

Past, Present and Future Relations between the
Fisheries Research Board and the Universities

1. IN THE BEGINNING

The FRB, founded in 1898, was previously known as the Biological Board of Canada. For the first quarter century of its existence, the researches of the Board were carried out exclusively by Canadian university professors, their students, and an occasional outsider. The universities had little or no money for research and no facilities of their own for aquatic field studies. Moreover, with the possible exception of McGill and Toronto, research was not a recognized part of the program of Faculties of Arts and Science; they were teaching institutions. Although the research topics at the Stations had to be approved by the Board there was little restraint, because the Board members were themselves the leading investigators at the Stations.

Operations were in summer and those accommodated were reimbursed for transportation from the university and provided with board and lodging only, in the residences at St. Andrews or Nanaimo. The work carried out by a student could be written up as a graduate thesis. Since there were no full-time scientists, there was no question of priorities for vessels or equipment. Board-University relations were close and cordial, although there were no formal agreements and no direct grants. Perhaps the main lesson from these early days was that in the field of environmental and resource science the provision of working opportunities is of prime importance.

The first full-time scientist of the Board was the Director at St. Andrews, who spent his winters at the University of Toronto, where he developed graduate work in marine science and supervised M.Sc. and Ph.D. theses, some of which were based on work in the Board's stations. This arrangement was unique in Canada and it terminated with the retirement of the incumbent.

After the first World War several developments combined ultimately to dissolve the partnership. One was the employment of a full-time