

EX-10-79

EX LIBRIS NEWS

Newsletter of the Ex Libris Association

Fall 1993 (Number 14)

ISSN 0833-4278

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ENCLOSURES

- Program for the 8th AGM, 1993
- Constitution (including amendments)
- 1994 Membership or Subscription Form
- Conference Registration Form
- 1993 Membership List

EX LIBRIS NEWS is published twice
a year by the Ex Libris Association,
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Toronto, ON M4Y 2E3

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Thanks to Betty McCamus this issue will be proofread and reorganized to make it as readable as possible. Betty has decided she does not wish to be Editor so I am "stuck" with the job again. Please forgive me for errors, omissions and for the inclusion of much of my own "stuff". But it is all your fault!! We have repeatedly asked you to write something. Our world is full of interesting librarians both living and dead. You have dealt with writing all your lives and have written hundreds, nay thousands, of reports, book reviews, articles and speeches. Where are you? But to this issue.

I persuaded Florence Cummings that her memories of her life at library school in 1929-30, her stint at Toronto Public Library to 1936 and her experiences at Orillia in 1935 as she began children's library services in that town were not only good reading but good history. Harry Campbell's comment on TPL's School Branch in his note on Newman Mallon's life ties in nicely with Florence's experience in extending public library service. Has the influence of public libraries and librarians on schools in the first half of this century ever been explored? Since so many of our members have been connected with school systems I thought the teacher's contract of 1891 with all its errors was fun to read. I am sorry the original itself could not be reproduced but I had to use a lighted magnifying glass to read it and the paper is so brittle it disintegrates when handled.

Enclosed is membership list and renewal notice and registration form for the annual meeting.

MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Although the majority of our present members have retired from service in librarianship, membership is open to others interested in the program of the Association as it refers to library history. Enquiries about membership should be directed to the Association's office:

Ex Libris Association
PO Box 44
552 Church St.
Toronto, ON
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"OUR MEMBERS WRITE..."

Jean Burness (March 1993)

"I look forward to each issue of the Newsletter. Keep up the good work!"

Pamela Hardisty (November 1992)

"I am sorry to have to miss the Association's Annual Meeting once again. As it happens I am leaving on Nov. 11 for a cruise around South America leaving from Valparaiso and will be returning to Ottawa only on Dec. 16. For the past 5 years I have been doing some work for the Library of Parliament on their Debates Reconstruction Project covering those years for which Debates were not published. However, I have now withdrawn from the project.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The eighth annual general meeting of our Association will take place on Thursday, November 4th, in Niagara Falls, Ontario, where the OLA and the New York Library Association are holding their joint annual conferences from November 3rd-7th. Once again we thank the Executive and members of the Ontario Library Association for accommodating us. The program for our Annual Meeting which is included with this issue of the *News* will deal with topics connected to the Niagara area and I hope that members will make the journey to attend and hear our interesting speakers.

Ms. Sheila Wilson, a retired librarian from the St. Catharines Public Library, will discuss her work in writing a history of it. She is active in local history projects and has also co-authored a history of St. Catharines, published by the *St. Catharines Standard* in conjunction with its 100th Anniversary: *St. Catharines, Canada's Canal City*.

Chris Raible, our afternoon speaker, is a writer, broadcaster and historical interpreter. His articles and reviews appear regularly in the *Beaver* and *Ontario History*. He has written for the *Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, the *York Pioneer*, and a variety of other publications. Some of you may have heard him previously as resident historian for CBC Radio's "Later the Same Day" program. His book *Muddy York Mud: Scandal and Scurrility in Upper Canada*, was published in 1992 by Curiosity House and distributed by Dundurn Press. Mr. Raible will have copies of his book with him (Special price \$18.00, tax included) and will contribute \$5.00 from each sale to the Association.

Also included with this issue of the *News* is a notice of proposed amendments to the Constitution. The major impetus for the amendments is the need to establish a new position, Vice-President/President Elect, which should ensure a regular succession to the office of President. The amendments were approved at the Board meeting of September 15th and will be submitted for ratification to the Annual Meeting on November 4th.

Among its other actions, the Board has approved a document prepared by the Past President, Betty Hardie, "Responsibilities of the Board", which outlines for the benefit of new Board members the duties and responsibilities of officers and board members.

In a continuing effort to attract new members the Association staffed a display table at the CLA Annual Conference in June in Hamilton. The President and other Board members were present to meet and talk to Conference attendees on three days during the Conference. The President also attended the Library History Interest Group meeting at the Conference and was invited to say a few words about Ex Libris and the Elizabeth Homer Morton Fund project.

In addition to these activities at the Conference, the Association sponsored a financial planning seminar on June 17th for librarians nearing retirement. Despite the fact that CLA had kindly sent notices for the seminar to Conference registrants, the attendance was disappointingly small.

I look forward to seeing you at Niagara Falls on November 4th.

(Note: The minutes of the AGM held on Nov 19, 1992 were included in *News* Number 13, Spring 1993)

Janette White, President

"OUR MEMBERS WRITE..."

Mary E. Silverthorn (April 1993)

"I very much enjoyed the last issue of the "News".

ABOUT MEMBERSHIP

Regular and sustaining membership at \$10.00 and \$20.00 respectively run for the calendar year. We like to receive memberships at the time of the Annual General Meeting in November for the following year (1994 memberships in October 1993). Life membership is \$200.00. Cost of printing and mailing two issues of the Newsletter in the year is approximately \$8.00. All work in composition, layout and stuffing envelopes is voluntary.

We do not send receipts for memberships. Members receive two Newsletters published in April and early October. We send reminders to people who have not renewed. People who join during the calendar year should receive two Newsletters for that year. Some people have paid for 1994 already. Please check your records before sending your membership.

The Annual General Meeting is usually held on a Thursday at the same location as the OLA Annual Conference.

Please send changes of address to the Secretary-Treasurer. We do not like to lose members.

FINANCIAL PLANNING SEMINAR FOR LIBRARIANS

The Annual Conference of the CLA was held this year in Hamilton, ON. This seemed to offer Ex Libris a great opportunity to sponsor, during the Conference, a seminar on some subject of interest and concern to librarians approaching retirement. If the program were well-received plans could then be made to do something of the same sort each year in the CLA conference city wherever held in Canada. In June 1994 the CLA city will be Vancouver.

This year with generous and enthusiastic cooperation from the CLA Conference Committee and the Hamilton Public Library, Ex Libris planned and executed the first such event in Room A, Hamilton Public Library, on Thursday June 17, 10:00 a.m. to noon. The event, in the format of a seminar was free to all. The topic was FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR LIBRARIANS; BASIC STEPS TO FINANCIAL SECURITY. It was aimed at librarians nearing retirement.

The seminar was conducted by Warren MacKenzie, C.A., assisted by Rebecca Szeto, C.A., both of Investors Group Financial Services, Inc., Toronto. As conducted by these two well qualified and widely experienced persons, the seminar was interesting, lively and extremely well focussed to the particular concerns of librarians. Moreover, Warren and Rebecca offered to give individual counselling and planning interviews, without obligation, to any librarians wishing to visit them, by appointment, at their Toronto office.

The seminar was well received by those present but the attendance was disappointingly small. We are trying to find out the reasons for this to help in further planning such events.

Gerald Prodrick
Membership Committee

"OUR MEMBERS WRITE..."

Anne Nyland (April 1993)

Please note Ex Libris News, Spring issue, Al Bowron's article:
Ruby Wallace left Niagara Falls and went to Nova Scotia to establish the second regional library, Cape Breton Regional Library (Not Saskatchewan). Alberta Letts founded the first region in Annapolis Valley Regional Library. (Isn't it amazing how easy it is to change history. The Editor)

IN CONVERSATION WITH FLORENCE (SCROGGIE) CUMMINGS

(The following paper is based on an interview conducted by Stan Beacock on July 20, 1889. When the transcript was reviewed it was decided that it would make more interesting reading if Florence herself edited it in the form of reflections. Following a brief **Biographical Sketch** which establishes her credentials and sets the stage, her recollections are divided into three sections because each segment seemed to shed light on separate aspects of Canadian public library history. In **Recollections of the University of Toronto Library School** she reminisces on her year there: in **Memories of Lillian H. Smith** she gives us a glimpse of Miss Smith's management style and her commitment to books and reading in society: finally in **Children's Services Come to the Orillia Public Library** she outlines how cooperation between a small Ontario town and a large city produced the encouragement needed to open that library's doors to children. The paper also introduces the relationship between public libraries and schools both in Toronto and Orillia, a relationship which has not been explored by either teachers or librarians. The editor)

Biographical Sketch

My maiden name, Scroggie, is Aberdeen Scottish. I had three sisters and two brothers all a great deal older than I was and when I was born, (as a joke) my father said I should have been a boy to even up the family. I was born at home as most babies were in those days, and the doctor, a friend of my father's, had no children. His name was Tom MacKenzie and the first time he came to see my mother and me Dad took him up to the bedroom and said, "How do you like your namesake Tom?" And that was it. I never heard my parents call me anything but Tom or Tommy in my whole life.

After 3 years at the University of Toronto I went to Library School in 1929, a member of its second class. From 1930 to 1936 I worked in the Toronto Public Library except for four months in Orillia. I moved to London when I married Dr. Gordon Cumming in 1936 and didn't work again until after our two sons were grown. Then I started at Teachers' College on Elmwood Ave. and I helped move that library to the new Elborn building on Western Road. I decided I needed a change so I phoned Dr. Crouch and said, "Do you need a librarian anywhere?" And he said, "Come down." So I worked for Eleanore Donnelly in the Children's Department for a couple of years in the late 1950s. When annexation came in 1961 and Byron became part of London Dr. Crouch said, "Why don't you go out and be the Librarian at the Byron Branch Library."

That was the first time I had worked with

adults and I had to pull up my socks a bit but I enjoyed it very much. It was a very busy job because I did all the children's book selection and story telling as well as all the adult work. I was the only librarian but I had a good helper—Alice Spicer. I had to read a great many book reviews to do the book selection for the adult department which was completely new to me. Fortunately I read a great deal myself so I had a good idea of the kind of material needed. I was lucky in getting an assistant who could do much of the children's work. She had been a public school teacher and had been a great reader to her children so that was luck. Mrs. Simmons was a wonderfully great help.

I never got to work in the new building which was opened in 1972 because I decided to take early retirement. I did have a model of the new library on a table for all to see and we missed quite obvious things even though we could lift the roof off. We never realized what a problem those two entrances were going to be with the two staircases. Who would ever have thought that streakers would run in the front door, down the front stairs, up the back stairs and out. Actually one entrance was kept shut because you couldn't supervise both with the staff we had. It was such a change from working in Toronto in the 1930s. There had been tremendous improvements but even so many could not even get in to the library for lack of a ramp.

I must say I had nothing but the nicest treatment wherever I worked. I have no

complaints whatever either in Toronto or London. My husband used to say, "I think you would have paid the library to let you work in it." I really loved my work. I hated to retire when I did but it was getting just a bit too much pressure. Byron's circulation was going up by leaps and bounds and I had to have more help and more space. Sometimes I did some weird things. When the Main Library took over the old church next door for storage, I just went in with some student help and pinched the shelves. I didn't even ask. We were so pushed for space we couldn't get the books on the shelves. It was just getting a bit much and that was the only reason I stopped when I did.

Recollections of the University of Toronto Library School

I recently found a clipping which my mother must have kept. It says "Libraries Course. The following have successfully completed the course for librarians' certificates", and then it gives a list of our names. I have no idea of its date, probably 1930. I didn't know what I wanted to be when I graduated from high school. All my older brothers and sisters were grown up, married and on their own so that I was luckier than they had been in that my father didn't have so many mouths to feed. He said "Go to university and see what you feel like doing." So I went but as an occasional student taking four subjects each year—just the ones I wanted—which was great. Two of my best friends were taking a full academic year and when one of them graduated, in 1928 I think, the University of Toronto took over the Library Training Course which had been given for some years by the the Toronto Public Library.

So my friend graduated in that certificate course in 1929 even though she had her BA. As soon as I heard about the library course from her I said that's for me. So I tried to get in and I found that, to get in, I had to have a science subject which I had not taken in my three years

at university. So the next year I took botany and then I was able to get into the 1929 class and graduated in 1930. Miss Barnstead was the Principal and Miss Bassam taught us Cataloguing at which I was a total loss. I don't know how she ever even spoke to me again. We ended up being good friends, which is a miracle. Classification, I was fine on that.

Dr. Locke taught us Administration. If you never met him you missed a treat. I just loved him. He wore those glasses that sit on your nose with a black ribbon, Oxford I think they are called. While he was talking his favourite trick was to let them fall and he would catch them in his hand. But his course in administration was the most unorganized thing I ever, ever listened to, and yet we learned a great deal. He didn't ever have a lecture prepared. A lot of people thought it was a total waste of time because he just sat and gossiped really about libraries, library work and his library experiences. But in a way it was a very good course because he had many years of experience and was a wonderfully good administrator. You couldn't have taken a note if your life depended on it.

Miss Smith, of course, taught us Children's Literature. She was very well organized and actually taught the course.

The only two people on permanent staff were Miss Bassam and Miss Barnstead. Dr. Locke and Miss Smith were brought in from outside and I think that's all we had. Although Miss Barnstead was very, what shall I say, strict and rather autocratic she had a heart of gold. She really was interested in her students. I can remember one very funny thing that happened. You're bad when you're young you know. Rose Fyleman, the English poet who wrote *There are Fairies at the Bottom of Our Garden*, came to Toronto and Miss Barnstead had a tea party for her. You see we used to have our classes at UTS (University of Toronto Schools) on the third floor. But she got the use of one of their

very comfortable sitting rooms for this nice tea for Rose Fyleman. Some of us thought that *The Fairies at the Bottom of Our Garden* was a little much but some of the girls were really entranced. Miss Fyleman wasn't young then but she was very charming and quite beautiful. I can remember one of the girls asked her if she really did believe in fairies and Miss Fyleman said she did. That got some of us in the back row in giggles.

As I said Miss Barnstead had a heart of gold. I remember one young lady from Alabama who had come to Canada to be with her father who had been seriously injured in the War. Unfortunately because of his injuries he fell into difficult times and she had to get a job to stay in school. The only job she could find was in Eaton's basement on Saturdays. It was an awful place to work with furnace pipes and no ventilation. She was an excellent student and when Miss Barnstead found out she said, "I won't have that. I will not allow her to do that." So Miss Barnstead arranged for her to work part time at the UTS Library.

Memories of Lillian H. Smith

I graduated in 1930 as a member of the second class at the U of T Library School and, in the fall, started in the Children's Department of the Toronto Public Library working for Miss Lillian Smith. My first job was the Assistant Children's Librarian to the new Runnymede Branch when it first opened. (See *Ex Libris News* Number 7, Spring 1990, for a note on the \$1.00 stamp issued by Canada Post in honour of the architect.) I worked at Riverdale and at Earls court for a long time as well as Boys and Girls House. Western Branch was my first solo branch.

Lillian Smith was a very remarkable person. She was always extremely nice to me and I have only one explanation for that. I had a lot of children's books read to me as a child so I knew children's books quite well. I really had remarkable luck in the books my older brothers and sisters gave me. That may have accounted

for Miss Smith thinking I'd be a good children's librarian.

She had a steel hand in a velvet glove but she had a very soft voice. Fortunately for her she hit it off very well with Dr. Locke, so what she wanted she usually got. She felt that her staff should never stop learning. Suddenly you would be called into her office and in her very quiet voice she would say, "You know Tommy, I just had a good idea and I think you might be interested in it. I've just arranged for a small group to come up to my apartment once a week. I think you would enjoy learning how to listen to music with Robert Finch." (Robert Finch was a professor of French at University College and a well-know poet and musician.) You didn't say no. You went. Another time she said, "I've arranged with Central Tech to give a course in poster making and I think maybe you would like to go to that." I didn't really want to but you just went. One of the younger instructors taught it—Doris McCarthy who is now a very well known Canadian painter. I was no good but some of the other girls were interested in sketching so bless Doris's heart, she got up early before work. We would sketch, have a cook out and then come back to work. My sketches were dreadful but it was fun. At that time I was working at Earls court with Miss Helen Carnahan.

Earls court had a big children's room with windows that were high up with shelves below them all around the room. In the lobby of the Library these high ceilings were roughcast and had beautiful murals by George Reid. Doris was still young and dying to have a one man show so Helen and I engineered it. We gave her a show in the Children's Room. She was doing small pictures then, maybe twelve by fourteen, and we hung them all around just above the shelves. Our story hour room also had plaster cast walls above the shelves. Doris said, "You know I've never done a mural. I'd love to put a

mural in your story hour room." We asked Miss Smith and Dr. Locke and then had Doris McCarthy working for us for a couple of months painting murals in our Story Hour Room. I hope they're still there.

Another time Miss Smith said, "You know some of you would enjoy a course in eurhythmics at the Conservatory." The instructor had been trained in France. I didn't enjoy that. I would have loved it if I had been with strangers. We were all self-conscious. This is the sort of thing Miss Smith did. It was remarkable. She had, as I said, an iron hand in a velvet glove. But it was very stimulating because she didn't let you get in a rut, believe me.

These activities were all done outside the normal work week. She wouldn't be able to get away with it now but it was all very interesting and we didn't pay anything (but we didn't get paid for the extra time either) and where could you get better instructors?

We worked regular hours, a seven or eight hour day. We always had a staff meeting at Boys and Girls House on Wednesday mornings. After the staff meeting we sometimes had special story telling sessions. We worked hard.

The Children's Departments were all closed in the evenings. This wasn't difficult to do since they were separate rooms in the branches. Although Miss Smith ran her own show she and George Locke did see eye to eye and I think she ran it pretty well on her own. We did story hours on Saturdays but we had a day off each week but I don't remember how we did it.

She was a lovely person if she was your friend. She was a wonderful person. But there were people with whom she did not see eye to eye. In fact there were people on her staff who didn't particularly like her but she had chosen them because she honestly thought they would be good children's librarians. We were a very varied lot in temperaments and backgrounds.

Some of the girls were not qualified but she knew they would be good with children and books.

My salary was \$1200 and I thought I was rolling. I don't think we took salary cuts during the depression but I don't remember getting much in the way of increases. Summer was vacation time. People didn't take winter vacations in the south or go on Caribbean cruises.

I had only been working a short time when I went to a library conference at Yale University in New Haven. I went with another Children's Librarian, Helen Chadwick and two Adult Librarians, Dorothy Falconbridge and somebody else. The four of us drove. I hadn't been working very long and I was surprised I was included. It was a lovely trip and I had a good time.

I thoroughly enjoyed working in the Children's Department but I think I was very lucky in my Toronto time. For instance when I worked at the Annette Street Branch I discovered there was a school up in the stockyards at St. Clair and those kids could never come away down to the Branch so I asked to start a library there. The school didn't even give us a room. I went up once a week and set up a table in the upper hall to mark the books in and out. It was very rewarding. Except of course, for the smell. You could sense it blocks away and the whole school was permeated with that smell all the time. Those kids were really poor. A lot of them were from other countries and some of them were very, very clever. Working for someone like Miss Smith was so rewarding because she would permit you to take a crack at new ways of providing library service to children.

When I returned to Toronto from Orillia in 1935 I worked with Rita Lewis in the School Branches. These were open once a week and run by the Public Library in schools which were not

near a branch library.

Marion Smaill, my puppeteering friend, also went once a week to Thistleton Hospital for Sick Children. She needed extra help and I asked if I could go. Miss Smith agreed. We rode out in the hospital bus which collected patients from Sick Kids Hospital every Wednesday afternoon than back again at about 4:30 or 5:00 o'clock. This library had been started by the John Ross Robertson family which had financed much of Sick Children's Hospital. Miss Smith offered the services of her staff if she could choose the books. Miss Elliott, the Supervisor of Thistleton, was a remarkable woman. She allowed the Children to have pets on the deck—rabbits, hamsters, etc.—and there were several dogs roaming the halls. Also a donkey and pony cart in the extensive grounds. We used to put a good, varied selection of books on a "banana wagon"—a sort of wheeled low cart for stretcher cases—and take them to all the wards. Sometimes we told a story or showed a picture book and then marked books out for any who wanted them. These children were nearly all long-term patients, many spinal diseases or recurring lung and respiratory cases. It was a sad but very rewarding interlude and one I wouldn't have missed for anything.

Miss Smith was an autocratic person rather than the rigid disciplinarian some have made her out to be. She had a very soft voice, one you could hardly hear but she was determined and if she liked an idea she would give you the green light and you could do it. I enjoyed working for somebody like that. A good example of her interest in providing library service to children no matter where they lived was the time I was seconded to the Orillia Public Library for four months in 1935.

Children's Library Services Come to the Orillia Public Library

The first I heard was when Miss Smith put her finger on me again and said, "I've been

asked to loan a librarian to start the Children's Room in Orillia, and I would like you to go for four months from December to May." I think this is the way it happened. There were two newspapers in Orillia, *The Packet and Times* with Mr. C.H. Hale as Editor and the other I think was called *The Advertiser*, Mr. Boyle, Editor. The original idea seems to have been proposed by Reverend David M. Rose who had been the Chairman of the Library Board. However Mr. Hale, who was a remarkable man, I feel deserves all of the credit. Although he had no children of his own he worked very hard on the idea. He was a very well read man, a gentle, genial person and he was determined that there was to be a children's library in Orillia. He came to Toronto and first talked it over with Dr. Locke. He had already raised money to buy books. With the help of Mr. Boyle I think and some of the other people in Orillia, he had talked the Board of Education into paying half a Librarian's salary if the Orillia Library would pay the other half. Apparently Dr. Locke passed him along to Lillian H. Smith and she said she would be glad to lend him a Librarian on one condition. "If you will let me choose the books you can have one of my Librarians". That was a very good thing, because she certainly knew good books for children which they probably didn't. So she chose the books and, after Christmas in December 1934 I was seconded to start the Children's Library in Orillia. To be truthful I don't know how I ever had the gall to do it.

My fiancé, Gord, drove mother and dad and me up to find a place to stay. That turned out to be perfectly lovely because it was in the home of one of my Library School classmates, Doris Noy who used to be a librarian in Windsor. Their home backed onto a park and I could see the Champlain Monument and the lake. I had a lovely little bed-sitting room with a desk.

I had never seen the Library that I was to

work in. It was the typical Carnegie building, red brick, wide front steps with cement walls on each side of the steps. When you went in the charging desk was in the middle. To your right there was a little railed area which was maybe a place to sit. I don't know why it was railed but it had a little gate. It was a small room with a huge plate glass window and, in front of the window, was the biggest Christmas cactus I had ever seen. It must have been three feet in diameter. Also on a tall, tippy pedestal of golden oak, everything was golden oak, sat a plaster bust of Shakespeare, the bald egg-headed one that I don't like. There was one section of black metal shelving, and that was it—the future Children's Room. It was unbelievable, to be truthful and, of course, there weren't many books. My first problem was to get rid of the cactus as fast I could because there wasn't room for me and one child. We moved it over into the adult section. It had a big window too.

The Librarian was a very sweet little lady named Miss Murphy and I honestly think we probably shortened her life by a good many years because it was absolutely something totally new to her. Every book in the Orillia Public Library was covered in brown paper with titles written in long hand on the spine. I don't know what they were being saved for but this was to save the books. It was depressing to say the least. Miss Murphy was really as cooperative as she could possibly be but I think it was all a terrible shock to her. However, that was the start.

I visited the schools every morning so it was through the schools that I reached the children. My notes tell the story rather succinctly so I will read from them. Under my heading Schools:

"If possible one period in each room once a week, preferably in the morning if the timetable can be conveniently worked out. (I tried to be tactful.) The first and second grades to be confined only to schools. (In

other words they weren't allowed to join the library. This wasn't my decision.) I plan to show one picture book and tell one story and then let them look at the books for the remainder of the period. Progressively longer periods and oftener with them than with the upper grades. For the third grade classes, it seemed to me to be an ideal library age so I will introduce them gradually. Possible do registration in the schools to save confusion in the library. In school periods give book talks and readings. For the fourth grades, same as the above except I won't need so many periods as the thirds because they are more accustomed to the library. They had been allowed to join. I will tell all the grades about the library and library behaviour and how to use reference books. Saturday story hour for all."

After I got there I discovered there was a very energetic high school principal who suddenly said, "If the Board of Education is paying half this woman's salary, I think we should get in on this." Miss Smith hadn't bargained on that. So I said, "All right. I'll try it". But this posed a bit of a problem because I would have to use the adult books. And that's how it started. Again from my notes:

"Matters were settled either with Mr. Hale, Acting Chairman of the Library Board, (or at the joint meeting of the Boards) and the Chairmen of the School Boards along with the school principals. They all cooperated fully and were most helpful. The principals each chose one day on which I was to visit their schools, preferably the day when the music supervisor was not there. This is to be done in the a.m. or early afternoon as I am to be at the library from four until six every day. The six o'clock closing was rather a blow but I agreed to come late on

Friday afternoons and stay the evening as so many of the collegiate pupils come in at this time. All the details of marking books and so forth are to be settled by Miss Murphy and myself."

I had a lot of work to do—make posters, mark out books, find page help, keep statistics, make a shelf list, provide a mothers' shelf and figure out how to contact them. I had a great deal of worry about space. And here again from my notes:

"Tentative school time tables: West Ward School, Central School, King Street School, the Separate School and the Collegiate. Things to be done: 1) Make new class signs (that is classification signs) preferably in colour and larger; 2) Get a consignment of poster paper, paints, pens and India ink; 3) Post up supplementary reading lists for both grade VIII and high school forms if possible; 4) Take the brown paper covers off the books; 5) Mention mending and mending material at some opportune moment; 6) Look after the desk; 7) Clean off the top of the cupboard and remove the plants if possible and 8) Plan a program for the third and fourth grades."

Here is my diary for January 7th to 12th, 1935:

"During the week I visited all schools, one each morning, in the first and second grades. I told them about our plan of showing picture books and explaining that they were loaned and they must have clean hands. I took books to them because they weren't going to be allowed to join the Library."

There was no public transportation so from January to May all that winter I walked all over Orillia and I carried tons of books. And it was cold!! Going home one night it was 30° below (Fahrenheit). I got my ear frozen one night. But I didn't really mind the walk. There was no other way to get home after all. And I took the

job. Again from my diary:

"In most schools all the teachers welcomed me warmly. In only one did they mention anything about interrupting and so forth. However I also did quite a lot of registering at the library which was a bit difficult as Miss Murphy didn't make cards ready ahead."

Incidentally I also was responsible for starting the change in the marking system in the adult department. Formerly the books and cards were stamped when going out with the date of issue rather than the date of return so that everyone had to do mental arithmetic to see if the books were overdue. Miss Murphy was quite pleased about that. Again:

"Wednesday evening I talked to lady teachers in the public schools. The group was rather small, about a dozen and they were very appreciative and interested. The subject of attractive textbooks came up. We talked about reference books a good deal that night..."

It's a long time ago but I remember it all very clearly.

"The registrations have held quite steady but must be nearly all in now I should say. The circulation has been good and on the whole steady. Of course it grows more interesting all the time as the children get accustomed to the books. A whole order of new books arrived very opportunely as the shelves were getting very low. But it has taken me ages to get them all pasted, written up and stamped." (You see I didn't have any help) "On Friday evening I was invited to attend a reading club of ladies. They are now engaged on *Testament of Youth*. Most of them are mothers so I have quite an opportunity for private conversations, as it were. Mr. Hale (Editor of *The Packet and Times* and proponent of the experiment) bobs in every now and then and seems pleased at the way

things are going. He is a little leery about allowing the collegiate pupils full access to adult shelves. I can't see what else I'm to do when I'm using adult books to talk about in the schools. He also wants me to bring up the matter of buying new cards when old ones are filled up. What a crazy rule! Saturday proved to be busy for about an hour or two and then quiet. I had about twelve turn up, untold and unwanted for a story hour. I hadn't announced a story hour but they came anyway. I'm going to talk to public school teachers' club."

I must say that I couldn't have had a happier time than I had in Orillia. The people were so friendly. I had never lived in a small town before but I loved it. I was entertained. I was asked to every conceivable association there was in the place, which was great for publicity. And as both of the editors of the papers were interested that was a great help which was no credit to me. It was all due to their interest but it did help a great deal. We got lots of publicity. Now these notes are from a report to the Library Board and the Board of Education:

"I think it is easily seen from the statistical reports that I have met with splendid cooperation on the part of Miss Murphy and of all the principals and teachers with whom I've come in contact." (They were wonderful really when I think back on it but, as I'm reading these notes and I simply cannot remember where the Board Meetings were held.) "It's no easy matter to arrange and rearrange timetables in schools, where at the best of times the timetable is crowded. However, I feel that the figures in this case do somewhat justify the changes. I hope in the next month or two they will show even more improvement. As far as the children are concerned, I've found them most interested and interesting. They are all eager for books and some of them seem even

hungry. Their wide variety of reading interests is shown at a glance in the figures in the report. Many of these books were the children's own choices as I myself was occupied at the desk with registrations and also marking the books in and out. (You see it was a one man show.) Of course, many were taken out by the interest that was aroused by the reading in the school classes. If only I had twenty copies of each book from which I read I might be able to satisfy the demand."

And that was probably an error in all of our thinking. The only way you can talk to a school class is about a book you like. So as it was new to them, the whole blooming class wants that book. And I only had one copy of each. Very tough.

"The Children are now allowed to choose any two books they care to regardless of class. I think the non-fiction figures prove that boys and girls, provided that they start at an early age, are quite willing and eager to read books on every conceivable subject. The poetry seems to be surprisingly popular. The class "W" or standard fiction (in the Lillian Smith Classification System for Children's books) includes all the classics such as Dickens, Scott, Barrie, Swift and so forth. Naturally a good proportion of these was taken out by the high school pupils for supplementary reading, but a fair number were read by boys and girls in the Grade 8 classes."

The timetables weren't too hard to do. I see that I gave a talk to a junior literary society of the Orillia Collegiate Institute. That was on Kipling. I was scared out of my wits to talk to that group. The Principal of the High School was Mr. Magill, a very charming man, rather sardonic, a dreadful tease. He and his wife were so kind to me and they undertook to teach me to play bridge. They didn't know what a job they

had! But he was just determined that I was going to go to the High School. I only went to Grade 9 and 10 I think. But somehow or another I felt that those kids in high school were listening to me because they felt they had to. It is a little harder to tackle teenagers when they haven't yet had any library experience. There was no high school library and only a handful of old books.

I gave them a talk about Kipling. I warned them about sets of books. I am amused when I read this over now. Because you see, there were a lot of sets of books. You know how they used to buy sets and it is enough to turn anybody off. I was told I could talk to the students and this was typically Mr. Magill. I said "What do you want me to talk about?" And he said, "Anything."

Puppets were very popular children's programs at the Toronto Public Library for a long time. Mary Baldwin had inherited from her family, an old Toronto family, a real Punch and Judy Theatre. Mary had grown up with them and she had a wonderfully good sense of humour. Mary and I did puppets a lot. She had a wonderful puppet play that she had written from one of Anne Parish's books called *Floating Island*. They were stick puppets based on the old Punch and Judy. She went around to all the Toronto branches and gave that show and I used to go and help her. Then later on, I've forgotten which branch, we worked out some shadow stick puppets, the oriental type. We did a lovely one on *The Just So Stories - How the Whale Got His Throat*. That was lots of fun because you know that old whale could come and swallow a fish in silhouette on the little screen. It didn't take much work. We also did one on *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Mary and I once took a show to Sarnia and stayed overnight. Mary did a lot of puppets and then Marion Smail, as she was then, came along and got a boy's group going. When I was at Western Branch in

Toronto, I had a puppet club there and we did *Puss in Boots* but the kids did them with help from me and a little bit of help with costumes.

Toward the end of my stay I thought, "Wouldn't it be great if I could show these Orillia kids what could be done with puppets." It took an awful lot of doing but it's wonderful what you can do when you're young. Again with Miss Smith's and Dr. Locke's permission, somehow Marion and I between us arranged for her Boys' Club to come to Orillia. She obtained permission of the parents and arranged transportation. At my end I arranged accommodation for them in Orillia. We were going to be allowed to use the lovely big empty downstairs room in the library, which had an outside entrance and should have been the children's room. As I remember it we had planned one show on Saturday morning and one in the afternoon. Little did I know that every single available child in Orillia decided he or she would like to come to see the show. About four o'clock in the afternoon mobs were still outside wanting to come in. It was really quite frightening. They had been very good at the show but there was this horde of unsatisfied characters outside. I had to go out onto those big cement slabs on top of the steps and simply harangue the crowd. I had to shout because they were restless and noisy until I made myself heard enough to say "I'm sorry. That's all. These people have to go home on the train. We can't have another show. It's done. You will have to go home." That's the last word I said for three days because I lost my voice completely. It was really quite astounding. I guess I sort of overshot myself.

While I was there I managed to convert one of the high school girls to be a librarian. She came down and went to Library School later. I don't know where she ended up.

One thing I know, the best story I ever used and the most effective reading I ever gave to a

class anywhere was to a Grade 8 class in Orillia. I've never forgotten it because I've never been able to do as well again. I suppose I can't explain it. I used a very nice book of Greek legends called *Children of the Dawn*, by a person called Buckley. It's probably out of print now. I read them *The Hunting of the Caledonian Boar*. I can remember the Principal, who was the teacher, stayed in the room and that always puts me off a bit. However he was a very sympathetic to the whole scheme so I just started in to read. And all of a sudden I began to realize I was having more than riveted attention. It was attention I had never felt before. I had a little sort of inkling how a successful actor might feel when he really grabs the audience. But I wasn't telling it; I was reading from a book. The strange thing was, it's a tragic story you know, I wondered if I was going to make it to the end without choking up. And when I did end I wondered how we were going to unwind. There was absolute, total, dead silence. And it was the strangest feeling because you didn't know how to come down from the peaks. But I never told or read such a successful story again. It was such a strange story and such a strange group, a grade 8, mixed boys and girls. But it got to them, somehow. So it was things like that that I won't easily forget.

And yet I have always felt that a story teller should not be an actor. When I was teaching library science and story telling at Elborn College I always said that you should under rather than over tell. Alice Kane who was a co-worker with me in Toronto and is an authority on story telling was an under stated story teller. I always advised that you were not acting you were telling a story. I based my feeling on Arbuthnot who was an authority on children's literature. She said, in one of her books, if you are telling a story and you come to a place where it says "And she curtsied" you don't

have to curtsied. You just say "And she curtsied". And that just stuck in my mind as a very good point. I think the tendency is to over act in story telling and I think the story may lose some of its punch.

You are not acting out a play, you are telling a story which is a different thing. But I enjoyed that part of my work in Orillia very much. Those children in Orillia hadn't had anything. They were so really hungry for it and they were wonderful—wonderfully good listeners.

I did a lot of homework at night. I learned the hard way. I would plan a program for each grade. I tried always to have some fiction, some non-fiction and usually some poetry and maybe that's why poetry went well. And then I realized I couldn't have a separate program for every single grade because I didn't have that many books to choose from. So I sort of had to rotate them. I would be surprised if we had as many as five hundred books altogether. I started with none. Miss Smith selected and sent them up in small quantities at a time. I had to paste them up, list them in the accession book, classify them and get them on the shelves.

I really doubt that we had as many as five hundred. They weren't a bad selection of books that I had to work with but it took a lot of homework in the evenings planning the week's program. I was entertained a lot and I was enlisted to talk to the Women's Canadian Club, the Kiwanis Club, the Doctors from the Mental Hospital—those children worried me to death. When they were taken for a walk they would pass the public library and I just wished I could do something for them but of course I couldn't. However, I think it was Dr. Horne who was the Head of Orillia Mental Hospital who asked me to talk to some of the Doctors. I can't remember all the groups I talked to.

My work seemed to have been appreciated and that helped. However I was a little disappointed that the Library Board decided they

could not continue the project when the Board of Education pulled out. Apparently they had thought of asking somebody to stay a little longer but times were tough and they decided that they couldn't. I was only hired for four months but everybody had hoped that it would go on. Well in fact, although my notes say they couldn't do this it did go on. They did hire a full time Children's Librarian. What is more they eventually fixed up that lovely downstairs room for a Children's Library.

I can't remember the name of the girl who followed me but she was a lot younger than I was. She wasn't there very long but, yes, the Children's Program at the Orillia Public Library did continue and I suppose my experiment was successful.

I don't remember how I got paid whether by Toronto or Orillia. I remember I paid my own board. I came home to Toronto occasionally on week ends by train. I had to work evenings quite often particularly after I got roped into the high school deal. The library was open on Friday nights until nine o'clock and occasionally I would sneak out at a quarter to nine so that I could make the last show at one of the two movie houses in Orillia, one in the basement of city hall and one in a regular theatre. By that time I was ready for it believe me. I worked a pretty long day, walking around to all of the schools carry bags of books. But it wasn't that bad. Rather it was very interesting and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

I had a very happy time there.

"OUR MEMBERS WRITE..."

Edith Jarvi (October 1992)

"I find the Newsletter very interesting. I am not contributing to the library world but am involved in my co-op. I admire Olga Bishop's continuing efforts despite her fall."

R. Brian Land (October 1992)

"In the spring of 1993, the Ontario Legislative Library will be publishing a history of the Legislative Library (1792-1992) by Fiona Watson, a reference librarian on the staff."

Roberta Weiner (November 1992)

"Sorry I cannot come to the Annual Meeting. Reading the fall newsletter with chuckles at J. Talman's address."

A FASCINATING NOTE

From *The Toronto Star* May 8, 1993: "101-year-old a walker and a talker", George A. Johnson, for 20 years in his private law practice, became chief librarian at Osgoode Hall in 1939. He retired from that job in 1965. He was a long-time active member of the Toronto Chapter of the Special Libraries Association.

ADVENTURES OF A RETIRED LAW LIBRARIAN: WRITING A BIOGRAPHY OF SIR JOHN GEORGE BOURINOT, by Margaret A. Banks

My initial interest in Sir John George Bourinot related to two of his books, *Parliamentary Procedure and Practice ... in the Dominion of Canada*, published in 1884, and *A Canadian Manual on the Procedure at Meetings of Municipal Councils, Shareholders and Directors of Companies, Synods, Conventions, Societies and Public Bodies Generally*, published early in 1894. There is much misunderstanding about these two books, one often being mistaken for the other. To confuse the matter further, there are really three books, because later in 1894 an abridged version of the *Canadian Manual* was published, omitting the sections on municipal councils and church synods. It is the abridged version, together with later editions of it, that has become known as *Bourinot's Rules of Order*, a title not adopted until sixteen years after the author's death. The results of my research in this area, dealing with the various editions and reprints of *Parliamentary Procedure and Practice* and the *Canadian Manual*, were published in an article entitled "New Insights on Bourinot's Parliamentary Publications," in the Spring 1992 issue of the *Canadian Parliamentary Review*.

Meanwhile, however, I had become interested in other aspects of Bourinot's life and had discovered that many of the biographical sketches published about him were inaccurate. Aware that a biography of Bourinot would be included in Volume XIII of the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (dealing with prominent Canadians who died during the first decade of the twentieth century), I offered to write it. My offer was accepted, and this was my first project after taking early retirement in the summer of 1989. Probably because of funding cuts at the DCB, volume XIII has not yet been published. I understand that it is to appear in 1994.

A brief summary of Bourinot's life may here be appropriate. Born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, in 1836 (not 1837, as stated in most biographical accounts and library catalogues), he was privately educated by a tutor in Sydney, and in 1854 entered Trinity College, Toronto. In spite of a brilliant academic record there, he dropped out at the end of his second year in 1856. He began a journalistic career with the *Toronto Leader*, but returned in the fall of 1858 to Sydney, where he entered into articles of clerkship with a local lawyer. This did not last long—he is said to have dreaded a life of professional routine. His activities for the next year or so are uncertain—there is evidence to suggest that he spent a short time in Quebec City and also in the United States, probably in the Boston area. In 1860, he settled in Halifax, where, in partnership with Joseph Crosskill, he founded and edited a newspaper, *The Halifax Reporter*. The following year he also became chief official reporter of the debates of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly. Official reporting was discontinued at the beginning of the 1862 session, but Bourinot still reported the debates for his newspaper. Official reporting resumed in 1864 and Bourinot was again appointed Reporter To The House, a position he held through the last session before Confederation in 1867. At that time he also left *The Halifax Reporter* and, soon afterwards, returned again to Sydney, where he seems to have been engaged mainly in freelance writing during the next two years.

In 1869 Bourinot moved to Hull, Quebec, on being appointed to the vacant English clerkship in the Senate. (Why he chose to live in Hull when the Senate offices were in Ottawa is not known. Perhaps living accommodation was less expensive in Hull.) The following year he was given additional responsibilities as shorthand