

# ELAN Ex Libris Association Newsletter

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## Annual Get-Together

### The Program

#### Changes in Reference Due to Technology: From Gutenberg to Gates

Vivienne Monty, Senior Librarian,  
York University

and

#### The Importance of Story in an Automated World

Ken Settingington, Children and Youth Advocate  
for Library Services, Toronto Public Library

**Monday, November 7, 2005**  
**9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**  
**North York Central Library**  
5120 Yonge Street, Toronto  
(North York Centre subway station)  
Cost: \$25 (includes lunch)

Registration forms with more information were mailed to members separately.

*For further details, contact Frances Davidson-Arnott (416) 282-1864*

*Frances.Davidson-Arnott@SenecaC.on.ca*

## Library Book Rate Update

The Canadian Library Association (CLA) welcomed the July 22 announcement by Canada Post that the Library Book Rate (LBR) will continue for at least one year past its March 31, 2006 expiration date. Says CLA President Barb Clubb, "We look forward to further announcements on the funding mechanisms and rates". CLA has been actively lobbying for the continuation of the Library Book Rate and has given at least 18 national, regional and local media interviews on the subject.

While CLA is pleased with this announcement, it will be working with the Minister and officials to ensure that the next stage of the Library Mail Rate is fully supported financially, is true to the core objectives of the current program and is updated to reflect 21st-century library service by extending the Rate to all library materials, including video-tapes, CDs and DVDs.

For more details, check these postings:

[http://www.cla.ca/issues/lmr\\_update\\_july\\_22\\_2005\\_2.htm](http://www.cla.ca/issues/lmr_update_july_22_2005_2.htm)  
[http://www.cla.ca/issues/lbr\\_update\\_july\\_20\\_2005.htm](http://www.cla.ca/issues/lbr_update_july_20_2005.htm)

Canada Post plans to implement a new automated system to streamline the Library Book Rate program. Stay tuned for further details on this initiative through the CLA website.

CLA's other major advocacy files include the revisions to the Copyright Act, attempting to secure long-term expanded funding for the Community Access Program in public libraries, developing a nation-wide network of equitable library service for print-disabled patrons, and expanding library service for aboriginal people. □

– From information provided by CLA

# News From The Ottawa Public Library



BY MARIE F. ZIELINSKA

OPL continues to lead a very intense life, and its problems and successes are regularly making their way to Ottawa newspapers. Fortunately, budget time passed fairly quietly this year. Perhaps Ottawa City Council finally accepted the notion that Ottawans love their libraries and are prepared to fight for their survival using all available resources. The small cut in the budget (around \$300,000) has been absorbed by the Library without harming the quality of services delivered. Congratulations and thanks to management and staff for their efforts in making things run smoothly and improving services against all odds.

The most important improvement to OPL was the introduction, by the end of June, of an improved Lirico electronic catalogue. The new version allows quicker navigation, easier location of desired material and provides patrons with book reviews, summaries, first-chapter excerpts and pictures of book covers for many titles. The new system also allows users to create and save lists of books they wish to read and lists of books already read.

Another June milestone was the opening, in cooperation with CNIB, of a new service called Visunet Canada Partners Program (VCP), which provides all print-disabled OPL patrons with access to the vast resources of the CNIB Library.

Visunet includes the following components: VisuCAT, the online catalogue of CNIB; VisuNEWS, a service providing Internet access to daily English and French newspapers; and CNIB's Digital Library and Children's Discovery Portal, which includes Internet chat and games.

Thanks to financial support from Industry Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Culture and the Office of Francophone Affairs, OPL has begun a partnership with Toronto Public Library to produce a French-language interface and add French content to the Virtual Reference Library, a subject-based Internet information source focusing on Canada and Ontario. Its web address is [www.virtualreferencelibrary.ca](http://www.virtualreferencelibrary.ca)

Congratulations and best wishes to Doug Robinson, an ELA member who retired in June from Library and Archives Canada, after 35 years of work in libraries. □

## Library Launches Rent-A-Gay

SUBMITTED BY LELAND WINDREICH

(Malmoe, Sweden) A library in a small community in southern Sweden has started a novel program to promote diversity and break down stereotypes.

In addition to lending books on different cultures, the Malmoe Library is now offering people.

The living library project is called Borrow a Bias. It allows townsfolk to borrow any of nine different minority people. Borrowers have 45 minutes to confront the prejudices in the library's outdoor cafe.

"You sometimes hear people's prejudices and you realize that they are just uninformed", said Ulla Brohed, the chief librarian and the person who conceived the idea.

The group includes a lesbian, a gay, an imam, a Muslim woman, a journalist, an animal rights advocate, a Dane, a Romany or Gypsy, and one other to be announced later.

Although Sweden has civil rights protections for gays and recognizes same-sex couples with partner rights, many Swedes, especially in smaller communities, have little knowledge of gay issues, including the desire to marry and adopt children.

"It's a fun idea. Prejudice is something you have when you don't know each other. If you confront each other, then the prejudice is broken down," said Lilian Simonsen, the Dane who will be on loan.

A similar project is already underway in Copenhagen, Denmark.

*Reprinted with permission from [www.365gay.com/newschannel/newschannel.htm](http://www.365gay.com/newschannel/newschannel.htm) □*

## Canadian Library Association Conference Papers

The keynote addresses and papers from the CLA 2005 conference, held in Calgary, are available on CLA's website. Check [www.cla.ca/resources/cla2005.index.htm](http://www.cla.ca/resources/cla2005.index.htm)

## Members, Tell US What You Want Ex Libris to Do!

The Board and Executive of Ex Libris Association want to hear from you. The Board meets at least three times a year, usually in January, April or May and September. The Executive meets between Board meetings.

If you have issues, concerns, ideas, or questions you would like the board to consider, please let us know. This is a grassroots organization and we encourage your participation.

Send us your thoughts!

BY E-MAIL TO: Frances.Davidson-Arnott@SenecaC.on.ca

or BY REGULAR MAIL TO:

Ex Libris Association  
c/o Faculty of Information Studies  
University of Toronto  
140 St. George Street  
Toronto, ON M5S 3G6

## Sheila Egoff: Pioneer Canadian Children's Literature Critic and Professor of Children's Literature

BY JUDITH SALTMAN

Sheila Agnes Egoff, Officer of the Order of Canada, died on May 22 in her 88th year, at Vancouver B.C. Her multiple careers as children's librarian, professor of children's literature, and critic and advocate of children's literature had a profound impact on the development of academic teaching and criticism of children's literature, on the growth of Canadian publishing for children, and on Canadian public library service to children. Born in 1918 in Auburn, Maine, she grew up in Galt (now Cambridge) Ontario. Sheila's childhood in rural Ontario was marked by avid

public library use and exposure to the children's books of the early years of the twentieth century.

Her lifelong career as a scholar and critic of children's literature, and pre-eminent promoter of Canadian children's literature in particular, began at the Galt Public Library. After graduating from the University of Toronto and qualifying as a librarian at the University of London (England), she worked at the Children's Room of the Toronto Public Library. There, Sheila Egoff was a disciple of Lillian Smith, a towering figure in early children's librarianship and a pioneer critic of children's literature. Sheila learned her philosophies of quality library service and stringent evaluation of children's literature under Smith.

Sheila was instrumental in bringing the famed Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books to the Toronto Public Library and was that collection's first curator. Her experience in serving the reading needs of contemporary children was balanced with learning about four centuries of writing, publishing and illustrating books for children.

After a short period on the staff of the Canadian Library Association, Sheila was recruited to join the faculty of the School of Librarianship at the University of British Columbia soon after its establishment in 1961. She was the first full-time tenured professor of children's literature at a Canadian university. Her impassioned and scholarly teaching of children's literature and children's library services formed and influenced a generation of children's librarians. On her retirement as professor emerita in 1983, she had sent a generation of enthusiastic promoters of children's books and reading from Vancouver to libraries across Canada, the United States, Japan and elsewhere. They applied her rigorous message, "Only the best is good enough for children", by writing children's books, storytelling, practising and administering children's services in public and school libraries, and contributing to the cultural life of their communities.

Sheila Egoff was the first critic of children's literature from Canada to be recognized internationally. Her contribution to children's literature scholarship is broad ranging, involving many interests and approaches, from Canadian and international children's literature to scholarly bibliography of early and rare children's book collections. Sheila wrote seminal works of children's literature scholarship for over 50 years, beginning in the 1950s, a time when little serious scholarship was available and children's literature was not respected in the academy. Through her teaching, advocacy and scholarship, she brought the present acceptance and recognition of children's literature as a legitimate scholarly discipline into being.

Sheila's groundbreaking 1967 *The Republic of Childhood: A Critical Guide to Canadian Children's Literature in English* was the first monograph on the subject. Her advocacy for quality international standards in the beginning years of Canadian children's literature

*continued on page 4*

## Sheila Egoff

*continued from page 3*

and publishing in the 1960s and 1970s had a profound influence on the development of this country's literature for children. She worked closely with other advocates of Canadian children's literature and publishing for children, such as William Toye, Oxford University Press' editorial director. She advocated tirelessly for a children's literature division at the National Library of Canada.

Her historical and bibliographic work is meticulous, combining book history and literary analysis with historical, analytical and descriptive bibliography. It includes *Children's Periodicals of the 19th Century* and two annotated catalogues of holdings in the Arkley Collection of Early and Historical Children's Literature, which she attracted to the University of British Columbia Library.

She received numerous awards for her writing. Her literary analysis of contemporary international children's literature, *Thursday's Child*, won the Ralph R. Shaw American Library Association Award for library literature. As the chief editor of three editions of *Only Connect: Readings on Children's Literature*, Sheila established this resource of critical essays on children's literature as a respected and fundamental choice in courses in children's literature worldwide. Her study of fantasy, *Worlds Within: Children's Fantasy from the Middle Ages to Today*, is an important source in its field.

Sheila's high regard in the children's literature community was evident in the many honorary lectureships and awards she received. She was the first Canadian appointed as a judge for the international Hans Christian Andersen Awards for children's literature. As a highly admired lecturer, she gave speeches in Japan, Australia, throughout Canada and the United States. Professor Egoff received honorary doctorates from three Canadian universities, as well as the

University of Utah's 5th Landau Award for Excellence in Teaching Children's and Young Adult Literature. She was the only children's literature professor to be honoured as an officer of the Order of Canada.

Other public honours include the International Board on Books for Young People's Claude Aubry Award, the Alberta Provincial Council of the International Reading Association's Award, and awards from the University of Toronto and the Canadian Library Association, among others. In 1983 a symposium on Canadian children's literature was held in Vancouver to honour Sheila's scholarship and teaching. In the 1980s, the British Columbia Book Prizes established an annual award for children's literature that bears her name.

Sheila developed the first Pacific Rim Conference on Children's Literature, at the University of British Columbia in 1976, one of the first children's literature conferences held in Canada. The conference continues to this day.

Sheila Egoff's graduates include two Governor-General's-Award-winning writers of children's books, Kit Pearson and Sarah Ellis, and other writers of children's books. Those who studied with Sheila became, in their turn, mentors for another generation of children's writers and librarians, teaching at universities and writing critically on children's literature.

Upon her retirement in 1983, Sheila had developed five graduate courses in children's literature and library services. Her early achievements in this program had

an influence two decades later in the founding of Canada's first multidisciplinary Master of Arts in Children's Literature program at the University of British Columbia.

Sheila's life commitment to children's literature continued unabated until the months leading up to her death. Retirement did not stop the flow. Following her retirement, she published six books on children's literature. In 2004 Sheila received the Anne Devereaux Jordan Award from the Children's Literature Association for her lifetime contributions to the field of children's literature as a librarian, teacher and scholar. A mere month before her death, despite health difficulties and blindness, she completed her final book, *My Life with Children's Books*, to be published posthumously this fall.

Sheila possessed a gift of friendship. She was a great hostess whose parties were legendary. Her colleagues and students remained her lifelong friends, taking delight in her warmth, generosity, and wit. The people whose work and lives were touched by her vision and presence remember her with gratitude and praise.

Predeceased by her brother George and sister-in-law Luella, she is survived by their sons, her nephews John, Brian and Christopher Egoff and by John's wife and children, all of Cambridge, Ontario, as well as her devoted caregiver Tracey Wowk. Donations to the scholarship already established in her name may be sent to the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia. □

### AGM Date Remains Same

At the 2004 AGM a motion was presented to move the Annual Get-Together and the AGM to coincide with the Ontario Library Association's Superconference. After discussion, the matter was put to a vote, and the motion was defeated. The Annual Get-Together and AGM will continue to be held on the First Monday in November.

– Peter Mutchler, President



## Out in BC-Land



BY HOWARD OVEREND,  
SALMON ARM, B.C., August 8, 2005.

### The Little Engines that Could

Buying power we didn't know we had: Canadian libraries purchase a whopping est. 2.7 billion dollars of goods and services annually, nearly as much as Canadians spend on children's clothing (\$2.8 billion) and more than on spectator sports (\$2.2 b) and cosmetics (also \$2.2 b). Wowee! Way to go!

This data is from the Canadian edition of *Libraries – How They Stack Up*, a report prepared by the On-Line Computer Library Center (OCLC), a worldwide library co-op based in Dublin, Ohio with its Canadian office at Chambly, Que. It purports to show libraries as economic engines, or in my words, the little engines that could.

### Salmon Irony

An unusual story of loss and tribute comes from Salmon Arm where Andrea Deakin, retired teacher and a longtime lover of children's literature, is building a collection of children's books in memory of her husband Dr. Barry Deakin, former Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada and head of the radiology department of the Shuswap Lake General Hospital. Dr. Deakin died in 2000.

Ms. Deakin, winner of the BC Library Association's Keith Sacre Library Champion award in 2002 for her contribution to children's literature in Canada and recipient last year of an honorary degree of doctor of letters (D. Litt.) from Okanagan University

College for her advocacy of children's literature and literacy, has been a reviewer and critic of children's books since 1971.

The Dr. Barry Deakin Memorial Collection of some 3600 titles, donated by Ms. Deakin, is housed in pristine condition for reference and study use in the library of Okanagan College, Salmon Arm campus. The former Okanagan University College was split into UBC Okanagan and Okanagan College in 2004.

Irony. This underused treasure of children's books, unique in BC-Land's interior and continually growing, is virtually inaccessible to local children who use the local branch of the Okanagan Regional Library instead.

### Two Libraries, A Tale of

The public libraries of Cranbrook in BC-Land and Coeur d'Alene in northern Idaho compete for bragging rights in February each year as to whose readers read the most books in that month. In 2004, Coeur d'Alene (pop. 36,000) beat Cranbrook (18,500) 23,231 items to 21,508 (not counting magazines and newspapers but including audio books).

This year was a dramatically different story, with Cranbrook's readers rallying to a record of 34,795 books read to Coeur d'Alene's 28,352, also a record for that city.

To date, Cranbrook has won the reading challenge trophy five times to Coeur d'Alene's three since the event began in 1997. The rival reading cities are in Kootenay country in BC-Land and in Kootenai country in Idaho, some 240 km or 150 miles apart.

To spur readers on, there were weekly draws during February and a concluding Grand Prize with adult winners in each city receiving mini-vacations in each other's city. There were also prizes in youth and children's categories.

P.S. The name Coeur d'Alene literally means "heart of awl", and derives

from a legend that French-speaking fur traders were so impressed with the sharp trading practice of local Indians that they called them the Coeur d'Alenes (hearts as sharp as awls).

### Plus Ça Change...

The more things change, the more they are the same. In ancient times when I was at the Peace River branch of the Library Development Commission in Dawson Creek, I wrote Paper 14 of a 20-week correspondence course for community librarians for BC-Land's Department of Education. My topic was publicity for small libraries.

That was in the sixties. I don't know how many years the course lasted but a lot of aspiring community librarians took it and were awarded certificates after successful completion of the work followed by a hands-on week of instruction at the UBC library school. The prized certificate entitled their library board to receive a small boost in its annual operating grant from the Commission.

Some time ago the Public Library Services Branch updated the course and renamed it the Community Library Training Program. As expected, mail correspondence gave way to online Internet work, and material was expanded to include eight courses of instruction each lasting up to four months. Completion of four core courses and successful work on three graded assignments and a test entitles the trainee to – guess what? – a certificate. And possibly a salary boost from the local library board by way of recognition.

### InterLINK Wins Big at CLA

Rob Tiessen, head of accession services at the University of Calgary's library and this year's convener of the Canadian Library Association's Resource Sharing Interest Group, has awarded the 2005 CLA/OCLC award for resource sharing achievement to Public Library InterLINK, a group of

## Friends of the Ottawa Public Library: An Amalgamation Success Story



BY MARIE F. ZIELINSKA

The new city of Ottawa was officially born on January 1, 2001 after two years of hard work by the transition team. Its task was to streamline the work of 13 independent municipalities varying in size, type (city and rural) and profile of inhabitants into one smoothly functioning municipal unit.

Individual libraries had also to be incorporated into one system with 33 branches. Thanks to the hard work of all the CEOs under the leadership of Barbara Clubb, the present city librarian, the process went so smoothly that patrons did not even notice organizational changes. The only problem represented Friends of the Ottawa Public Library. Being an organization of citizens concerned with providing support to individual libraries, they had to undergo a separate process of amalgamation.

At the time of amalgamation, there were three Friends groups legally incorporated as non-profit organizations and several groups that acted under the name "Friends". As a first effort to create one integrated association, the then Ottawa Friends' board invited representatives from the other groups to sit on the Ottawa board. The first to join was a Friend from Nepean and, in the second year, more representatives joined from other parts of the newly amalgamated City of Ottawa: three from Nepean, one from Cumberland in the east end of the

new city and one from the west, Stittsville. This gave the board a composition that represented the various regions of Greater Ottawa.

During this transition period, discussions were underway concerning ways and means of becoming one Friends organization. However, certain members feared that the former Ottawa group would simply swallow other organizations and lose the local flavour of library branches in outlying areas of the new city. The first round of discussions broke down, but several board members from the different groups continued to support the idea of an amalgamated organization with one strong, unified voice. Discussions reopened thanks to the efforts of a former employee of the Nepean Friends, who gained a community coordination position with the amalgamated city library. During this second round of discussions, people noted that the amalgamated library benefited the small, rural libraries in particular.

A real breakthrough brought the concept of local committees. It was decided that existing groups would continue to operate bookstores and several other activities pretty much the same way as they were doing before, but would report to one board rather than several. After retaining a certain percentage of profits for their own purposes, they would give the remaining money to the Board. The Board, in turn, would give the money to the library system according to its "wish list", for items that could not be accommodated in the general budget. The three incorporated organizations of Friends (Ottawa, Nepean and Cumberland) signed the legal documents in the fall of 2002. The new Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association was legally constituted under one bylaw effective January 2003. The Board presently consists of 12 voting members, a liaison person from the Library and the city librarian, who attends meetings whenever possible. In its first year, the new Association resolved administrative matters, approved some operational rules, designed a logo, printed official stationery, prepared publicity brochures,

etc. The second year was devoted mainly to establishing partnerships and enlarging the membership base, as well as to developing a public relations campaign to increase OPL awareness in the community. The Board was quite successful in its efforts in all the above areas. For the first time, a partnership was implemented with an English-language commercial bookseller, which named the association as a sponsor. This sponsorship brought in \$10,000 in royalties and a donation of over \$15,000 worth of new discounted books for the OPL's collection. This year the same program will be repeated and a similar arrangement with a French-language bookseller is planned. The Friends participated in the Riverside South Community Give-'n-Take day, gathering in hundreds of books for resale at the Friends stores.

This March a fourth local committee joined OPL Friends. The group is an outgrowth of a citizens group originally formed in 2004 to save the Vanier library branch from closing. They later renamed themselves Signets Vanier Bookmarks and conducted their first successful book sale.

The Friends net yearly, through their various fundraising activities, around \$150,000 for OPL. This year financial support was given to three main areas of activities: first, to enhance services to children, to sponsor special programs like the 1, 2, 3 Read with Me program for toddlers, the awesome Authors Youth program and acquisition of a special book collection for teens. The second area of support is to acquire books in heritage languages and the third to enhance accessibility of library services for all Ottawa citizens, regardless of disability and geographical location.

Trying to evaluate what OPL Friends have achieved since the amalgamation, any observer would agree that it was an excellent move, successfully implemented in record time. Amalgamation augmented the visibility of Friends of the OPL, enhanced its bargaining ability with City Hall and strengthened its role as library advocate. □

# Why I Became a Librarian

BY ERIK J. SPICER

My first visit to the Ottawa Public Library's Boys and Girls House, was as a young child in the 1930s, and my reception was such – so many detailed questions beyond my ability answer in order to establish my “right” to visit – that I never returned to the Public Library until driven by desperate need.

You see, the Reference Room housed the only copy of Jane's Fighting Ships, and it alone contained three view drawings of the ships of which I wanted to build models. Unfortunately, I was summarily ordered out following a very loud shout of “You are ruining that book!” Though I tried to explain that I was carefully tracing the plans on onion-skin paper with a soft pencil – high technology in those days – and pressing no harder than necessary as otherwise I'd pierce the fragile paper, I was not listened to and retreated from the library, not only again dissatisfied but resentful. (I did not return again until the summer following graduation from Toronto's Library School and before entering the School of Graduate Studies to begin an MA in history.)

Given this most unpleasant introduction to the world of libraries, how did I ever become a librarian and why?

Well, fortunately, I discovered a real library, one with good new books and a friendly, helpful staff in the Kenmore, New York, Senior High School – which I had the good fortune to attend for almost two years when my stepfather, an American serving as an officer in the RCAF, moved us to the Buffalo area in 1941. This library enriched my world, became my second home, and showed me what a good library should be and could do. After the war, of course, the main library at the University of Toronto and the old and justly famous Reference Room of the Toronto Public Library at College and St. George Streets further

impressed good libraries on my mind, and I spent many happy and productive hours within them. (Later, while attending library school, I happily worked in the Reference Room not only for money – 50 cents an hour – but for the interesting practical experience. My required practice work had been at the Hamilton Public Library under the redoubtable Freda Waldon.)

Following my discharge from the RCAF “by reason of reduced requirements” and before entering the army where “requirements” were apparently increasing, I just had time for an elaborate aptitude test available to veterans. It was a sobering experience, and there was considerable excitement at the results. I was called before the director of the Ontario College of Education – a friend of the family – and told that my results displayed the greatest difference he had ever seen “in all his years” between ambition and aptitude among anyone tested. I thought I wanted to be a bush pilot, but my mechanical and arithmetical aptitudes ruled resolutely against it. No great problem. I was destined to join the infantry, anyway.

On my formal discharge from the army, when WW2 finally ended, I entered Toronto's Rehabilitation School for Veterans (now Ryerson University) to complete some high-school courses and to be sure I hadn't lost the urge and ability to study before enrolling in university.

Entering the University of Toronto, nominally in Victoria College, in the ex-service summer session of 1946, I still didn't know what I wanted to do – though I was giving this some thought now that I realized I had a future.

Fortunately, during the summers of 1947 and 1948, I worked primarily as a brakeman and switcher on the “railways” of the Consolidated Sand and Gravel Company in Paris and Waterford, Ontario. And, in Paris, there was a pretty little public library, amazingly well stocked, run by a competent and friendly librarian. It then occurred to me that the relatively tranquil life of

a small-town librarian, with an adequate salary – perhaps eventually rising to as much as \$10,000 yearly – in pleasant surroundings, doing useful and satisfying work might be a rewarding career.

Two other career possibilities were also considered. Meteorology promised a solitary sojourn in the Arctic that appealed to me after my military service, but I was considered to be insufficiently equipped mathematically. Forestry was also appealing after the outdoors of army life and because I was then so fit. But the elderly man who interviewed me said there was “no future” in forestry and I should try something – anything – else. Thus, thrice thwarted – no bush pilot, no meteorologist, no forester – librarianship did not look so bad.

Time for another aptitude test. This one, administered by the YMCA, resulted in a four-page report, including the summary that listed three fields of possibilities: Literary, Social welfare, Art. The first category included editing, “Reporter...Librarian, Public relations, especially in a government department” and Radio programming. Social welfare included “Teacher...Social worker...Foreign trade service”. Art included Art teacher,...Art gallery or museum worker”.

Prudently, I decided to investigate further. In Ottawa I was granted an interview with the formidable, but charming, Elizabeth Homer Morton, the Executive Director of the then-new Canadian Library Association. With some diffidence, I inquired if there was any place for a young man in this profession. Sensibly, she answered, her eyes twinkling – I can see them yet – “That depends on the young man”. I confessed that I was the guilty one, and she said, “I think there might be”.

Shortly thereafter, I enrolled at the University of Toronto Library School. Much of the rest can be found in the *Canadian Who's Who*. ◻

*Erik Spicer is Parliamentary Librarian Emeritus and lives in Ottawa. – Ed.*



## Ethel Auster, 1942-2005

BY NANCY WILLIAMSON

Ethel Weiss Auster, AB, MLS, Ed.D, professor at the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto, passed away unexpectedly in her sleep on July 1. She was born in Montreal and graduated from Outremont High School in 1959, attended McGill University and, after two years in Cambridge, England, resumed her undergraduate education at Boston University, going on to Simmons College, where she received her MLS. Upon graduation she was librarian at Brookline High School for two years.



Following the birth of her son David, she returned to Toronto, where she worked first as a research librarian at the Toronto Board of Education and then as a librarian at OISE/University of Toronto. While at OISE she began studies for her doctoral degree and, during the completion of her dissertation, she was appointed assistant professor of library science at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. A year and a half later, she returned to Canada to join the University of Toronto at what was then the Faculty of Library Science.

Ethel's passing is a tremendous loss to her friends, colleagues, and the University of Toronto at large, as well as to Canadian librarianship. For 23 years she was an esteemed and well-loved professor at what became the Faculty of Information Studies. In the course of her career she was both teacher and mentor to hundreds of students. For 15 years, she served as the Faculty's chair of doctoral studies, guiding students through their programs – providing insight, research direction and practical advice that made her a legend across the country. A brave, forthright and committed faculty member, she was a mainstay of the Faculty throughout a number of its major changes and developments. Internationally known, she participated actively in the profession as a frequent speaker at a variety of North American conferences, including those of the Canadian Library Association and the American Society for Information Science and Technology, as well as involving herself in IFLA.

Ethel's courses and her research dealt with libraries, management and information use – covering such topics as the information-seeking behaviour of managers, the evaluation of online services, information dissemination, the retrenchment and downsizing of large academic libraries and, most recently, the training and development needs of librarians.

The recipient of many awards, in June Ethel was presented with the Miles Blackwell Award for Outstanding Academic Librarian by the Canadian Association for College and University Libraries for her "outstanding national and international contribution to academic librarianship and library development". As noted in the citation, she "demonstrated this achievement through her formidable research and publishing record, in which her projects support the investigation of issues related to academic librarians and academic libraries". The award also lauded her as a spokesperson and leader who actively promoted academic libraries and librarianship in Canada and for the significant mentoring role she played in the careers of numerous academic librarians.

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## Out in BC-Land

*continued from page 5*

17 public libraries serving readers in BC-Land's Lower Mainland area.

John Buckberrough, vice chairman of Vancouver Public Library and newly elected chairman of InterLINK, accepted the award at the OCLC Canada update breakfast in Calgary on June 16 at CLA's 60th annual conference and trade show.

### More Awards

Dr. Ann Curry, associate professor, School of Library, Archival and Information Studies (SLAIS) at UBC, won the British Columbia Library Association's top award (The President's Award) for 2005 "for her unwavering commitment to freedom of expression, leadership in [effecting] changes to defamation laws that will protect libraries, and [her] support of BCLA during legal action regarding the Intellectual Freedom website".

Two others: Dr. Ken Haycock, library consultant and director of SLAIS from 1992-2002, won the Helen Gordon Stewart Award for his noteworthy career in librarianship in BC. He has recently been appointed director of the library school at San Jose State U. in California. Maryann Cantillon, just retired head of Vancouver PL's Carnegie Branch, won the Achievement in Library Service Award for her commitment to residents of Vancouver's downtown eastside district. Congratulations all!

### Farewell

Nothing lasts forever. This is my farewell column. Thank you, *ELAN*, and thank you, readers. Good luck to you all. So long. Howard

*And a huge thank you to you, Howard. We will all miss your excellent writing! – Ed. □*



# Beginnings: How I Became a Librarian



BY ALAN H. MACDONALD

One of the benefits of career completion is the opportunity to reflect on what really has happened, including why I became a librarian. While my career was long, challenging and productive it was not quite the path I embarked upon. As with most aspects of human activity, explanations must be approached like the peeling of an onion – layer under layer with occasional tears.

What led to my increasing enthusiasm, passion, and commitment to librarianship? Why did I go to library school? Why did I then commit to pursue a life in librarianship?

For many years I would say I wasn't sure why I became a librarian.

I had completed my Dalhousie BA (in history) at 20, having largely avoided library use until falling into a form of total immersion during my final year. I knew I did not want to follow my father into law. I admit that, while aspects of the law appealed to me, I feared I could never match his gold-medal record. I had expected to become a high-school teacher but had such a low opinion of our education faculty that I had to find something else.

I was always fascinated by the organization of information, from my first collection of bubble gum cards. I was a builder and keeper of files – a skill that developed particularly during my summers as a tyro journalist with the *Halifax Mail-Star*. I preferred reference books to novels. Librarianship was still a one-year program. It was cheap. I had family in Toronto. What did I have to lose? So I went.

I graduated from the Uof T Library School (as it was called then) just over 30 years ago, in May 1964. I was a very young, very green 21. I had three job offers and one rejection. Margaret Beckman, then at Waterloo, offered me \$5,600 a year to be a cataloguer. Bruce Peel, at the University of Alberta, offered me \$5,800 to be his assistant, and John Wilkinson, then at Dalhousie, offered me \$5,100 as psychology librarian in a new branch library. (U of T decided they could live without my services.)

I accepted the Dalhousie offer – which was interesting, because I had failed my first run at psychology as an undergraduate! I accepted the offer, in part, because my father was ailing (and would shortly die) but mainly because I was terrified by the thought of settling into a new job and a strange city at the same time.

(To be clear, I was not one of those who came to libraries from the position of passionate user or keeper of the faith.)

Then chance intervened, as it has so many times over the years. Before I arrived at Dalhousie, John Wilkinson left to become a professor at the Uof T Library School and the interim regime scrapped the psychology library idea.

I became a social sciences librarian responsible for both reference and cataloguing and, shortly thereafter, was asked to take on the reorganization of a very-good-but-ill-managed government documents collection – a task I loved, because it was a marvellous combination of planning for the big picture and the nitty-gritty detail of implementation. I also got to do almost all the work myself – which gave me flexibility and a screen that allowed me to make mistakes and then correct them without attracting the attention of the powers that be.

Chance intervened again when I was invited to moonlight as a cataloguer in our law library, which had acquired its first real law librarian a few years before and had a massive backlog of cataloguing. Since it was evening and weekend work and paid twice my regular hourly rate, I was ecstatic. I was single and uninvolved and therefore could apply lots of time to the task.

My work volume was impressive, and my quality tolerable.

Within a year, the law librarian was felled by a fatal illness and the young, new dean (now a federal-court judge) asked the young, new librarian to act as law librarian and complete the planning for the new Law Library (which opened a year later). The dean's confidence showed me that you can take chances on people to deliver, even when the task is new to them.

I would like to think it was my ability and energy (and youthful arrogance) that made me a branch head at 22 but, in reality, it was a combination of my availability, my familiarity with the situation ... and my bloodline. My father had been dean of the Law School from 1934 to 1950 and, in the perverse way of looking at things in those days, this appeared to validate my competence.

One might say that the rest is history but, in truth, over time I have discovered there are many influences on my becoming a lifelong librarian.

When one advances well into one's career, there is a tendency to muse occasionally on how it all came to be. In looking back at my past with a more experienced eye, I see many influences that subtly led me towards librarianship in ways that I did not initially recognize.

I had grown up in an academic house where the utility of books and regular use of the public library were taken for granted. All four of my brothers shared my father's talent for words and all went on to earn their livings in the world of knowledge and information – journalism, the law, and intelligence service.

A teacher (Grade 3!), who (I learned many years later) was a librarian trained at McGill, taught that the importance of books was in their content. She taught us to respect them as useful vessels, not artifacts.

At the age of 10, I discovered a fascination with aircraft (a fascination that survives over 50 years later), devoured all the books I could find on the subject, and began to collect pictures from

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# Our President's Report



BY PETER  
MUTCHLER

Summer is over, if that was summer. Summer usually does not include extreme fog on the East Coast for extended periods of time, nor smog and extreme heat for over 30 days in Central Canada, nor unseasonable rains and cool weather on the Prairies, and very unsettled weather on the West Coast. This turned out to be not a summer for relaxing but one for planning how to survive the extreme weather conditions.

And it was not only the weather that was unpleasant. In Ontario and in Canada, governments seemed determined to provide librarians with bad news to match the dismal weather. In Ontario the government reduced its grants to both the Southern Ontario Library Service and Ontario Library Service-North, with excruciating results. In the south this led to a reduction in consulting services and, more importantly, the closure of the delivery service in October that assisted libraries in exchanging books and other materials. In the north it resulted in the closure of an office that had been providing a regional service since 1953, when it was called the Thunder Bay District Regional Co-operative, whose first director was W.A. Roedde.

Ontario was not the only level of government to set alarms bells off among librarians and their institutions. In 2005 Canada Post threatened to cancel the Library Book Rate, which has been in effect since 1939. Later it was announced that the Book Rate would be extended until

2006. The federal Department of Canadian Heritage seems to have offered some assistance in this matter. Regardless, this is a serious threat to all libraries, as the Book Rate allows libraries to provide their patrons with a wider range of materials than can ever be provided locally. I am sure that all associations are aware of the importance of the Book Rate to their members and the varied populations each library serves.

CLA's Annual Conference in Calgary this year occurred during one of the breaks in poor weather. Ex Libris was present at the Conference with a booth staffed by Alan MacDonald, our local representative, and Harry Campbell, ELA's travelling representative to at least four prior CLA conferences. Harry's report on the Conference was most enthusiastic. He says, "This was my fourth CLA Exhibit and one of the most successful". ELA's new brochure was well received, and Harry's 100 reprints of John Wright's report on a retired librarians get-together in Edmonton (from the Spring 2005 issue of *ELAN*) attracted further interest.

As a result, the Executive agreed that a letter be sent to Alan MacDonald and John Wright to see if ELA could capitalize on this enthusiasm. The letter suggested that an Alberta ELA group be formed. The group would have access to a chat room on the ELA web site, a regular column in *ELAN* and seed money for a mailing to arrange an inaugural meeting, along with a supply of ELA's brochures for distribution. Other ideas suggested were the appointment of an Alberta liaison officer, someone who might be interested in attending Board Meetings through OLA's telephone hook-up, and that a short history of Alberta libraries and library service might be undertaken, with the result being published as a special issue of *ELAN*, much like the *History of Library Education in Canada*.

During the summer the Executive, in response to some suggestions from Mavis Cariou, worked on revising certain sections of the Constitution and the duties and responsibilities of several positions on the Executive. While I realize this is not "hold the presses" news, it is one of the incremental steps needed to keep ELA functioning. The revisions to the Constitution will be presented to the Board for review, and to the AGM for adoption.

In the spring the Executive began to clarify the roles of the Promotion and Public Relations Committee and those of the Recruitment and Membership Committee. Over the years the functions of these two committees had become blurred about who was responsible for what. Other minor changes were also made, such as changing the name of the Publicity Committee to the Promotion and Public Relation Committee to better explain its function. It is, among other duties, responsible for the biennial W. Kaye Lamb Award.

At last year's AGM the question of changing the time and place of the Annual Get-Together to coincide with OLA's Annual Conference was raised. The question was discussed and the members in attendance voted to retain the present time and location of the Annual Get-together. However, there is a feeling that ELA should consider the possibility of increasing its presence at OLA's Conference. ELA's booth, which is kindly provided at no charge by OLA, understandably tends to be placed on the outskirts of the exhibit area. (At least it has been for the past two years.)

It has been suggested that ELA should sponsor a program at OLA that would attract people who may not venture to the furthest reaches of the exhibits. Being a part of the offi-

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## Atlantic News



BY NORMAN HORROCKS

**ELIZABETH (BETSY) ARMSTRONG**, who had headed the Nova Scotia Provincial Library since May 1999, retired in April 2005.

**DONNA BOURNE-TYSON** is now university librarian, Mount St. Vincent University. She was formerly associate director of the Education Centre Library, Nipissing University. She succeeds **MARGOT SCHENK**, who had been interim university librarian for a few months.

**BONITA (BONNIE) BOYD**, former head of reference at Killam Library, Dalhousie University, died after a lengthy illness at age 59.

**MICHAEL COLBORNE** was the 2005 Atlantic Provinces Library Association Merit Award recipient. Michael is now acting provincial librarian for Nova Scotia.

**SUSAN COLLINS**, director of information services and systems/ chief librarian at University of New Brunswick–St. John, retired.

**PATRICK ELLIS** is now health sciences librarian at W. K. Kellogg Library, Dalhousie University, where he has worked since 1979. Patrick was president of the Canadian Health Libraries Association from 2000 to

2001 and received the Association's Award for Outstanding Achievement in 2003.

**LESLIE FOSTER**, 61, died at home in August 2005. He had worked at the Dalhousie University Law Library, where he played a key role in the restoration of the Library's records after the 1985 fire there, and also at NOVANET.

**JOANN HAMILTON-BARRY** is now city librarian and director of the St. John Free Public Library. Formerly, she was acting director of the York Regional Library in New Brunswick.

**DEBBIE NICHOLSON** retired in July as director of technical services and systems at Halifax Regional Library, where she had worked since 1979.

**DIANNE TAYLOR-HARDING** and **STACEY PENNEY**, both of Memorial University of Newfoundland Library, are the new editors of the Atlantic Provinces Library Association Bulletin. They succeeded **ERIN ARMSTRONG** and **PATRICIA GALLANT** of Acadia University Library.

**JOHN TESKEY**, director of libraries at University of New Brunswick, assumed the presidency of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries in May for a two-year term.

**JOANN WATSON** became the MLIS Programme coordinator at the Dalhousie University School of Information Management in May. Formerly with the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, JoAnn fills a position similar to that previously occupied by **JUDY DUNN**, who moved to the University of Toronto Faculty of Information Studies as assistant dean.

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## Our President's Report

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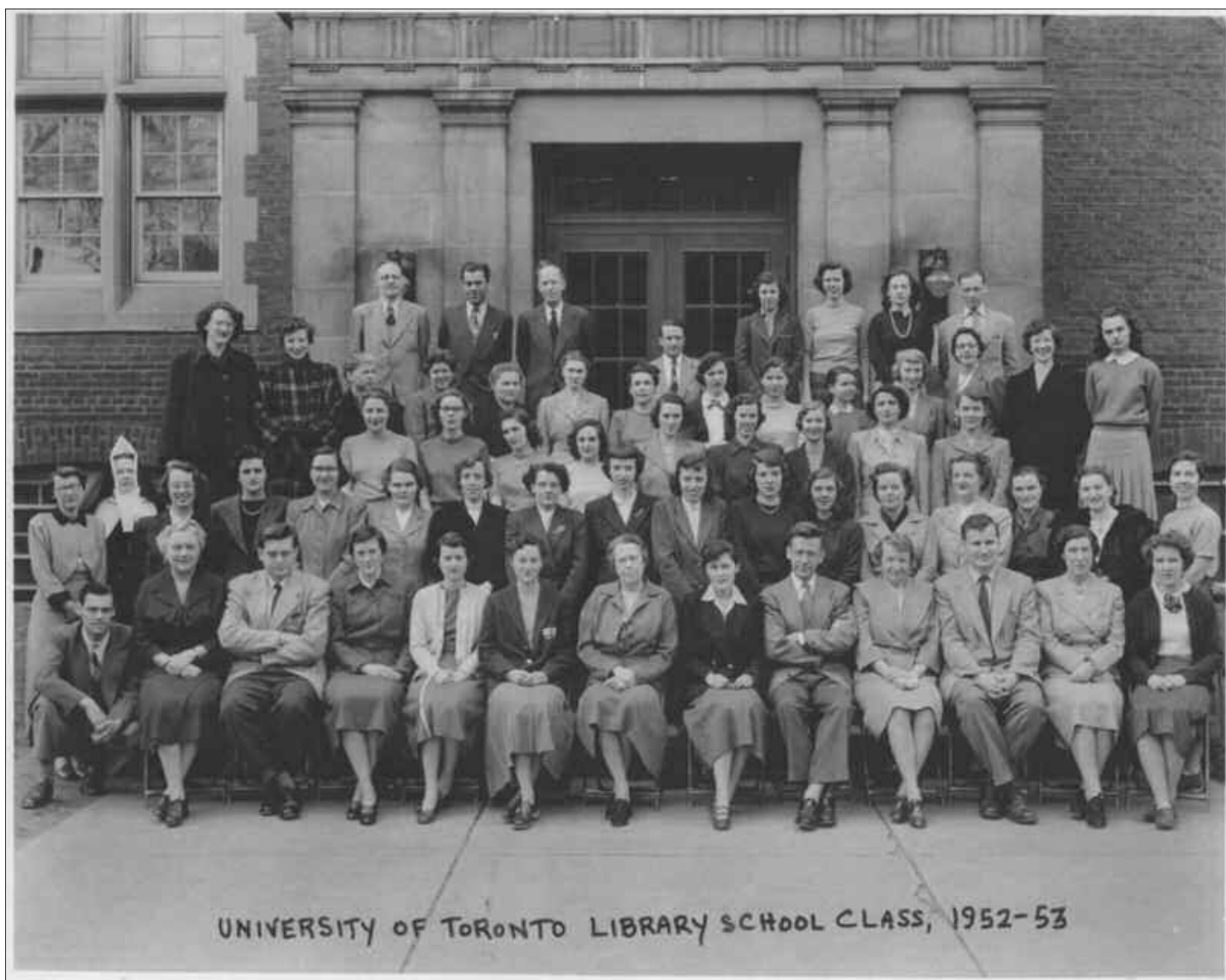
cial program would give ELA a chance to reach out to those who have never heard of the Association but are nearing retirement and would like to retain some connection with the library world. If the Board accepts this idea, it will be a little while before it comes to fruition, as negotiations will have to be undertaken with OLA for a place on its program and someone will have to be appointed to the task of drafting a program, obtaining speakers and suggesting a theme that should meet that of the OLA Conference.

Over the years Ex Libris has received requests for volunteers to help an organization or group in library-related matters. The Executive has agreed that requests for volunteers could be mounted on the Ex Libris website. So, watch the website in future for volunteering opportunities. But, before any requests are listed, certain protocols have to be drafted, such as a statement absolving the Association from any responsibility if the volunteer activity should turn out badly. There are other considerations, as well, needed to protect both the Association and of its members in all cases. Life is too short to become involved in lawsuits and other possible unpleasanties.

During the year, your Association created a new recruitment/publicity brochure. The effort was well received at Calgary, and as Harry Campbell reports, they went like the proverbial hotcakes. I would like to thank OLA, especially Trevor Balla, for the fine work he has done on our behalf, both in preparing our recruitment material and his continued efforts in ensuring that *ELAN* is as good typographically as it is. □



## University of Toronto Library School Class of 1953



**1st row:** Bill Morley, Miss Ball, John Hatton, Miss Cockshutt, Catherine Wiley, Elizabeth Murphy, Miss Bassam, Carolyn Gratton, Bill Bilsland, Miss Silverthorn, Brian Land, Miss Murray, Ann Harvey

**2nd row:** Elizabeth Brewster, Sr. Saint Francesca, Joan Magee, Margaret Martin, Elizabeth Calvert, Pauline Home, Marie Lavis, Melva Dwyer, Joan Henshaw, Jean Northgrave, Nancy Hayman, Sonja Hanssen, Barbara Smith, Elaine Reaman, Jean MacLeod, Priscilla Scott, Clarice Watson

**3rd row:** Ruth Thompson, Kate Wood, Joan Moore, Ann Fisher, Margaret Loucks, Marion Booth, Nora Neimeier, Irene Misslbeck, Elizabeth Kennedy

**4th row:** Shirley Wigmore, Patricia Grandy, Mary Gray, Primrose Bredl, Aleksandra Sudmalis, Miss Craig, Ogreta McNeill, Freda Zych, Tatana Sahankova, Clare O'Gorman, Kathleen Speller, Margaret Moffat, Grace Keenan, Nancy Griffin

**5th row:** Eric Holmgren, Michael Jaremko, Carl Wicklund, Roy Thomas, Ardis Stewart, Jean McNab, Mae Grigg, Jim Pilton

**Absent:** Jacqueline Hosking, Frances McDonald, Susan Semevan

## U of T Library School Class of '53

The following article by Grace (Keenan) Price appeared in the Spring 2005 issue of *Informed*, published by the Faculty of Information Studies (FIS), University of Toronto. It is reproduced with the kind permission of FIS and of Grace. *ELAN* asked members of that class to add their memories.

### REFLECTIONS OF AN ALUMNA – GRACE KEENAN PRINCE (BLS '53)

Half a century ago, I graduated from library school – by the skin of my teeth and the grace of God, I guess, because I wasn't much of a student. After my first degree, I didn't really know where I was going, or what I was doing. It was my best friend who talked me into library school – she didn't want to go alone, because she knew it wasn't going to be any fun. She wanted company.

I arrived a few days late that fall. I had been ill. The office dragon, Miss Jeffries, eyed my bateau neckline icily. "If you had pneumonia," she snapped, "You should be more ... warmly dressed!" I learned to shudder at library school; that was my first lesson and it wasn't from the cold.

Our first assignment from the formidable Miss Bassam was a brief essay justifying our presence in library school. "Don't say you love books", she said threateningly. "I don't want to hear that!" I thought briefly of opening with the announcement that I hate books – but, for once, discretion prevailed.

An odd sort of anti-intellectualism prevailed in that bleak building, which we shared with OCE [Ontario College of Education – Ed.] – the teacher's training school of the period. Everybody looked hunted: deadlines were serious business compared to St Mike's [St. Michael's College, U of T],

whence I had come. Gloomy student teachers were constructing papier-mâché projects, and we were arranging cards for Miss Cockshutt, who liked things alphabetical.

Terrifying as Miss Bassam was, we felt lucky to have been spared her predecessor, Miss Barnstead, a truly fierce director and a legend. She wouldn't have married women in the course! Our Miss B. may have felt deceived when a couple of my classmates turned up sporting engagement rings, but she didn't throw them out (and this, long before "student power").

A feeble old lady came in at intervals for children's lit. She always wore a black, crushed velvet hat and was given to coughing spasms, watched with a kind of detached fascination by the class, who wondered what we'd do if she'd expired on the floor before us. (I'm older now than any of those ancient women who taught me!)

Angus Mowat lectured, too, but I have no idea what his subject was supposed to be. He just reminisced about his travels and his canoe: Being a character (though a librarian) was his forte. W. S. Wallace taught Canadian literature. He, when he set his final exam, begged us to "entertain" him. When I wrote that paper, I, knowing little about "Can Lit", spent my time expatiating upon "My Favourite Canadian Writer", in this case an old beau who had been working on a novel for years. I knew a lot about Miles (though I didn't tell all I knew) and pointed out that he pioneered the device of "continuous revision" in fiction. I must have entertained Dr. Wallace, for a letter from the great man arrived shortly, informing me that he had given me an Alpha Plus.

It is worth remarking that we did all our work in longhand – except for cataloguing, which we carefully printed. Only our thesis had to be typed, and Bertha Bassam gave us detailed instructions on the format. We were

cautioned that she would accept no late papers, nor would she read overly long or short offerings. It amazed everybody to learn that one arrogant student flouted these instructions and hand wrote his thesis, far too long and a day or two late. It amazed nobody that he failed his year.

Library school wasn't all work. We had our mild revels, when the administration threw a party. Publishers were bidden to the Annual Tea, and those reps who drew the long straw (I guess) turned up looking patient. They told us, wistfully, that decadent McGill entertained them with sherry. Then we looked wistful, too. We had had a lecture on Hospitality, and Talking to All our Guests and we were chivvied about relentlessly by the supreme hostess, usually just when we had got a conversation launched.

My class was a very mixed bag. We were all ages – one bright woman was head of the TPL [Toronto Public Library] Music Library – and we had a poet and a nun. Our dozen men included Brian Land, the only cute guy around but, unfortunately, married. He, not just a pretty face, later became very distinguished and, at one point, director of the Library School. I wonder if he introduced sherry to those uncomfortable parties. (I wonder, too, if he remembers his oral presentation on the subject of Codex. Cool Brian sure lost his composure that day!)

As I look back at the training I received long ago, I really admire those doughty teachers who taught me all I needed to know to go out into the library world and perform. They always stressed that high marks don't produce the best librarians; what's needed is attention to detail, reliable records and a spirit of service. The last cannot be taught but with it we are good and without it we're no bloody good at all.

Clare O'Gorman dragged me to library

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school, made me go to class, and sat up all night with me while I wrote my thesis. I will always be grateful to her, too.

### **From Jean (Northgrave) Weihs**

Miss Bassam was a fiercely devoted Queen's University graduate. When classes first started she called Elizabeth Kennedy (now Robertson), Joan Henshaw (now Green), and me to her office to tell us that we must uphold the honour of Queen's and not do anything to disgrace its name. She would be keeping an eye on us. We did not know each other before this office visit because we had graduated in different years. However, Miss Bassam's "fierce eye" cemented our friendship. I have recently been told that even after Miss Bassam retired, she returned to speak to the Queen's graduates about the need to uphold the honour of Queen's.

Just before graduation I got a job in the University of Toronto Library's Order Department as a bibliographer. Miss Bassam disapproved. She said that someone with my personality was needed in the public library. I should leave cataloguing and bibliography jobs for quiet, retiring people.

She also voiced her disapproval of my forthcoming marriage to a man graduating from mechanical engineering because she thought librarians and engineers were a queer mixture.

My most negative memories of Library School were the dreadful teas where dressed properly we were carefully watched to see whether we possessed the social skills that the Library School professors deemed necessary accomplishments; and learning to write properly-formed call numbers with white ink on the spine of books. The positive: I have loved being a librarian.

### **From Elizabeth (Kennedy) Robertson**

When I chose to do my practicum at Toronto Public Library's Cataloguing

Department, I received advice from Miss Bassam similar to that given to Jean. I was too "approachable" to be cataloguing. Hmm! I was one of those odd types who liked cataloguing but I also enjoyed Miss Murray's reference course. (I wrote feverishly as soon as she opened her mouth.) After graduation, my first job was in the Reference Department of the Calgary Public Library. In the 1950s some prominent citizens of Calgary used the resources of the Reference Department – including then-mayor Don Mackay, who is said to have researched and written some of his speeches in the small confines of the Reference rooms. Now, how long would I have sat in the TPL Cataloguing Department before meeting the mayor of Toronto? Good advice, Miss Bassam! I am not overly impressed by having a passing acquaintance with mayors from anywhere, but as a newcomer to Calgary at the time, my reference librarian job provided a great opportunity for meeting many ordinary and extraordinary Calgarians.

Like Grace Keenan, I have no idea what Angus Mowat taught, but I do remember him bouncing into the classroom in a burst of energy, perching himself on the desk at the front and exuding energy for the hour. We woke up! I think that he was the provincial librarian at the time.

Although it is evidence of the reputed "clannishness" of Queen's graduates, if we three had not been called into the office, we might have taken half the year at library school before identifying each other. It was the beginning of lasting friendships.

### **From Joan (Henshaw) Green**

Grace Keenan's "feeble old lady" was Lillian Smith, noted for her knowledge of children's books. I remember her reading the opening sentences of many children's books and feeling the excitement of wanting to continue the story, something I later shared

with school classes visiting the public library.

Freda Waldon, director of the Hamilton Public Library, taught administration and was, like Miss Bassam, disappointed when librarians or would-be librarians married, as there was a shortage of librarians and women usually left the profession when they married. Dr. W. S. Wallace aroused my interest in Canadian literature, which was just then beginning to be appreciated.

I did not like library school, but I did like being a librarian. I was glad when the Queen's connection brought the three of us together.

### **From Bill Morley**

Entering library school, as it was then called, was especially important to all of its students as being the result of a career decision: henceforth we all, or most of us, would become librarians, proud followers of an ancient and honourable occupation. We all gathered many friends (one I made became my wife), some of whom would remain colleagues for the rest of our professional lives – and beyond. For me, one was Brian Land, who became director of the Library School, and another was John Hatton. An unusual friend, for me, was Sister St. Francesca, with whom I enjoyed many interesting talks (not all about libraries) on subjects in which her keen mind excelled. Sometimes we were still talking (or I was) as we left the building, and eventually she gently informed me of the impropriety of her being seen in the street talking to a man. In those days, nuns still wore their habits in public.

We were addressed by some really excellent guest lecturers on special topics in the fields in which they were authorities. This arrangement was much to the credit of the School's administration. Among these I recall Dr. W. Stewart Wallace, a pro-



ductive scholar who was our university librarian from 1923 to 1954. He lectured us on Canadian literature (and dismissed the pioneer Strickland sisters as snobs of no account). He gave us a tour of the main library, during which he referred several times to the accomplishments of his predecessor Hugh Langton. Upon reaching his office, we couldn't fail to notice a human skull grinning at us from the middle of his desk - about which Brian Land whispered in my ear, "His predecessor I presume?" I could hardly contain myself! Brian's lively wit has, I am sure, permeated the lives of a goodly number of Canada's librarians.

Another guest lecturer was the great children's librarian Lillian H. Smith, devoted head of Boys and Girls House of the TPL. She introduced me to the delights and wonders of Canadian children's literature. Ms. Smith had just retired in 1952, after 40 years of library service to Toronto children. We were also treated to a lecture on Canadian poetry by no less than the distinguished Newfoundland poet E. J. Pratt, who retired that same year as professor of English at Victoria College [University of Toronto]. Another special lecturer I well recall was Angus Mowat (father of the celebrated author Farley), director of Ontario's Provincial Library Service. His subject was the function and importance of public libraries in the province, in which he clearly echoed the first priority of our library school's administration at that time. His casual demeanor, however, addressing us while sitting cross legged on the front of the instructor's desk, was in striking contrast to that of the Library School faculty.

Unfortunately, such a learned environment was not generally prevalent at University of Toronto's Library School. Having just triumphed over the rigours of an Honours BA (and 11 final exams) at Trinity College [University of Toronto], I was unpre-

pared for the entirely different atmosphere at the university's Library School. Expecting an academic air of postgraduate studies, I was disappointed to discover, quite early, that here it was more like what one might expect to find at a community college. For example, one professor (the title teaching staff held) devoted one whole hour's class just on how to answer the telephone. Now, I readily admit that there are courtesies to be observed in telephone conversations, but these most of us learn fairly early in life.

One more incident seems to have well penetrated my memory for over 50 years: A classroom window was open a few inches, but, being mid-winter, it admitted a cool breeze. One student quietly rose and closed the window. This was observed by the professor, who remarked "Thank you! Now there's a student who will do well at the end of term". Good heavens, I thought, such considered gestures can earn us marks!

Now I am long since retired and such comments may safely be expressed openly, but for years library school was a kind of employment bureau for librarians, and the source of references. Only the most foolhardy (or perhaps wealthy) would risk being so frank in public. My unfortunate friend John Hatton might have passed his year had he been less outspoken! When all's said and done, however, I made some very good friends at library school, and that year of 1952-53 provided me with the necessary qualifications to enter a career I have loved and found most rewarding. For these remarkable benefits, I am indeed most grateful to the University of Toronto Library School.

#### **From Brian Land**

In 2003, the University of Toronto Library School Class of 1953 marked its 50th anniversary. Jean (Northgrave) Weihs and I were the only members of that class of 57 (9 men and 48 women) to attend the

annual Spring alumni celebrations and wondered what had happened to our classmates over the intervening years.

Since there were so few men, it was easier to recall them. I remember that Bill Morley used to keep his timetable on a 3 x 5 catalogue card, which he carried in the breast pocket of his jacket and consulted frequently. Bill, who retired from Queen's University Library, and I still exchange Christmas greetings. Jim Pilton used to tell me about his experiences in Paris while we sat beside one another in the back of the classroom. Jim, a veteran of the RCAF, retired from the Edmonton Public Library and died some years ago in Vancouver. Bill Bilsland, a good-natured man, returned to BC to join the Provincial Archives. He, too, is no longer with us. I recall Professor Katherine Ball giving permission to Roy Thomas and me to skip a cataloguing lab, so that we could attend an afternoon football playoff between Toronto and Hamilton at Varsity Stadium. I lost touch with Roy, who subsequently joined the staff of the Sarnia Public Library. I recall that Eric Holmgren used to stride about purposefully carrying a battered briefcase. He later worked at the Alberta Legislative Library and died some years ago. John Hatton didn't find his library school experience much to his liking. He subsequently worked in a special government library in Toronto. Michael Jaremko and Carl Wicklund were older students, and I had less contact with them.

As for the female students, I had my locker next to Jean (Northgrave) Weihs and, little did we realize, our paths would continue to cross for more than 50 years. Jean was a Queen's grad and was ipso facto held in high esteem by the director, Bertha Bassam, herself a Queen's alumna. Our vivacious class president was Carolyn Gratton, who I'm not certain ever practised librarianship. A num-

ber of the women used to pal around in small groups. I remember, for example, the troika of Fran McDonald, Nancy Griffin and Betty Murphy. Others pairings included Jacquie Hosking and Cathy Wiley, my colleagues in cataloguing labs, the ever-smiling Gracie Keenan and Clare O'Gorman, and Joan Moore and Kate Wood.

Among others I remember from the Class of 5T3 are Sister Saint Francesca, with whom I corresponded regularly until her death; Elizabeth Brewster, who became a distinguished Canadian poet; Reta McNeill, the popular head of the Toronto Public Library Music Department; Joan Magee, with whom I worked for a time as a colleague at the Windsor Public Library.

The Class of 5T3 also had a couple of marriages: Bill Bilsland and Clare O'Gorman, and Bill Morley and Mae Grigg.

In 1953, there were still only two accredited library school programs: McGill and Toronto. This meant that students were drawn from across the country. After graduation, the largest group of graduates found employment in Ontario. Those who headed west from the Class of 5T3 included Bill Bilsland, Marion Booth, Primrose Bredl, Melva Dwyer, Ann Harvey, Margot Moffat, Priscilla Scott, Ardis Stewart, and Carl Wicklund. Those headed east were Mae Grigg, Bill Morley, Pauline Home, and Sister Saint Francesca. Margaret Martin and Irene Misslbeck found employment in the United States.

The Class of 5T3 was taught by a veteran group headed by Bertha Bassam who, in addition to being director, taught the courses History of the Book and Library Administration. Katherine Ball and Margaret Cockshutt, a more recent addition to the teaching staff, taught cataloguing and classification. Mary Silverthorn taught book selection, and Florence Murray taught the reference course,

my favourite. Jean Jeffries, long-time secretary to the director, ran the office. In addition to the regular staff, there were several part-time instructors from the field, including the distinguished Toronto children's librarian, Lillian H. Smith, who introduced me to *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*; W. Stewart Wallace, chief librarian of the University of Toronto, who frequently invoked the name of his predecessor H. H. Langton; Freda Waldon, chief librarian of the Hamilton Public Library, who wore her hat while lecturing; and, of course, the colourful Angus Mowat, director of public libraries for Ontario, who sat on the desk pipe in mouth and related stories from the field, much to the delight of his listeners. Distinguished members of the academic staff of the U of T also gave special lectures.

One other recollection. On the last day of exams, after students had cleared their lockers, it was customary for Miss Bassam to stand at the head of the stairs on the third floor to wish students goodbye. When I passed through the informal receiving line, she asked me how my year had gone. Since I seem to have been one of those rare individuals who actually enjoyed my classmates and library school, I spontaneously told her that "I had had a lot of laughs". It was clear from the expression on her face that she didn't know quite how to take this comment. It wasn't until years later when I succeeded her as director that I could appreciate the ambiguity of my remark.

### **From Nancy (Griffin) Hall**

Library School 1953 – most of the details have slipped from memory in spite of the fact that long-term recall is supposed to be one of the characteristics of the aging mind. I do, however, remember that my decision to enrol was sudden and last minute. Betty Murphy and I, at loose ends after graduation from U of T, were spending the summer taking typing and shorthand at Secord's Secretarial

School for Girls. Our progress was just short of disaster and, in late August, Mr. Secord called us in for a chat. He suggested we might be more successful doing something else.

We retired to a Honeydew restaurant across the street to ponder our future. I remember a friend suggesting library school, to which we replied, "What's that?" A quick call from a pay phone and we were informed by a person, whom we later got to know as Miss Jeffries, that there was little time if we wished to start in September. The next morning we were in Miss Bassam's office. She was somewhat suspicious about the impromptu nature of our decision; however, she expeditiously processed the required documentation and within a few days we were assigned to branches of the Toronto Public Library for the mandatory practice work.

The following months are really a blur. But I do remember that we sat alphabetically in rows and I believe attendance was also taken. I recall the agony of trying to print neatly in upper and lower case letters on catalogue cards (made bearable only by the patience of Miss Ball). In retrospect, it seemed like months of memorizing – cataloguing and classification procedures, reference and book selection tools, filing rules, all interspersed by guest speakers from various walks of librarianship – some inspiring, some frankly scary.

I also remember hours spent in the coffee shop of the Medical Arts Building across the street, where we laughed a lot. It was the comic relief we needed at that time. We talked about how we would do things if we were in control, and we nominated Brian Land to return as dean to ensure that our reforms would be implemented.

Frustrations notwithstanding, it was a time when I came to realize that, for me, public librarianship offered the

## University of Toronto Library School Class Of '53

*continued from page 16*

right combination of community service and career satisfaction. Miss Bassam did not approve of my decision; however, as the years passed and I moved about in the public sector, it was one I have never had occasion to question or regret.

### From Melva Dwyer

I was one of the older members of the Class of '53, since I had already spent eight years as a high-school teacher in British Columbia. After having more or less successfully coped with countless students who saw no reason to enjoy social studies, I found library school a welcome relief from the stress. I must admit I did not enjoy all aspects of the year but, on the whole, it was peaceful. Along with three other members of the class, I was in a residence under the control of the dean of women of University College. This meant that we took our meals with the undergraduate residents of the college. One of our group of four really did not enjoy library school and made it quite clear at most meal times in a loud voice. Miss Bassam asked me one day to see if I could do anything about this, because she and Dean Ferguson had deliberately arranged for library school students to be in the residence to encourage others to seek librarianship as a future career. I did manage to quell the problem, but I am afraid that the damage had been done at least for that year.

I did find that Miss Cockshutt's ideas of alphabetizing were not the same as mine, and I also discovered that Miss Ball's determination for us all to watch our periods and commas was an important aspect of cataloguing. Apart from these minor worries, I am afraid that I must admit that I did enjoy the year at the University of Toronto and the Class of '53.

ELAN encourages the members of other classes to send their collected remembrances and, if possible, include a class photograph. □

## Ethel Auster

*continued from page 8*

During her career, Ethel published three books, coauthored two others and wrote numerous scholarly articles. Her most recent book, coauthored with Shauna Taylor (University of Toronto Press, 2004), has been praised as "ground breaking" and as "the most comprehensive survey of the impact of downsizing in Canada's university libraries". Another reviewer noted the "remarkable, even exemplary, clarity of thought behind the writing and structure".

In addition to her own teaching and research, Ethel served the university community in many capacities: she was twice elected to the Governing Council of the University of Toronto and, over the past two

years, spent countless hours reviewing doctoral student award applications for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. She had unfailing energy for students and inspired them with her forthright intellectual honesty, her unstinting regard for others, and her exacting scholarly standards. With many of them, she formed mutually gratifying friendships.

Ethel is survived by her son David Auster and his wife Janis Auster, of New York City, and David's father Henry Auster of Toronto. She will long be remembered by all of us who knew her. □

## Did You Find Oddities?



BY JEAN WEIHS

A staff member at the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico found a small, yellowed envelope tucked into a copy of an 1888 book about medicine in the Civil War written by Dr. W. D. Kelly. The envelope was labelled "Scabs from vaccination of W. B. Warrington's children" and was signed by the doctor. These pre-vaccination-era samples are now in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, where scientists hope they will examine them for traces of smallpox. (Excerpted from *American Libraries*, December 2004 issue.)

When she was working in the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore many years ago, Sherrill Cheda found a fried egg tucked into the pages of a book in the history, biography and travel section of the library. Merlyn Beeckmans, another Ex Libris Association Board member, found a petrified orange that had obviously been sitting for many years on top of the shelves in a school library.

*Have any of our readers found unusual things left in books? Contact Jean Weihs at [jean.weihs@rogers.com](mailto:jean.weihs@rogers.com) or write to her at 4 Fairview Blvd. Toronto M4K 1L9, and we will publish these reports in a future issue of ELAN.*



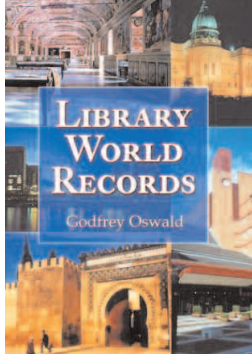
# Book Reviews

## LIBRARY WORLD RECORDS

BY GODFREY OSWALD

McFARLAND, 2004, 238 pages, index, \$29.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY JEAN WEIHS



If you are a fact junkie, as I am, you will love this book. If you can't resist looking through *The Guinness Book of World Records*, this is a book for you.

Godfrey Oswald, a British librarian, has worked as cataloguer, database searcher and library website manager. In 1995 he developed and still manages The Info Connect Library and Information Science Directory, "a free Internet directory for information scientists, librarians, academic researchers, etc., as well as university library school students" ([www.lwrw.com](http://www.lwrw.com)). *Library World Records* seems a natural extension of the online directory.

As would be expected from the book's title, the largest and oldest libraries of various types; the largest, oldest, and tallest library buildings; the largest collection; and the largest special collections in the world and in individual countries are listed. There are a few "smallest": the G8 country with the smallest number of public libraries per capita (Japan); the state with the smallest library budget in the United States (North Dakota).

The section World Records for Books, Periodicals and Bookstores includes the earliest written works and the first books printed in various languages and other records about these materials; for example, the most overdue



library book (287 years), the most popular author among library users in the U.K. (Catherine Cookson), the oldest continuously trading bookstore in Europe (John Smith & Sons Bookshop in Glasgow, Scotland).

Some of the interesting facts found in the Miscellaneous World Records for Libraries section include the most expensive library (the U.S. National Security Agency library at Fort Mead, Maryland, with a annual budget of \$900 million); a list of major films that featured libraries; a list of some notable people who have worked in libraries or as librarians; and 40 translations of the word "library" around the world.

There is a section that deals with library catalogues, databases (in 1951 the U.S. Census Bureau produced the first important database), indexing services, citation indexes, microfilm (in 1884 the National library of France was the first library to make use of microfilm), electronic journals and books (in 1986 the *Grolier Electronic Encyclopedia* was the first major reference book to be released on CD-ROM), search engines (the largest search engine, FAST, also known as AllTheWeb, based in Oslo, Norway, holds over 700 million webpages); and OPACS (Geac Library Automation Systems, based in a suburb of Toronto, was the first company to develop library OPACs).

The last section of the book deals with library and information science organizations, such as library schools (the Columbia University School of Library Service in New York City was the first library school, established in 1887); library associations (the Japan Library Association, set up in 1892, was the first national library association in Asia); and other tidbits of information that did not fit into the other sections (the first full-time paid

librarian in the U.K. was Richard Johnson, who in 1653 was appointed by the Chetham Library in Manchester at an annual salary of 15 pounds).

Occasionally Oswald strays into opinion rather than pure facts. He lists "the ten greatest inventions used in libraries today" (paper, book printing, the Internet, microfilm, electric bulb, television, photocopying, personal computer, CD-ROM disk, and DVD-ROM disk) and the "18 greatest texts of all time". Other librarians might have chosen different items for these lists.

In addition to his list of facts Oswald has provided "notes" at the end of many entries. These notes contain interesting information that is not a record; for example, the Coptic language; how an original map of 1507 came to the Library of Congress; the living organism that has existed for thousands of years.

Each section begins with an introduction to the topic and there are many explanations about topics that the general public is unlikely to understand, such as classification and the Anglo-American cataloguing rules. Some topics, such as the earliest libraries, are in essay form rather than in list form.

The book's content is enhanced by 211 black and white photographs of buildings, library interiors, paintings, rare books and much else. There is a two-page bibliography and an excellent 16-page, small-print index.

It is probably obvious at this point that I recommend the purchase of this book. Oswald states that *The Guinness Book of World Records* is one of the three books that have "broken the 100 million barrier". This book is unlikely to match that feat, but it will provide lots of fodder for lunch-time conversations.

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## A BOOK IN EVERY HAND. PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SASKATCHEWAN

BY DON KERR

Coteau Books, and Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 2005, 277 pages.

REVIEWED BY HARRY CAMPBELL

Few Canadian librarians have studied S. R. Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Service, but Don Kerr's history of 100 years of development of public libraries in Saskatchewan provides a perfect example of them all: books are for use; every book its reader; every reader his book; save the time of the reader; a library is a growing organism. Kerr is a former Saskatoon Public Library trustee and author of many previous books. In his concluding sentence he says, "How could anyone want anything better than a Library?" In 277 pages he covers in immense detail the expansion of public library systems in Saskatchewan to become a "one province" library system, starting with the 1906 Public Libraries Act. The Act was introduced in the second day of the first sitting of the brand-new Saskatchewan Legislature on March 29 of that year and was assented to on May 26.

Kerr devotes a chapter to the travelling libraries and open-shelf libraries of the Prairies in the period 1914 to 1987. All of the regional libraries are covered: North Central, 1944-1962; Wheatland, 1959-2000; Southeast, 1958-1992; Parkland, 1956-1998; Chinook, 1961-1997; Lakeland, 1962-1999; and Palliser, 1964-1995. Kerr also covers the city libraries of Regina and Saskatoon, from 1908 to 2002, and the library associations.

Saskatchewan, of course, was the early stamping ground of Angus Mowat, who arrived in 1932 at the Saskatoon Public Library. Mowat instituted a travelling library, sending boxes of books by mail to the drought-ridden southwest and newly settled districts in the extreme north

of the province. By 1939, 716 boxes (almost 40,000 books) had been exchanged by this means.

*A Book in Every Hand* is a marvelous example of provincial library history, since it covers in entertaining detail the rise and fall of governments, politicians and library services for a full hundred years. Few punches are spared. There are extensive references and a very complete index. It is to be hoped that the book will inspire similar thorough and comprehensive accounts of library growth in all areas of Canada.

## HISTORY OF THE BOOK IN CANADA. VOLUME ONE.

BEGINNINGS TO 1840

EDITED BY PATRICIA LOCKHART  
FLEMING, GILLES GALLICHAN AND  
YVAN LAMONDE

University of Toronto Press, 2004, 560  
pages, \$75.

Published in French as

## HISTOIRE DU LIVRE ET DE L'IMPRIMÉ AU CANADA

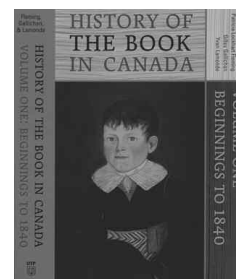
Les Presses de l'Université de  
Montréal, 2004.

REVIEWED BY FRANCES HALPENNY

Volume One of *History of the Book in Canada, Beginnings to 1840* is a landmark in Canadian book history. It is a large-scale undertaking in this relatively new discipline for our country, a discipline that is developing momentum in both English and French. Book history is not literary criticism (which explores the content of books and periodicals for literary patterns and achievements). Instead, it deals with how and why the created word passes through a chain connecting author, publisher and distributor, finally reaching readers through bookstores and libraries, and eventually summarized by bibliographers. The editors of this volume present it as "a collaborative history written in French and English which poses and seeks to answer a series of questions

about the role of print in the lives of Canadians". The French title, *Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada*, emphasizes this purpose.

The development of this book began with a discussion at the National Library in 1993, sponsored by the Bibliographical Society of Canada. The resulting research project's founding conference took place, again in Ottawa, in 1997, and the project began in 2000, with a major Collaborative Research Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. The book was to be a bilingual publication, its volumes appearing simultaneously in both English and French. It was also to be bicultural in creation, with project members collaborating in the two languages at all stages. In these respects, it resembles the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. *Dictionnaire biographique du Canada*. The research project was to be nationwide, undertaken by teams of editors,



postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students at the Universities of Regina, Toronto and Sherbrooke, and at Dalhousie, Simon Fraser, and McGill Universities.

The two general editors for the project are Patricia Lockhart Fleming, professor in the Collaborative Program in Book History and Print Culture at the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto, and Yvan Lamonde, professor in the Department of French Language and Literature at McGill University. Each volume also has its own editors. The editors for this first volume are Patricia Lockhart Fleming, Gilles Gallichan, librarian and historian with the Library of the National Assembly of Quebec, and Yvan Lamonde. Volume Two will cover the years

*continued on page 20*

1841-1918 (publication anticipated in autumn 2005) and Volume Three, 1918-1980. The editors have been encouraged by parallel projects proceeding in the United States, Britain, Scotland, Australia and New Zealand, and by work in France. The Canadian research effort is distinguished by its national conferences on the volumes' contents, followed by conferences with authors when their contributions are available for discussion, then by final revisions. The quality of translation for the volumes is felt to be extremely important.

Volume One interprets "book" to begin with "native oral and inscribed discourse" – for example, petroglyphs, wampum, and totem poles – and then discusses the way in which works printed in Europe brought knowledge of the New World to Europeans through accounts of geography, fauna and flora, native inhabitants and explorations. Printing in Canada began during 1752 in Halifax, three years after the city's founding. It benefited from the experience of printers who moved north from the Thirteen Colonies and Loyalists. The trade they and their successors established was broadly based, relying on such activities as book selling, binding and stationery to balance job printing and the production of almanacs, textbooks, sermons, government contracts and – most important for society – newspapers. This "largely utilitarian" colonial press was supplemented by the significant trade in books imported from Europe and the United States. After 1815 a growing number of bookstores served readers of both French and English, so that book selling gradually became independent of printers.

Volume One traces all this activity and also documents the consequences for the book trade of the activities of religious organizations and societies and of circulating libraries and reading rooms (with a growing recruitment of supervisors to

serve as librarians), as well as the development of personal collections and the slow growth of literacy through many private endeavours. The breadth of purpose that informs this contribution to book history is readily apparent in this first volume and demonstrates how, though reading materials might have been scarce in British North America, the printed word "was everywhere" – from trade signs, to broadsides and election handbills, to the newspapers printed locally or brought in from abroad and then shared among many.

Early literary culture in Canada, encouraged by imported print, took in religion, history, politics, and philosophy. But the genres to come were heralded by the 1808 publication in Quebec of the play *Colas et Colinette, ou le Bailli dupé* by Joseph Quesnel, the first dramatic work to be published in British North America, and by the novel, *St. Ursula's Convent*; or, the *Nun of Canada* by Julia Beckwith Hart, the first novel by an author born in British North America, published in Kingston in 1824. In 1829 the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada established the Christian Guardian printing office in York (Toronto). The first novel by a native of Lower Canada, *L'influence d'un livre* by Philippe Aubert de Gaspé fils, was published in Quebec in 1837. Canada's first major literary magazine, the *Literary Garland*, began publication in Montreal in 1838.

Riches of content abound in this volume and the reader is led forward, becoming more and more absorbed as the many unfamiliar stories unfold. The many contributors, all with specialized knowledge in their areas, provide the depth and authority needed, and the editors have shaped the essays into a cohesive whole. The volume is generously and effectively illustrated; its typeface is Cartier Book, adapted from a design by Canadian typeface designer Carl Dair.

Although you may feel a sense of duty in picking up this noble attempt, you will soon shed duty for the pleasure of reading and discovery. The volume is free of academic jargon, so that the story of people and what they made and read comes across with great immediacy. Above all, the reader has a sense of a society in full bustle of creation, revealed by the craft and fertility of print.

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## LUNACY AND THE ARRANGEMENT OF BOOKS

BY TERRY BELANGER

Oak Knoll Press, 2003, 26 pages, \$10 paper.

REVIEWED BY JEAN WEIHS

Of the many tales in this essay about ludicrous arrangements, Belanger finds the most compelling is that dictated by an etiquette book written in 1863. The book's author decreed that the works of male and female authors must be segregated on bookshelves unless the authors were properly married.

*Lunacy and the Arrangement of Books*, a booklet originally published in 1982, has been reissued for the amusement for another generation of librarians and bibliophiles. In its 24 pages and two pages of footnotes the author describes many idiosyncratic ways of arranging books. To most librarians "arrangement of books" means arrangement on shelves. This essay, which is packed with anecdotes, takes a broader approach to book arrangement that includes home decoration, styles of book collecting, architecture, theft, personal classification schemes and peculiar notions of the type of books that should be housed together.

His tales about size and colour did not surprise me. When I was young, each summer I visited my grandmother who lived in a village that had an

*continued on page 21*



## Book Reviews

*continued from page 20*

imposing (for the size of the village) library. The “librarian” was the mayor’s elderly (at least to my young eyes) widowed relative who needed a job. She arranged the books in an attractive fashion by colour – all the red covers on one shelf, the blue covers on another shelf, etc. – and also by size from the tallest to the shortest. We used to have battles about borrowing a book from the middle of her arrangement. She wanted me to take books from the ends of the coloured sections so that the attractiveness of the library would not be disturbed. Belanger tops my tale by relating the story of a collector that had an aversion to books taller than fourteen inches and sold the valuable items in a collection he had purchased that did not conform to his requirement, with the result that the Pierpont Morgan Library to which he gave his collection missed out on their acquisition. Another collector bought books only in the quarto size because when stacked they made successful footstools and they could be placed underneath children to raise them to a proper height at the dinner table.

I was also not surprised by the story about the architect who installed light fixtures that hung fourteen inches above a library’s reading tables. In

an amusing exchange the librarian protested that this would affect a reader’s ability to turn the pages of large books, while the architect ended the argument by responding that the librarian did not understand the concept of a building. My husband, a consulting engineer who was occasionally hired by architects to do the mechanical work on a library building, did encounter architects for whom the functioning of the library was a distant second to the “concept of a building”.

Using books for decoration is not new and probably still happens. Belanger tells of a company called Books By the Yard that sold books strictly as decoration. The story about the guests at a country house who could choose whether to stay in the architecture room, the opera room, or the cookbook room, all distinguished from one another by the books and prints on the walls, reminded me of The Library Hotel in New York City where each of the hotel’s 10 floors and 60 rooms are decorated with framed art and a library of books that relate to the room’s specific Dewey decimal classification theme.

There is lots of amusing stuff here. The \$10 purchase price is lower than you would pay to see a comedy. It’s a good buy. □

## HOW I BECAME A LIBRARIAN

*continued from page 9*

any source I could, to add to my files. As my files grew, so did my fascination with methods of organizing knowledge and retrieving information. What I could have done with a computer in 1954 or 1956!

Another teacher (Grade 9) taught us how to filter large quantities of information and distil the essence into

orderly packages for easy use in the future.

An Air Force warrant officer in an air cadet summer program at Camp Borden showed me that standing up in front of people to speak or to respond to their questions was not life threatening.

By chance, my mother’s involvement in a women’s service club, Zonta International, had brought me into fairly regular contact with some very impressive librarians: Alberta Letts, the Nova Scotia provincial librarian, Eunice Beeson, the Dalhousie law librarian,

and Evelyn Campbell, the local Research Council librarian. All were interesting people, very professional, enthusiastic about what they did. While I was never aware of being recruited, they were certainly directional and reinforcing role models.

While I found certain aspects of library school neither challenging nor interesting to someone who looked at everything through a historian’s filter, I was energized by Katherine Ball (an ex-RCAF NCO), who showed that organization and fun were not incompatible. I was significantly influenced by the quiet Florence Murray, who radiated the joy of meaningful and effective reference service.

The final commitment to the world of libraries, information, and service came in 1966, when Louis Vagianos was appointed as university librarian at Dalhousie. Without doubt, he was an unequalled influence in transforming me from someone who worked in a library to a professional librarian convinced that the rest of my working life would relate to libraries.

Louis saw something in me and gave me a steady stream of wonderful opportunities to fly, to fail, to learn – challenges that tested me and rewarded me with success most of the time. I was also rewarded in times of failure and occasional ineptitude with analysis and learning. Louis taught me to look at the totality of things (how many walls). He showed me that no one ever looks ready. He demonstrated the art of the masterful servant, which I have emulated throughout much of my career. His ferocious energy, stunning creativity, and soaring vision were the forge in which my metal was tempered.

While I take pride in my career, it is clear that my road to and through librarianship was marked by the talents, influences, and wisdom of many, many fine people whose path I was fortunate to cross. I thank them for making this all possible. Without them, who knows where I might be?

*Alan Macdonald, University of Calgary librarian emeritus, continues to be modestly active in libraries as a mentor, speaker and occasional consultant. □*

## More Folks in U of T Class of '51 Photo (Spring 2005 *ELAN*) Identified:

### Letters to *ELAN*

16 June '05

In response to your "Help anyone?" re the Class of '51 – #25 is JEAN KONDO. I was a page at Locke Branch of the T.P.L. when she came on staff there.

Yours in sleuthing,  
Marion (Lawson) Seary  
Halifax

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June 14, 2005

I didn't recognize a bunch of people but I'm pretty sure that number 39 is Edith Jarvi.

Cheers/amicalement,

Vivienne Monty  
York University  
Toronto

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*Thanks very much Marion, Irma, and Vivienne, for these additions! - Ed.*

I enjoyed the class photo of U. of T. Library School May 51 – the year I graduated.

Attached [below] are some of the names I remembered. Perhaps you could supply all the names in another issue of the newsletter? Thanks for the newsletter – I read every word.

Irma (Wansbrough) Kadela  
Kitchener, Ontario

- #3 – Irma Wansbrough (now Kadela)
- #11 – last name is Gregg (first name may be Audrey?)
- #14 – Mrs. Ruth Kraulis – was catalogue dept. head – early days at North York P.L.
- #16 – Ruth Ward from Chatham
- #27 – may be Marion, or Molly, Brown – worked at T.P.L. children's department
- #31 – Trudy Treadwell – later Trudy Towne – employed at Toronto P.L.
- #34 – I think surname was McPherson?
- #35 – think surname was Peterson – was C.E.O. at Scarborough P.L.
- #38 – first name is Dorothy – came from Edmonton – last name might be Thompson, as she sat beside Trudy Treadwell and close to me (yes, we had a seating plan, by alpha order of surname)
- #45 – I think is Irene Aubrey – know she was in Class of '51. Recently retired, Children's Services, National Library. I am almost certain that Helen Macintosh was in the class but could not find her!

### ELA T-Shirts Can be Ordered by Mail!

Our t-shirt with the distinctive Ex Libris Association logo makes a great gift for retirees, anniversary celebrations, presentations, or for children's reading awards. Made with short sleeves, of good quality cotton, we have a supply of most sizes and colours. Price includes mailing and is \$17 for adult and \$10 for children's sizes. We also have a new style with a white logo on red or navy:

Red with white logo: Xtra Large and Large  
Navy: limited supply of Xtra Large  
Cream with black logo: Xtra Large and Large  
Yellow with black logo: Medium  
Red with black logo: Medium and Small  
Orange with black logo: Medium and Small  
Light or mid blue: Small

In children's sizes:  
Red w. black logo:  
sizes 6-8 and 10-12  
Mid blue w. black logo:  
sizes 6-8 and 10-12

# Milestones

## Compiled by Merlyn Beeckmans



### Obituaries

**Bryan Bacon** died on July 30. Born in Coventry in 1934, he was a graduate of the Loughborough School of Librarianship and worked in several public libraries in England before emigrating to Canada in 1965. He was assistant regional librarian of the Okanagan Regional Library and then chief librarian of the Prince George Public Library. In 1970 he became chief librarian of the Burnaby Public Library, and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1989.

**Jean (Gordon) Bennett** died on April 8 at the age of 89. She received a Library Science degree in 1969 and worked at the National Library for nine years before her retirement.

**Aina Kibermanis Bowman** died on April 6 in Cairo, Egypt while on holiday. She was 69. She received an MLIS from the University of Western Ontario in 1989.

**Helen Mary Cram** died on June 10 at the age of 90. She was a graduate of Queen's University and the University of Toronto. She worked for many years in the Toronto Public Library.

**Edith Grace Firth** died on July 23 in Toronto at the age of 78. She received degrees in history and library science from the University of Toronto in the 1940s. She was head of the Canadian History Department, Metropolitan Toronto Public Library, for many years. She became well known for her scholarly books on local documents, including *The Town of York* and *Toronto in Art*.

**Jean Elizabeth (Shepherd) Jannaway** died on March 20 in Victoria, B. C. at the age of 85. She graduated in library science from Ryerson University and worked as a librarian at TV Ontario.

**Karen Olcen** died on July 18 in Richmond Hill, Ontario at the age of 51. She received a BLS from the University of Alberta in 1975 and an MLS from the University of British Columbia in 1980. She worked in the libraries of the federal Office of the Auditor General and the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs from 1975 to 1979, and as a cataloguer at the University of British Columbia from 1980 to 1987. From 1987 until her death, she was a professor in the Library and Information Technician Program at Seneca College in Toronto.

### Awards

**Gohar Ashoughian**, manager of the University of Guelph-Humber Learning Commons, is the recipient of a University of Guelph Distinguished Professor and

Librarian Award for her effective integration of the resources and services of a university library and a college library.

**Robin Bergart**, an academic liaison librarian, received a University of Guelph Distinguished Professor and Librarian Award for her successful outreach efforts.

**Jane Burpee**, manager of reference and information literacy at the University of Guelph, was given a Distinguished Professor and Librarian Award for her tireless promotion of information literacy.

**Delilah Deane Cummings** of the London Public Library, was named Children's Librarian of the Year by the Ontario Public Library Association.

**Christine Dalgetty** of the Burlington Public Library received the OPLA's Award for Leadership in Youth Services.

**Christine House** of Loyola Catholic Secondary School, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, is the Ontario School Library Association's Teacher-Librarian of the Year for 2005.

**Janet Kaufman**, a University of Guelph librarian, received a Guelph YMCA-YWCA Woman of Distinction award in the category of education and training for designing the University of Guelph's Learning Commons.

**Don Kinder** of Ryerson University was chosen as Academic Librarian of the Year by the Ontario College and University Librarians Association.

**Ilo-Katryn Maimets** of York University received the Academic Librarianship Award from the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations.

**Esther Rosenfeld** of the Toronto District School Board received the Special Achievement Award from the Ontario School Library Association.

**Basil Stuart-Stubbs**, librarian at University of British Columbia from 1964 to 1981 and director of the UBC School of Librarianship (later the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies) from 1981 to 1992, was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada by Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson.

**Laraine Tapak**, director of the library at Confederation College, received the ACAATO Award for Distinguished Service in the Ontario College system.



# Milestones, continued

## Retirements

**Graham Hill**, university librarian at McMaster University, retired after 34 years of service at that institution.

**Carol Ohlers** retired from York University in January, after a 32-year career as a music cataloguer.

**Mary Anne Trainor**, head of collections and technical services in the Health Sciences Library at McMaster University, retired after 27 years of service.

## News

**Tamsin Bolton**, MLIS (McGill), joined the Leddy Library at the University of Windsor as information literacy librarian.

**Peter Duerr**, MIS (University of Western Ontario), joined York University's Scott Library as reference and government information librarian.

**Joyce C. Garnett**, university librarian at the University of Western Ontario, was elected to the board of directors of the Association for Research Libraries (ARL), a non-profit organization comprising the leading research libraries in North America.

**Sheril Hook** became coordinator of library instruction, University of Toronto at Mississauga. She was formerly English and American literature/theatre arts librarian at the University of Arizona.

**Rebecca Jones**, MLS (University of Toronto) is the new director of the Professional Learning Centre at the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto.

**Martha Joyce** accepted the position of media services librarian at Library and Media Services, Fanshawe College.

**Victoria Owen**, MLIS (University of Western Ontario), was appointed head of library services, University of Toronto at Scarborough.

**Beatrice Tice**, MLIS (University of Washington), is the new chief librarian, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto.

## Board Meeting Dates

Watch the home page of the Ex Libris Association website

<http://exlibris.fis.utoronto.ca>

for an announcement about upcoming Board meetings.

## We Invite You to Get Involved in ELA

This is your organization and you are invited to get involved. If you would like to be on a committee, or even be a corresponding member of a committee, or just help out from time to time, please get in touch with Frances Davidson-Arnott ([frances.davidson-arnott@senecac.on.ca](mailto:frances.davidson-arnott@senecac.on.ca)) or any of the executive.

## Back Issues of Ex Libris News

The Board of the Ex Libris Association has authorized the sale of back issues, *Ex Libris News*. Single issues are available at a cost of \$2.00 per copy; a complete set of back issues from Number 1 to 28 is available for \$24.00.

Write Ex Libris Association, c/o Dean's Office,  
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## ELAN

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Barbara Elizabeth (Tubman) Beardsley died on February 11, 2005 at her home in Milford, Ontario at the age of 77. She received a BLS degree from the University of Toronto in 1962. She worked at the Education Centre Library (Toronto Board of Education) and for the ONTERIS project (Province of Ontario).

Robert David Binkley died on February 25, 2005 in Peterborough, Ontario at the age of 52. He was educated at the Universities of Toronto, Western Ontario and Waterloo. He worked at Trent University. He developed the AVISO software program and contributed to the development of GODOT, a document-request system.

John Alexander Bovey died in Winnipeg on January 12, 2005 at the age of 70. He was an historian and archivist, serving as such in the Northwest Territories (1960s), Manitoba (1970s) and British Columbia (1980-1998).

Ruth Patricia Brooking died on January 11, 2005 in Oshawa, Ontario at the age of 76. She received a BLS from the University of Toronto. She was the CEO of the Oshawa Public Library from 1974 to 1993.

Diane E.M. Cooper died on September 17, 2004 at the age of 61. She was a fine arts reference librarian at the University of British Columbia Library for 39 years.

Mary Higgins died on November 8, 2004 in Toronto at the age of 87. She received a BLS in 1940. She was deputy chief librarian for the City of York Public Library.

Margaret Noreen (McManus) Hyland died on January 30, 2005 in Pointe-Claire, Quebec at the age of 76. She received a BLS from McGill University in 1952.

Jean Irene Lavender died on

February 23 in Lindsay, Ontario at the age of 87. She held a BLS from the University of Toronto. She was music librarian at the Royal Conservatory of Music and later became head librarian at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto.

Edith Mildred (Gibson) Lawford died on February 18, 2005 in Markdale, Ontario at the age of 91. She held an MLS.

Mary Ruth Thompson died on May 28, 2004. She received a BLS in 1953 and an MLS in 1970 from the University of Toronto. She was young adults librarian and later head of the Westdale Branch of the Hamilton Public Library.

Rosemarie Wolfe died December 3, 2004 in Toronto at the age of 85. She was a librarian at the Ontario Ministry of Education.

Jean Woodrow died on June 11, 2004 in Vancouver at the age of 97. She received an MLS from the University of Washington. She was a teacher-librarian for a total of 30 years at two Vancouver high schools. She contributed her considerable musical skills to both her high schools and to her church. She left a bequest to the Vancouver School of Theology Library.

Muriel Margaret Wright died on January 22, 2005 in Kamloops, B.C. at the age of 90. She held a BLS. She retired as head librarian at Macdonald College (McGill University) in 1979.

Patricia Helen Yamamota died on June 17, 2004. She was a librarian with the University of Toronto at Scarborough for 30 years. Wendy Newman (MLS 1985) was awarded the Faculty of Information Studies Alumni (University of Toronto) Jubilee Award last spring. Wendy was chief librarian of the Brantford Public Library and co-chair of the Joint ALA-CLA Conference in

June 2003.

Judith St. John (Dip. Lib. 1934) received the 70th Anniversary University of Toronto Chancellor's Medal on August 4, 2004 in conjunction with her 90th birthday. She was a children's librarian at the Toronto Public Library (1934-1952) and head of the Osbourne Collection (1952-1979).

Lorna Rourke, of the University of Guelph Library, received the Academic Librarianship Award in recognition by her peers of her significant contributions to academic life.

Barbara Lee retired as associate director of Library Services for Canadore College and Nipissing University, after 30 years of dedicated service.

Lynda MacLeod retired at the end of July 2004 as the Reference Services library technician at Lakeshore Campus. She had served for 23 years.

Karen Melville retired from her position as Professional Learning Centre director at the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto. She was instrumental in making the Centre the largest continuing education program for the information field in North America.

Donna Munroe retired in February 2004 from her position as head librarian at Citizenship and Immigration Canada. During her career with the Government of Canada, she served in the National Library of Canada, National Archives of Canada, and Employment and Immigration Canada. The late Florence Partridge, long-time chief librarian of the University of Guelph, left a considerable legacy to the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto, in support of

# My Abyi Adi Adventure

BY SHIRLEY LEWIS

I was invited by Allan, a Filipino VSO volunteer who was appalled at the state of the library at his posting (at a college in Abyi Adi in far northern Ethiopia), to advise on reorganizing the library. When I got to look at the library, it was certainly in terrible shape. There were six ladies without a lick of training, a librarian who did square root of nothing during his three-year tenure, book donations lying fallow in a container and a storeroom, and a very large backlog of books that hadn't been catalogued. They had Dewey but no Sears, which I brought with me.

There were four men: a deposed librarian, two very surly cataloguers who had a diploma that hadn't taught them very much, and the new librarian named Getu who was as different as day and night from the others, including his natty attire. He looked like he had stepped out of a handbox: navy blue trousers with a crease in them, blindingly white shirt, and snappy tie. Full of enthusiasm and ideas – really magical under the circumstances. But he had little training, since he started out as an engineering student. He looked to me as a flower looks to the sun, and I couldn't let him down.

So we started out with just a workshop on how to shelve books and how the Dewey Decimal System keeps subjects together. Bless my soul, it was like turning a light on in the dark. All six of the ladies were dazzled, and I assigned them each a shelf to restore to order. Their interest and enthusiasm was like something out of the movies, and the cataloguers, who frankly also didn't seem to realize that Dewey was actually practical, headed up three teams of two women each to tackle the

shelves. Pandemonium reigned for about half an hour, as they found books totally wrong for their shelves and moved them into the right general area. They chattered enthusiastically, and I cheered them on, working madly myself and sweating profusely (it's hot in Abyi Adi).

It was like a self-fulfilling prophecy, as they began to see that all the psychology books came together as we straightened things up – OK, look, all the English books are together, and so on. It took the rest of the day, and some of the next day, to get the books all in order, but they were very enthused. The women never complained at all, but the men started to flag when we then moved all the books out of the back room that, for no particular reason, had been kept as a secret hideaway. I swept away their objections and insisted that all books should be on the shelves for all the world to see.

After that, I concurrently gave mini-workshops while exhorting staff about library service and rewriting policy with Getu. Apparently the students are not allowed to borrow the books, much to the chagrin of the dean of the college. In one fell swoop we changed that and made a plan to give every student a library card and start loaning the books by next semester in September. I warned the staff that their days of lounging about the library doing nothing were gone forever. I didn't care at all whether they liked it or not, whether they liked me or not – the library service had been so terrible that the whole library concept was about to go down the drain. The two surly librarians were the ones who most took me by surprise. They started off really badly – so much so that I mentally called the thin one Ferret-Face and the big guy The Hulk. At first they sat slumped in their chairs, arms crossed and glowering. But, as they discovered, I knew so much more than they did, and I was implementing stuff with or

without their cooperation. They were nonplussed. I just went about my job and they could either join me or sit in the corner. I'm not sure when the tide turned, but within a couple of days they were carting books, slugging volumes into yes and no piles as we went through a storeroom in shocking condition. It held books that had just been tossed willy-nilly, with many quite badly damaged. We worked non-stop, and when one of them complained, I laughed and said, "Well, I'm 68 and, if you can't keep up with me, just let me know". He shamefacedly went back to work.

On Tuesday Saba, one of the circulation workers, took my hand on the way to coffee break, then threw her arm around my shoulder. I knew instantly that this meant I was one of them. For the rest of the week they all hovered about, sharing their umbrellas when we went out in the sun, carrying my briefcase for me, and so on. The library wasn't that hard to straighten out once they all started to pitch in, and it was really a very happy week.

Allan mentioned that we would have a "closing ceremony" on Friday afternoon. Ethiopians just love ceremonies, so I expected that there would be certificates and soft drinks and cookies and speeches. I knew I would be expected to give one, so I got ready for that. But this was a ceremony to end all ceremonies. There were the usual events, but there were also pictures and videos, and then we were herded onto the college bus and taken into town for dinner and dancing. They nearly went into hysterics when I got up and tried my luck at a Tigrayan folk dance. Eventually I got so tired I wondered how I was ever going to get out of there. But not much after the fatigue started to hit, the vice-dean got up and made a nice speech, and the staff gave me a remembrance gift – a little woven dish that one of the circulation work-

## **EX LIBRIS ASSOCIATION Long Range Plan, 2005- 2010**

As its major commitment in 2004, the Ex Libris Board of Directors embarked on an analysis of its accomplishments and the planning of its future activities. The general objective was to determine how the Association can best serve its national membership in future years. A draft plan was prepared. Discussion and consultation took place and suggestions for change were made. At the Annual General Meeting, November 8, 2004, the draft proposal for the long-range plan was accepted with the recommendation that it be reworked by the Executive Committee and presented for final approval at the January 31, 2005 meeting of the Board of Directors. The goals of the reworked plan together with the proposed means for implementation are presented below:

### **Goal 1**

To provide a forum for interested individuals to stimulate the recollection and publication of the history of Canadian librarianship, ELA will:

- a) carry out a feasibility study on the development of a central  
Target date 2005

database of biographical information on individuals in the field of library and information science and implement such a project if it is recommended;

- b) continue to publish in ELAN articles of the personal recollections.

### **Goal 2**

To facilitate the collection of oral histories related to library and information science in Canada, ELA will:

- a) encourage the safe deposit of material from oral history projects in appropriate archival collections;
- b) explore the possibilities of continuing to collect oral history of

libraries  
and librarianship and related fields.

### **Goal 3**

To encourage the preservation of, and accessibility to, Canadian historical materials in the field of library and information science, ELA will:

- a) publish reports and make recommendations concerning the deposit of  
personal papers of individuals and the archives of institutions on the ELA  
Web site and in ELAN;
- b) communicate this information to provincial organizations;
- c) provide assistance to ELA members in finding appropriate locations for their  
personal papers.

### **Goal 4**

To serve as a voice for members and other retirees on library services and other important library-related issues on which they would wish to be heard, ELA will:

- a) continue to sponsor the W.K. Lamb Award for Library Service to Seniors;
- b) establish an ad-hoc committee of newly retired teacher-librarians to advise  
Target date 2005  
the Board on whether there is a role for ELA in fostering support for school libraries and if so what that role should be;
- c) continue to support the Canadian Coalition of School Libraries (CCSL) and its provincial counterparts;
- d) act as a sounding board on library and archival related issues of national  
importance through ELAN, the website, programmes at annual get-togethers, and other means.

## **EX LIBRIS ASSOCIATION Long Range Plan, 2005-**

**2010**

### **Goal 5**

To act as a medium of communication among members, to keep the members informed of library, archive and publishing developments of interest and to continue to improve communication with our members throughout Canada, ELA will:

- a) continue to publish the newsletter, ELAN, twice a year;
- b) continue to maintain and update the website;
- c) establish an electronic discussion list and/or chat room to  
Target date 2005  
facilitate debate and discussion on relevant issues;
- d) seek to provide an ELA presence at the conferences of CLA and the provincial and regional associations;
- e) hold annual get-togethers and such other gatherings as from time to time may be deemed appropriate.

### **Goal 6**

To expand the membership of the Ex Libris Association throughout Canada, ELA will:

- a) explore ways and means of recruiting members, and developing  
Target date  
2005  
strategies for recruiting members from all parts of Canada;
- b) conduct periodic recruitment campaigns;  
Target date 2005
- c) establish liaison with library and information associations across Canada;
- d) seek provincial or regional representatives to liaise with ELA and/or to serve  
Target date 2005  
as members of the Board of Directors and develop guidelines for responsibilities of liaison representatives.

**2 February 2005**



student learning and librarianship.

BY HOWARD OVEREND,  
SALMON ARM

### **Give a Little Whistle!**

Coincidental with the story “Ex Libris ’84” (on page 8 in this issue) is that the only signs of life I noticed on the climb over the rocks leading to the Chilkoot Pass came from very agile, cute, furry rodents called marmots. They kept darting in and out of their hideaway holes and whistling shrilly to each other to warn of the approach of a monster intent on reaching the top. All this is apropos of talking about the public library in the resort municipality of Whistler, whose odd name is said to have come from the abundance of marmots on nearby slopes. Give a little whistle!

And what is a resort municipality? In BC-Land where “vast mountain ranges and glaciers, abundant snowfall and accessibility to key markets have combined to give [the province] a strong ski industry”, the government enacted the Resort Municipality of Whistler Act in 1975. This act created a special kind of municipality with enhanced powers to manage and deliver services to its residents. Amended in 1996, the Act's general provisions apply to other potential ski resort areas throughout the province, facilitating their development.

Whistler, about 70 miles north of Vancouver on the Sea to Sky highway, was the first such resort municipality in Canada and, as if it weren't already a North American favourite with skiers and snowboarders, will host alpine and Nordic events at the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic winter games a scant six years from now.

So much for the tremendous sports hype. The public library doesn't really need it, though. It's got its own star. Joan Richoz, born in Winnipeg, grew up in Vancouver. A UBC grad (MA '72), Joan was a key figure in a

local ginger group formed to get a library started in Whistler. When it was incorporated as a public library association in 1985, she wound up as a trustee but traded this post for that of chief librarian.

Since then, the public library has gone from peak to peak. “My greatest challenge was starting the collection for the library. It was a daunting and frightening task, but one that I will never forget”, Joan says. From an initial collection of 2,500 books, it has grown to more than 39,000 – with some 135,000 loans in 2003. Circulation in her aptly described library (“a cornerstone of the community and a real meeting place”) grows by an average of 15% each year, she reports. All this in a crowded space of 2,800 square feet.

The Whistler Municipal Public Library, as it became in '99 when it was taken over by the municipality, has a busy staff of 10 people, including its most recent addition, Anwen Boyd, a BA (U. of Calgary) and Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) grad from the U. of Edmonton with Alberta library experience. Anwen serves as Children's and Youth Services Librarian at Whistler.

The library board plans a new 14,000-square-foot library building, to be started next April, with a capital budget of a cool \$7 million. The project is in the hands of a steering committee of Board members, staff, community volunteers, municipal councillors, and municipal staff under chair Keith Bennett, General Manager of Parks and Recreation in the town.

The current library board, chaired by Registered Nurse Anne Fenwick since 1995, comprises a dozen library-oriented members of the community. Since '97 the library has received excellent interlibrary loan service from InterLINK, a group of

17 Lower Mainland co-operating libraries. It also receives operating funds from the province, corporate sponsors, donors and foundations, as well as proceeds of spirited fundraising events in the community.

Whistler, though, as its Web site proclaims, “is more than two award winning ski mountains and a gorgeous village full of shops. It's a bustling town of over 10,000 residents improving an established community, focusing on recreational pursuits, artistic endeavours, business development and environmental sustainability.” Ya—hoo!

That's Whistler. Up and coming. Well-run, well-funded, well-promoted and well – that's why it's a success.

### **In This Corner, A New Library Champ!**

Speaking of donors, hear this! Ben Dayson – not even a library board member – has given his (and his wife Ester's) 500-volume collection of Judaica books to the Richmond Public Library, along with a generous \$50,000 cheque for the library's endowment fund.

And for so doing, he was recently awarded the Keith Sacre Library Champion Award, given annually by the BC Library Association for outstanding support of public library services in BC-Land.

A library champ indeed, and a worthy one. A forerunner, Kwok-Chu Lee, also of Richmond, has given more than 1,700 Chinese-language books, valued at about \$17,000, to the library this year. He also persuaded some of his friends to donate a total of \$10,000, too. Lee, who has been described as “Richmond Public Library's most prolific, generous and prestigious donor”, won the Sacre Award in 2001. Good for Dayson and Lee!







ers had made. This will certainly be a sentimental favourite that I will bring home with me. And the coup de grâce was, as we walked down the street back to the bus, Ferret-Face walked along with his arm around my waist and his other arm draped over my shoulder. The Hulk, who turned out to be an immensely shy person, said, in a voice loud enough to hush the other chattering, "Miss Shirley, you must phone us when you get back to Gondar so that we know you are safe". As if that was not touching enough, he added, "And you must let us know when you leave for Canada, so that we can say goodbye from our hearts". It was a magical moment that I will never forget. It really was a marvellous experience.



Under a Bushel?

What is there about personal publicity that makes library directors shy away? Why aren't they out there front and centre?

In a random survey of 25 public library Web sites in BC-Land, only seven of them (or 28%) list the names of their directors, while 16 (64%) show the names of library board members – some with pictures. And eight (32%), believe it or not, show neither.

Why is this?

Do chief librarians fear invasion of privacy, or exposure to the public? Are library heads opting for bureaucratic anonymity on their Web sites? Doesn't the public have a right to know who the captain is? Boards are important, of course, but the CEO is the one who works with them and the staff and the public to make the library go. The name of that person should be front and centre in its message to the public.

Always (100%).







