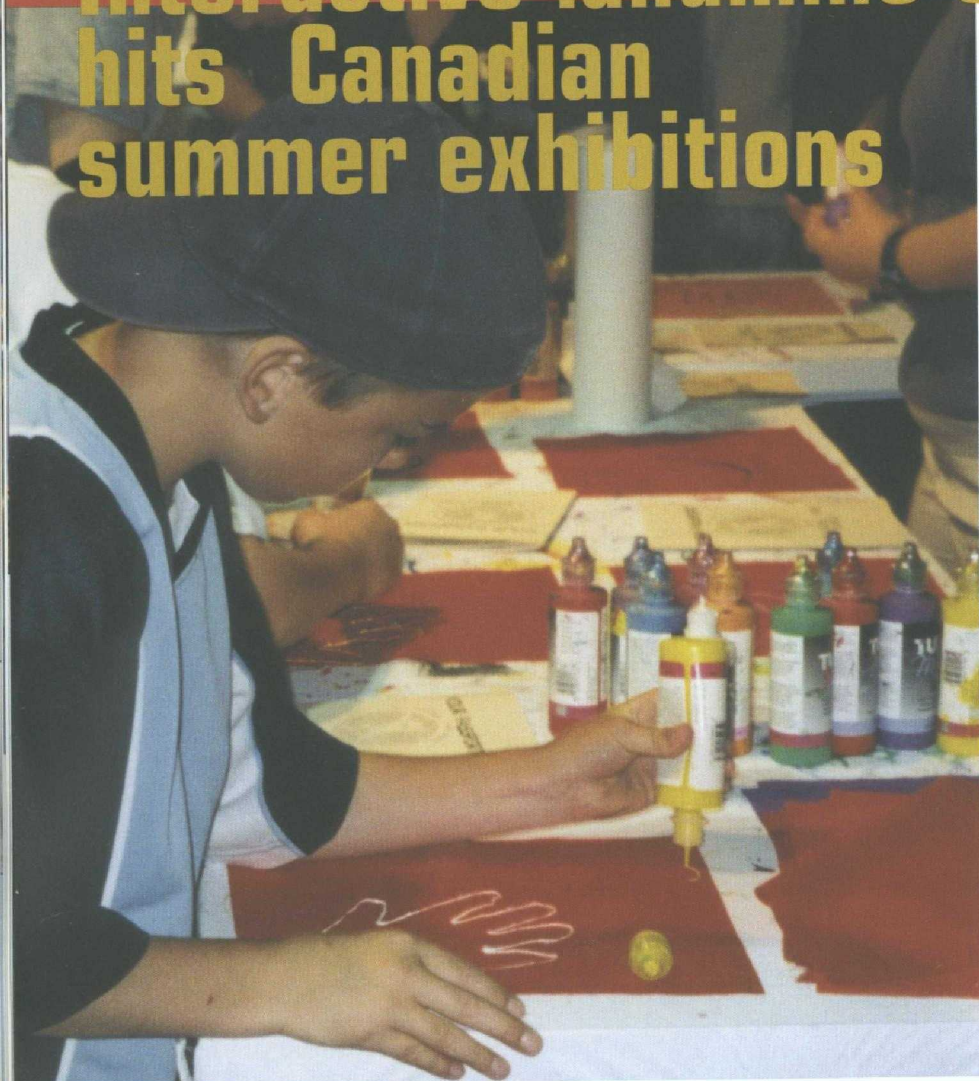


Interactive landmine education hits Canadian summer exhibitions



Jackie Hansen/MAAP

Interactivity, art and true-to-life props helped bring landmine education to summer exhibitions throughout Canada in 2000.

With the hope of engaging more Canadians on an issue that has already received wide-spread public support, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Mines Action Canada and the Canadian Red Cross brought a travelling summer mine action

event to the Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly in Windsor and to major Canadian exhibitions in Toronto, Quebec City, Edmonton and Ottawa.

A key element of the outreach initiative was a simulated mined village exhibit, illustrating scenes from a war-torn community and featuring equipment and activities related to victim assistance, mine awareness and mine clearance.

Canada's Youth Mine Action Ambassadors toured with the exhibit to spread the message that there are many ways for Canadians to support mine action.

Young people express their thoughts artistically at the OAS General Assembly landmine exhibit.

First stop: OAS General Assembly

The travelling mined village exhibit made its first appearance at the Showcase of the Americas in Windsor, Ontario, from May 22 to June 12, 2000, attracting scores of local children and youth, as well as government representatives attending the OAS Annual General Assembly in Windsor from June 4 to 6.

The public was invited to view a demonstration of techniques used in humanitarian demining and a nearby children's art pavilion engaged young people in creating artistic expressions of their commitment to a world free from landmines.

According to Quebec City Youth Ambassador Violaine Des Rosiers, the exhibit gave the public an opportunity to learn about mine action in a more interactive way.

"One man who visited the exhibit was from a mine affected country and his wife was a landmine survivor," Des Rosiers recalls. "He was excited to connect with the Canadian mine action community, and his children were learning about how Canada – their new home – is making a difference."

Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy and Minister of International Cooperation Maria Minna unveiled a mural depicting mine action in the Americas and helped decorate the mural with handcrafted butterflies children had made to symbolize their hope for an end to the use of landmines. ●



Scott Kressman and Kyle Ruttan

Waterloo junior high students create award-winning anti-landmine CD-ROM

by Scott Cressman and Kyle Ruttan

It is said that, in the next 22 minutes, a landmine will injure a person somewhere around the world.

It's statistics like this that inspired us to do our project – a landmines CD-ROM. We just finished Grade 8 at Centennial Senior Public School in Waterloo, Ontario. We got started on our project in Grade 7 when we read an article in class about landmines. After learning about the horrible consequences of landmines, we were determined to help people affected by landmines in whatever way we could. We decided to create the CD to educate people around the world and inspire others to join the anti-landmine campaign.

Award winning multi-media artists Scott Kressman and Kyle Ruttan with their landmine ban CD-ROM.

We have had countless people encourage us and assist us in whatever way they could. Some notable ones are Rae McGrath of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, who gave us advice when he came to our school to speak on landmines, Rochelle Johnston, of the Youth Mine Action Ambassador Program, Sgt. Burkenshaw of the Canadian Reserves and Doug Morrison of the mine detection dog training company, NOTRA Systems. Our teacher, Mr. Arnie Covey, also made it possible for us to do much of our research and work on the CD.

We were amazed by how many people in and out of the landmine community thought our landmines CD would help people. When we began our project we had no idea we would get the type of recognition that we've received from newspapers, television and individuals. We also entered the CD in the Multimedia Mania Contest, sponsored by the International Society for Technology in Education and it received first place in North America.

On the landmines CD you can find information on how and why landmines are used, victims of landmines, affected countries and the landmine ban. These sections include audio clips, 3D animation and a virtual game. All of this combines to create a truly unique multimedia learning experience.

For more information visit www.landmines.cjb.net ●

Mine action comes to US campuses

Since 1999, Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Mine Action Team, with the support of the Canadian Consulate General in Boston, has sponsored the activities of Dr. Christopher Kirkey of Bridgewater State College, Massachusetts as a 'Mine Action Scholar-in-Residence'.

In this position, Dr. Kirkey has promoted landmine issues at several academic conferences in the United States and has undertaken a lecture/discussion tour of several US colleges and universities, with the aim of engaging students, faculty, administrators and the general public on a wide range of mine related issues. In the first 14 months of this initiative, Dr. Kirkey presented lectures at 33 post-secondary institutions throughout the American east, southeast and mid-west, and presented papers at four major academic conferences.

Dr. Kirkey's themes for lectures and research activi-

ties include a review of the Ottawa Process, US policy towards the ban on anti-personnel (AP) mines, international humanitarian demining efforts, the role of the United Nations Mine Action Service, needs assessment planning for mine-affected states, current status of AP mine stockpiles and meeting the needs of mine victims. For the fall of 2000, 28 colleges and universities – from the University of Alaska-Anchorage to the University of New Orleans – have expressed interest in hosting an AP mine lecture and discussion forum.

During the 2000-01 academic year, the project will be expanded to include mine action faculty development workshops in Boston, Atlanta, New York and Chicago. These workshops will bring together heads of academic departments and other faculty to facilitate the design and creation of college and university courses that will focus on AP mine issues and the Ottawa Convention. ●