2002

The Annual Meeting of the National Museum of Language will take place on June 15, 2002. It will be divided into two sections, the business meeting and the Reception/Dinner. The business meeting will be held in NML offices, while the Reception and Dinner will take place at the nearby Inn and Conference Center of the University of Maryland University College.

Keynote Speaker

We are pleased to announce that our speaker for the Annual Meeting 2002 will be our distinguished Associate Father Lee Lubbers, S.J., Founder and President of the renowned educational enterprise SCOLA, which had its beginnings at Creighton University in 1983.

A non-profit educational consortium that receives and retransmits television programming from more than 50 different countries in their original languages, SCOLA provides its services to universities and colleges, elementary and secondary schools, cable television systems, and language schools and training sites within the United States Government. Its estimated audience is approximately 10 million viewers just in North America. It has been aptly described as a ‘dynamic language-learning tool aimed at toppling cultural barriers worldwide.’

A sculptor grounded in Latin, Greek, philosophy, theology, and aesthetics, with studies in Austria and France, Father Lubbers brings a rare depth of understanding to his story of harnessing the marvels of modern technology in the cause of linguistic and cultural awareness.

This event, which is open to the public, has been widely advertised in the Washington metropolitan area. It is hoped that representatives of various segments of the language and broadcasting fields will be in attendance to learn more about the contributions SCOLA services can provide to many audiences.

Dr. John White
Florence Reeder
Madar Yaghi & NML President Murdoch
Intern Program

Purpose
The purpose of the National Museum of Language (NML) Intern Program is threefold:
1. To enlist interns to assist in the development of the NML, providing the Museum with critical labor in the early stages of shaping the institution. Such a program will provide the NML with a wider base of workers, in terms of both labor and ideas.
2. To provide these interns with official acknowledgement of their services, describing the kind of duties they performed, and evaluating their performance.
3. If appropriate, to provide formal procedure for link with an academic program.

Qualifications
Applicants should provide evidence of the following:
1. Training or experience in a field appropriate to the mission of the NML.
2. Two letters of recommendation.
3. If appropriate, an identified/approved faculty supervisor/advisor.

Terms of Service
The period of service may be three months, six months, or one year, each term to be renewable.
1. Each intern shall be under the supervision of a Director or Associate of the Museum. If a professional or technical expert is assisting in the endeavor, such experts will also supervise the work of the intern.
2. Informal review of performance
3. Satisfactory performance of duties shall include either the completion of a certain number of hours of work or the completion of a specific project, and submission of a paper or description of the project involved.

Acknowledgement of Service
Recognition of the contribution of the intern shall be provided in two forms:
1. A certificate from the National Museum of Language recognizing the work of the intern.
2. A letter of acknowledgment from the Museum, suitable for use in conjunction with a resume.

Stipend
Internships may or may not carry a stipend. No internships with a stipend are available at the present time.

Fields
At present, internships are available in the following fields:
Web design
Exhibit design
Publications Assistant
Graphic design
Collections
Museum management
Public relations/Marketing
Grant writing
Language and Linguistics

Inquiries are welcome at this time. We are currently developing job descriptions and an application form.

For further information, please contact Dr. Amelia C. Murdoch, NML Intern Program, 7071 Baltimore Avenue, Suite 202, College Park, MD 20740. Tel: 301-864-7071/301-864-4999; email natmuslang@juno.com

Grahn Resigns

The NML Board of Directors has accepted with great regret the resignation of Leslie M. Grahn, Member and Secretary of the Board since the formal organization of the NML on June 10, 1998. Grahn has been a truly invaluable Secretary, a frequent contributor to the Newsletter, an eloquent spokesman in professional circles for the Museum, a source of creative ideas, and always a wise counselor on the Board and in the committees (Executive and Programs) on which she served.
Formerly a foreign language teacher at Martin Luther King, Jr., Middle School in Prince George’s County, Maryland, Grahn cites family responsibilities, a career change, and an enlarged professional role as reasons for resigning. She has recently transferred to Howard County Maryland Schools, where she now serves as Chairman of a large foreign language department in a new high school (Reservoir) which will open in September of this year.
Additionally, she is the incoming president of the Maryland Foreign Language Association (MFLA), the state association for foreign language teachers. The Association boasts a growing membership of several hundred, representing all languages taught in the State. It is now preparing for its Annual Conference, which will be held on October 12 at the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore.
The Board and members of the NML extend their best wishes for the future to Leslie in her many personal and professional roles. They welcome the news that, although she is giving up her official duties for the Museum, she will continue to support its mission in other capacities.

Dora Kennedy and Amelia Murdoch

Director Joseph Page, Associate Manuel Guevara & Dr. Jennifer Decamp
Report from the Committees
Administration Committee

In an effort to expedite its work, last July the Administration Committee agreed to meet monthly from then on instead of every other month. Much of the effort expended during subsequent meetings has focused on reviews and revisions of the draft Prospectus, which remains the Committee's top priority for completion. Various members of the Committee have been assigned specific topics and deadlines, while all are assisting in reviews of the submissions.

Through the efforts of Associate Steve Groh, who works for the City of College Park, the NML now has an additional computer reconstituted from 2-3 castoff city computers. This new computer and our old one have both been connected to the new second-hand multi-function printer donated by the city, thus giving us a fax capability. Mr. Groh also installed a new telephone connection so we can connect everything to the telephone line.

The founder of SCOLA, Lee Lubbers S.J., has agreed to be the keynote speaker at the NML Annual Meeting planned for June 15, 2002. The impact of SCOLA on foreign language teaching has been impressive on a world-wide basis, and we are looking forward to the presentation by this NML Associate.

As a result of her attendance at the November ACTFL meeting, Dr. Amelia Murdoch discussed with Matthew Webb, Assistant Director of Augusta County Institute for Classical Studies in Virginia, the possibility that the NML co-sponsor a Latin language and culture workshop for youngsters in the College Park area. The Committee members agreed to investigate this proposal further.

Murdoch also reported that she had discussed with Joseph Bratton of the Bratton Corporation and Stella Derum of Sony Corporation a proposal that they develop a time-line exhibit for the NML on the development of language laboratories. Preliminary plans are being made to convert part of the present NML office into an exhibit area. This concept originated with Michael Judge, who is leading the effort. The addition of a new desk to the reception area is a first step toward making our office more visitor-friendly.

Whitney Reed

Museum Programs Committee

The Museum Programs Committee meetings in the Fall of 2001 began with a new chair, Lauren Raivel, who has been member of the Museum Programs Committee since the Fall of 1999.

During the October 2001 meeting, Committee Members Dora Kennedy and Isaac Yehiel presented the Place-Name Game (see p.1), a Traveling Exhibit for the Young Linguists Program. As a result of the experience gained during the preparation of this exhibit, the Committee outlined procedures for developing new projects. A form for initiating museum programs is now ready for use by any committee member who is interested in starting a new project.

The Committee also received an update on the Linguistic Heritage of the United States task force. Helen Carpenter and Lauren Raivel, co-chairs of this task force, visited Janis Tomlinson, the Director of the Arts in the Academy on August 20, 2001. The meeting sparked ideas on topics in linguistics for which professional artists would be willing to create artwork. At the December meeting, in addition to a lengthy consideration of procedural matters, members reviewed the proposed symposium on machine translation, which was initiated by the Administration Committee.

Michael Judge is continuing to work on his project, Dialects of Maryland, which will display the heritage of languages close to home (Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia).

Lauren Raivel

Web Committee

The NML Web Committee met under the chairmanship of Associate Sally Morrison on February 5 and welcomed Brendan Patterson and Donna Wright to the committee. Patterson, a recent graduate of the University of Maryland, has a graphic and web-design background and hopes to intern with the Museum. Wright is a freelance designer and has already contributed some great ideas. The Web Committee made some important decisions at its last meeting. Deciding to limit our main link pages to About NML, Programs and Exhibits, Membership, Volunteers and Internships, Links, and Contact, the Committee has solicited content from NML board members and associates.

Unfortunately, Chair Sally Morrison has been forced to leave the Washington area because of family circumstances. Director Wayne Slater agreed to assume the position of Chair. After reviewing the work of the Committee, he proceeded with the effort to find a suitable provider to design and maintain an NML website. A proposal has been received from a provider and will be presented to the Board for its consideration at the Annual Meeting on June 15.

Sally Morrison and Amelia Murdoch
Acknowledgements

......We appreciate

The members of the Board of Directors wish to express their appreciation for several substantial gifts of equipment and services that have significantly improved the Museum's technical capability. Our Associate Allegra Tasaki has contributed a computer and monitor. David Yee, owner of Star Print, has given us a color printer. And Associate Steven Groh has provided a second computer and a multi-function printer, and upgraded both computers to a Pentium II level. We are extremely grateful to Ms. Tasaki, Mr. Yee, and Mr. Groh for their support and belief in the Museum.

Notes on Membership

At this time, our main financial support still comes from the dues paid by our members. We therefore urge all of our readers to renew their membership and to join us in a drive to increase our numbers. Many renewals have already been received, and renewal letters have been sent to all members along with an extra copy of the NML brochure to be passed on to potential new members.

Certificates of Recognition as Builders of the National Museum of Language (designed by Thomas Reed) have now been sent to all past and present members of the NML.

Whitney E. Reed

PLACE-NAME GAME
CORRECT ANSWERS

VERMONT (STATE) GREEN MOUNTAIN
CHICAGO (IL) LAND OF SKUNK SMELLS
RIO GRANDE (TX) BIG RIVER
EAU CLAIRE (WI) CLEAR WATER
SYRACUSE (NY) GREEK CITY
SOLDATNA (ALASKA) SOLDIER MATTERS
PALO ALTO (CA) HIGH POLE
BOCA RATON (FL) MOUTH OF THE RAT
BATON ROUGE (LA) RED STICK
BISMARCK (ND) GERMAN STATESMAN

Discussing the MT Symposium
# UPCOMING EVENTS

## NML MEETINGS

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## Executive Committee

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## CONFERENCES AND OTHER MEETINGS

NML representatives (Board members, Associates) will be at the following conferences and meetings. They have been active in the work of the Museum and will be glad to share their information about the latest developments.

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National Museum of Language

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED