

Personality of the year 2016: Katherine d'Entremont (Translated by Google)

Description

Editor's note: In front of a government that did not hesitate to criticize it unfairly in the public square before finding after the late an infatuation for the bilingualism that still has to be proved and in front of members of the official opposition who went Until its removal and the abolition of its position, the Commissioner of Official Languages has never ceased to defend the equality of the two linguistic communities with serenity, aplomb and dignity. That is why Katherine d'Entremont was chosen Personality of the Year 2016 by Acadie Nouvelle's expanded editorial team.

"Twenty times on the job, hand over your work." This quote from the French poet Nicolas Boileau could be the slogan of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages for New Brunswick.

Nearly 50 years after the adoption of the first Official Languages Act, 23 years after the equality of the two linguistic communities was enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and 13 years after the creation of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages , The daily work to ensure the real equality of Francophones and Anglophones remains colossal in the only officially bilingual province in the country.

Fortunately, almost everything in the life and career of Katherine d'Entremont seems to have predisposed her to this role.

From his birth in an exogamous family established in a bilingual city in Moncton to his work in the Department of Local Government during the implementation of the Official Languages Act in the municipal sector, Teaching in French immersion in Sussex and Fredericton, Mme d'Entremont recounts that she always had "one foot in each linguistic community".

Since her appointment as Commissioner in 2013, Katherine d'Entremont has sought to uncover systemic language problems in the public service through dozens of individual complaints she receives each year.

"Is there a widespread problem? We're trying to get to the bottom of things, "she says.

In recent years, the Commissioner has highlighted the absence of an active offer from the government and its inability to serve its citizens in French in certain regions. It uncovered the unilingualism of several officials in charge of reception and security in the government buildings of the capital. She called the City of Miramichi and NB Ambulance to order. She warned the government against the dangers of privatizing the Translation Bureau and some health services.

"Institutions often want recommendations that will allow them to comply with the law. If we make realistic and pragmatic recommendations, it will help them. This is the objective, "says Mme d'Entremont.

However, nothing is ever gained, particularly because of staff turnover.

“It’s always something to do. Institutions can not assume that this is done because they have issued some messages to educate their employees. ”

Due to its investigations and recommendations, the Commissioner of Official Languages is often accused of creating chaos, fueling linguistic tensions and splitting.

Its role and powers are “always to explain and to explain to the members of the public (and also to the elected representatives)”, says Mme d’Entremont.

“Some people imagine all sorts of things. There are people who think that the commissioner has all kinds of powers that she does not have. Power is a power of influence. I have no decision-making power. ”

The criticisms provoked by this misunderstanding seem to have little effect on Katherine d’Entremont.

“The work of the Commissioner of Official Languages in New Brunswick is not always easy. But we are encouraged by people who understand our role, who write and congratulate us. ”

“When we hear things, it encourages us to explain our role. The mandate is given to us by law and that is what we are doing. ”

What causes the Commissioner more headaches is her budget. Fully frozen for two years, it has increased by only 2.6% since the creation of the police station in 2003, while that of the Legislative Assembly of which it is responsible has grown by 83% during the same period.

If one considers the rise in the cost of living, “it is not an increase at all, it is really a big decrease”, she deplores.

Since it has no right to ignore the complaints it receives, it is the promotion of the equality of the two linguistic communities of its mandate which suffers from it and which is in part subject to the vagaries of external subsidies .

“We should have these funds in our operating budget. In the meantime, without money for the promotion side, we do things that cost nothing, such as the chronicles that have been published in the four New Brunswick dailies. ”

In addition, the Commissioner has inherited a new responsibility this year whose spin-offs will not become public until next year.

For the past six months, professional associations also have responsibilities to their members and to the general public under the Official Languages Act. The learning curve for some of these associations looks brutal.

“I can tell you that we have a lot of work to do with these associations. We have a lot of work in this area already and it is only since July 1 that people can file a complaint,” says Ms. d’Entremont without wanting to reveal more before the publication of her next report.

The year 2017 has not yet begun, it is already planning for the Commissioner of Official Languages.

Old_laureats_tableau

The leading squad

Several names were raised during the meeting of the enlarged editorial committee of Acadie Nouvelle in charge of choosing the personality of the year. Here are four which have not been retained, but which nevertheless profoundly marked the New Brunswick news in 2016.

Geneviève Lalonde

Geneviève Lalonde ran the women’s Olympic finals of the 3,000 meter steeplechase in Rio on August 15th. – Archives

GENEVIÈVE LALONDE – ARCHIVES

Acadian athlete Geneviève Lalonde had an exceptional year, to say the least. She completely dominated the survey of members of our editorial team to guide our committee’s choices.

Had it been known that the reporters of the sports section would give it a good place in their year-end coverage, it might have been named personality of the year.

Geneviève Lalonde, a specialist in the 3,000-meter steeplechase, was very close to qualifying for the Rio de Janeiro Olympics on July 8 when she finished third at the Canadian Championships. She had to finish first or second to qualify automatically.

It was well known that the head coach of this team would appeal to Geneviève Lalonde, the Canadian record holder in this event. As expected, she was invited to participate in the Olympics

It made us live strong emotions in Brazil. She shone in qualifying by breaking the Canadian record. In the final, which took place on the National Day of the Acadians, she took 16th place.

Back in Canada, Geneviève Lalonde continued to stand out and be an inspiring figure for young people in the region. She met with students to talk about her background.

Michel Doucet

The lawyer Michel Doucet. Acadie Nouvelle: Pascal Raiche Nogue. 2014

MICHEL DOUCET – ARCHIVES

Lawyer and linguistic rights specialist Michel Doucet did not turn his thumbs in 2016. In addition to using his fingers on Twitter, where he has been active for a long time, he has continued to fight Name of the Francophones.

One of the issues that has occupied him over the last few months has been anonymous and particularly hostile comments on Acadians and francophones on the CBC website.

In March, he wrote a letter of complaint about this. Several dozen New Brunswick public figures have rallied to the cause and co-signed the letter. These efforts finally paid off when the CBC announced the end of anonymous comments on its site.

Michel Doucet will retire next year. He gave his last course in early December. However, it should not be expected that it will completely disappear from public space.

Rene Cormier

René Cormier – Archives
RENÉ CORMIER – ARCHIVES

The year that ended was not an easy one for the multidisciplinary artist and leader Acadian René Cormier. Elected president of the Société nationale de l'Acadie in June 2015, he spent most of 2016 at the head of this organization.

In October, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced his appointment to the Senate of Canada. He became the first New Brunswick Francophone to be appointed to the Upper House following a selection process based on merit.

This news was very well received in New Brunswick, where René Cormier has a good reputation and has been very active in recent years. Many people saw it as a sign that the voice of Acadians and the arts community would be heard more in Ottawa.

René Cormier first indicated that he wished to remain president of the SNA after his swearing in the Senate. He then changed his mind and gave in. The vice-president of the organization, Xavier Lord-Giroux, succeeded him until the next annual general meeting of the SNA in 2017.

Gérard Comeau

Gérard Comeau – Archives
GÉRARD COMEAU – ARCHIVES

Gérard Comeau, a retiree from Tracadie, made a lot of talk in 2016. The story goes back to 2012 when he was fined for importing too much alcohol from Quebec.

With the support of a Restigouche lawyer, Mikaël Bernard, he challenged this fine and the seizure of his alcoholic beverages by the police. His trial took place in Provincial Court in 2015. The highly anticipated verdict fell in late April 2016.

The judge declared the section of the Liquor Act unconstitutional that he had broken by buying hundreds of bottles of beer and three bottles of liquor from across the border before transporting them to the house.

The Crown attempted unsuccessfully to persuade the New Brunswick Court of Appeal to consider the verdict.

She then turned to the Supreme Court of Canada, which now has to decide if she wants to get involved. If it agrees to do so, it could have a significant impact on the trade in alcohol across the country.

(With the collaboration of journalist Pascal Raiche-Nogue)

<http://www.acadienouvelle.com/actualites/2016/12/28/personnalite-de-lannee-2016-katherine-dentremont-videos/>

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